

# Wesley Grove Messenger

July 2023

## My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

*"For surely I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord,  
"plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."*

~~~ Jeremiah 29:11 ~~~

In 2019, a new term entered the Collins English Dictionary: "hopepunk." It is defined as "a literary and artistic movement that celebrates the pursuit of positive aims in the face of adversity." Hopepunk emerged during bleak sociopolitical times (pandemic, climate change, economic, and geopolitical crises), which gave it a greater appeal to readers. Coined in 2017 by fantasy author Alexandra Rowland, hopepunk was a reaction to a different kind of writing dominating the market that year, a genre that Rowland and others refer to as "grimdark." Grimdark emphasizes the cruelty that so often defines human interaction. Rowland writes that, in contrast, "hopepunk says that *genuinely and sincerely* caring about something, anything, requires bravery and strength. It's about demanding a better, kinder world, and truly believing that we can get there if we care about each other as hard as we possibly can." (*Hope, "HopePunk," and the Gospel — BreakPoint*)

The essence of the hopepunk philosophy can be found in an exchange between Frodo and Samwise Gamgee in *The Two Towers* from Peter Jackson's "Lord of the Rings" films, as they struggle against the forces of evil around them...

"It's like in the great stories, Mr. Frodo," Sam says. "Full of darkness and danger they were. And sometimes you didn't want to know the end. Because how could the end be happy? How could the world go back to the way it was when so much bad had happened? But in the end, it's only a passing thing, this shadow. Even darkness must pass. A new day will come. And when the Sun shines, it will shine out clearer."

"What are we holding on to, Sam?" Frodo then asks.

"That there's some good in this world, Mr. Frodo... and it's worth fighting for," his friend replies.

In a world often characterized by cynicism and despair, the emergence of hopepunk offers a refreshing perspective on how to navigate through challenging times. But I would submit that hopepunk's ideology of proactive optimism and resilience finds a deep resonance with the teachings and values of Christianity. Christianity encourages us to cultivate radical hope in the face of despair, mirroring the hopeful resistance of hopepunk. Both Christianity and hopepunk call for active engagement with the world, offering a counter-narrative to passivity and resignation. And both encourage individuals to stand up for justice, embrace vulnerability, and build a better future, no matter how bleak one's present circumstances may seem.

Hopepunk's emphasis on radical hope, social justice, empowering vulnerability, and community building aligns with the principles that guide us as Christians. Perhaps, by embracing hopepunk's ethos and combining it with the spiritual foundations of Christianity, we can find a renewed sense of purpose, strength, and inspiration to navigate the complexities of life and contribute to a more just and hopeful world.

In God's Peace,  
Pastor Karen

## Lectioary Readings

**July 2, 2023**

*July 4th Weekend*

*Jane King, preaching*

Genesis 22:1-14

Psalm 13

Romans 6:12-23

Matthew 10:40-42

**July 9, 2023**

*Pastor Nick, preaching*

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67

Psalm 45:10-17 or Psalm 72

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

**July 16, 2023**

*Pastor Karen, preaching*

Genesis 25:19-34

Psalm 25 or Psalm 119:105-112

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

**July 23, 2023**

*Christmas in July*

*Pastor Nick, preaching*

Genesis 28:10-19a

Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24

Romans 8:12-25

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

**July 30, 2023**

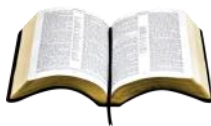
*Pastor Karen, preaching*

Genesis 29:15-28

Psalm 105:1-11, 45b

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



Please contact Tammy at 301-253-0044 to volunteer to serve as our liturgist during a Sunday morning worship service.

## May 2023 Financial Report

*Rick Monarch, Treasurer*



### Expenses

|                                                 |                   |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| BWC Mission Share                               | \$1,184.16        |
| Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary)           | \$1,563.42        |
| Associate Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary) | \$405.50          |
| Church Secretary's Wages                        | \$972.23          |
| Organist / Pianist                              | \$0.00            |
| Worker's Compensation Insurance                 | \$0.00            |
| Payroll Taxes                                   | \$74.38           |
| Capital Improvement Costs                       | \$0.00            |
| Grass Cutting Costs                             | \$0.00            |
| Snow Plowing Costs                              | \$0.00            |
| Groundskeeper Costs                             | \$0.00            |
| Custodian's Salary                              | \$0.00            |
| Programs                                        | \$523.39          |
| Property Insurance                              | \$0.00            |
| Administrative Expenses                         | \$171.30          |
| Charge Treasury - Parsonage Expenses            | \$390.85          |
| Charge Treasury - Professional Expenses         | \$113.92          |
| Charge Treasury - Medical Insurance Cost        | \$296.66          |
| Charge Treasury - Retirement Contribution       | \$332.23          |
| Charge Treasury - Administrative Costs          | \$12.50           |
| Trustees - Maintenance Costs                    | \$1,611.16        |
| Miscellaneous                                   | \$125.00          |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                           | <b>\$7,776.70</b> |

### Income



|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Weekly Collections             | \$4,235.00        |
| Cell Tower Rental Fee - Sprint | \$2,167.34        |
| Use of Hall                    | \$750.00          |
| Miscellaneous                  | \$0.00            |
| <b>Total Income</b>            | <b>\$7,152.34</b> |

## Have You Planned Ahead?

Don't leave your loved ones in the lurch! Wesley Grove has cemetery plots available at \$1,000 each. Contact Jim Kemp at 301-253-2859 if you have any questions and/or are interested in purchasing one or more.



## Fellowship News

*Becky Lewis, Chair*

The heart of summer is here, which means it's time for picnics, swimming, parades, and Christmas carols. Huh?

This month's Fellowship schedule indeed includes two of those events — the Celebrate Damascus Parade on Friday, July 7, and a potluck luncheon following the 'Christmas in July' worship service on Sunday, July 23.

If you'd like to ride on the Wesley Grove float in the 7 pm parade, please sign up on the list in the vestibule. And if you're not going to ride with us, please still plan to come out and support your church and your community by watching from along the route, which begins at Damascus High School and proceeds north along Route 27 to Lewis Drive and ends at the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department Activities Center. We have purchased matching tee shirts for everyone riding on the float, at a cost of \$15 each. Extra shirts are also available if you'd just like to wear one while watching to show your support. Please see Becky to grab yours!

For the "Christmas in July" Holiday Luncheon, please sign up to bring a favorite holiday dish (casserole, side dish, and/or dessert) to accompany the turkey breast and ham that the Christian Fellowship Committee will provide. We'll have a brief time of games (and maybe a small snack!) immediately following the worship service, with lunch served at approximately noon. The Committee will also provide drinks and paper goods. And if you haven't signed up ahead of time and find out at the last minute you can come, please know that you're always welcome and there's always plenty of food!



## News from Our Friends

in the Damascus Lions Club

The Damascus Lions Club will host a Pancake, Sausage, and Scrambled Egg Breakfast from 7 am to 11 am on Saturday, July 8 in the Damascus UMC Dining Room, located at 9700 New Church Street. Tickets cost \$15 for adults and \$7 for children ages 4-12. (Children under 4 are free.) A Bake & Craft Table will offer goodies for sale. Breakfast tickets may be purchased at the door or from any member of the Damascus Lions Club. For more information, contact Lion Mary Frances Gosnell at 301-829-1002.



A Flea Market sponsored by the Damascus Lions will also be held on the Damascus UMC front lawn on Saturday, July 8 from 9 am to 4 pm during the "Celebrate Damascus" festivities. Spaces are available at \$25 each. Contact Lion Tess Gladhill at 301-253-2141 to reserve your space now.



The Montgomery County Police will be on hand and host a Drug Take Back booth near the Flea Market from 10 am to 2 pm. They will collect all old, expired, and not needed prescription and OTC medications.

And finally, Critical Power, Inc. will also be on-site from 10 am to 2 pm to collect all types of old and no longer usable batteries, with the exception of commercial ones.



Please join in these activities to help keep our local environment safe and clean! All proceeds from the Damascus Lions Club fundraisers are used for community projects.

Other events, such as cruizin' with classic cars and store sales, are happening around town throughout the day on Saturday.

## July Birthdays

- 9 Rick Monarch
- 11 Jimmy Johnson
- 15 William Briggs
- 20 Debbie Pesce
- 23 Jim Kemp
- Kay Snouffer
- 25 Skip Ketchum
- 28 Becca Benson



# Christmas in July

**Sunday, July 23**

**Worship Service**

10 am

**Holiday Luncheon**

12 pm

## School Supply Drive

This summer, we are again helping needy students within the Damascus Community start the new school year off fresh by donating brand-new school supplies. The list of needed supplies is below. Please place any and all items that you wish to donate in the large blue bins in the church vestibule **by Sunday, August 13**. Thanks to all of you in advance for your much-needed and much-appreciated generosity!

|                             |               |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Spiral notebooks            | Lined paper   |
| Composition books           | Pencils       |
| Pens (blue, black, and red) | Crayons       |
| Markers (thin and thick)    | Scissors      |
| Colored pencils             | Glue sticks   |
| Erasers and eraser caps     | Rulers        |
| Dividers (5-7 subjects)     | Pencil boxes  |
| Pocket folders              | Binders       |
| Highlighters                | Post-It notes |
| Dry erase markers           | Glue bottles  |

Faith Connections would also love donations of new or “almost new” backpacks! Please bring these to the blue bins as well.

Plan to join us to celebrate the miraculous story of Our Savior’s Birth and to sing your favorite carols at a time of the year other than December. *After all, why should something so wonderful and so amazing be shared only once a year?!?!?*


Be sure to wear the colors of the season — **red** and **green** — and bells, holly, snowflakes, whatever you have — and come with a festive holiday spirit ready to celebrate Christmas in July!

After the service, we will continue our celebration in the fellowship hall with Christmas Dinner in July. Bring your favorite holiday casserole (*mashed sweet potato, green bean, etc.*), side dish (*savory stuffing or mashed potatoes and gravy*), and/or dessert (*fruit cake, gingerbread cookies, etc.*) to share. Roasted turkey, baked ham, beverages, and paper products will all be provided. *After all, why should food so delicious and so yummy only be eaten once a year?!?!?*



# July 2023



| Sun                                                                                                                     | Mon | Tue                                                                                                                                | Wed                                            | Thu | Fri                                                                              | Sat                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                         |     |                                                                                                                                    |                                                |     | <i>Pastor Karen out of town</i>                                                  | 1                                                                                  |
| 2<br>10:00 AM—<br>Worship Service<br>with Communion<br><b>Wear red, white, &amp;<br/>blue.</b>                          | 3   | 4<br><i>Happy<br/>Independence<br/>Day!</i><br> | 5                                              | 6   | 7<br>5:45 PM—<br>Participants Report<br>7:00 PM—<br>Celebrate Damascus<br>Parade | 8<br>7 AM—11 AM—<br>Lions Club Break-<br>fast at DUMC<br>9 AM—4 PM—<br>Flea Market |
| 9<br>10:00 AM—<br>Worship Service                                                                                       | 10  | 11                                                                                                                                 | 12                                             | 13  | 14                                                                               | 15                                                                                 |
| 16<br>10:00 AM—<br>Worship Service                                                                                      | 17  | 18 <i>Deadline for<br/>August<br/>Newsletter<br/>Submissions</i><br>7:00 PM—<br>Communications<br>Com. Meeting (Zoom)              | 19<br>12:00 PM—<br>Lunch Out at Tom<br>& Ray's | 20  | 21                                                                               | 22                                                                                 |
| 23 <i>Xmas in July</i><br>10:00 AM—<br>Worship Service<br>12:00 PM—<br>Holiday Luncheon<br><b>Wear red &amp; green.</b> | 24  | 25<br>3:00 PM—<br>Book Club Meeting<br>at Tammy's Home                                                                             | 26                                             | 27  | 28                                                                               | 29                                                                                 |
| 30<br>10:00 AM—<br>Worship Service                                                                                      | 31  |                                                                                                                                    |                                                |     |                                                                                  |                                                                                    |

# **Wesley Grove United Methodist Church**

Church Phone: 301-253-2894  
Email: [wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org](mailto:wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org)

**As a Church Family that...**

- \* covenants to walk together in Christ's peace,
- \* believes that all persons are created equal,  
and
- \* affirms the inclusive love of Jesus Christ,

**We Welcome All to Our Work and Worship,**  
regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age,  
ability, sexual orientation, and/or economic  
circumstance.

**We're on the Web!**  
[wesleygroveumc.org](http://wesleygroveumc.org)



**CELEBRATE  
CHRIST'S BIRTH  
in the summer!**

**Sunday, July 23**

**Christmas  
Worship Service  
and  
Holiday Luncheon**

**Festivities begin at 10 am**

To unsubscribe, please call the Wesley Grove UMC Office (301-253-2894) or email [wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org](mailto:wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org)

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