

Wesley Grove Messenger

October 2023

From the Pastor's Desk...

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Hope for The Church??? Hope for our church???



Are there times you worry about the future of The Church? Do I worry about the future of The Church? **Not at all!** The Church is the movement of God present among God's people. It is the vehicle God has chosen to work in the world to demonstrate an alternative reality which will one day be a present reality for all creation. One day --- on The Day --- God is going to act and turn the kingdoms of this world into The Kingdom of God. Since God has chosen The Church to be His witness in the world along with the Jewish people, I never worry about the future of The Church.

Another reason that I never worry about the future of The Church is that I know its history. Modern people tend to remember back only a few lifetimes. That is what we know. But church history teaches us a far longer lesson about the ebbs and flows of The Church. In the years leading up to the 1700's, The Church was dying. Church attendance was almost non-existent. Europeans had witnessed 150 years of religious wars between the Catholics and the Protestants, and the state churches of Europe were mired in corruption. Nobody went to church, and then out of the blue, there was a Great Awakening among the faithful. Groups like the Wesleyans and the Baptists sprung onto the scene and revitalized The Church in a fairly short period of time. God was working once again among His Church, and therefore, the churches of Europe would continue to be vital for another couple of hundred years. In addition, Church history teaches us that we never know when God's spirit will reignite the flame of witness in the life of The Church.

But church history also teaches us that there are times when churches die and church cultures disappear. If you travel today in many countries that were traditional Christian strongholds, you would be surprised to find churches and church cultures that have greatly diminished from their highpoints. The most famous example is the traditional Christian homeland of Asia Minor. The country we now know as Turkey was home to the greatest concentration of Christians for the first 1,500 years of The Church's existence. Turkey was the Christian heartland from the 300's all the way up to around 1500. The city of Antioch in modern day Turkey is the place where the followers of Christ were first called Christians. Today, that city is less than 1% Christian. If you had asked a Christian in Antioch in the year 800 if he could envision a world where God's Church was thriving all around the world, but not in Antioch, I am sure he would have never believed it possible.

But that is what happened. Christianity became a minority religion in Turkey hundreds of years ago, but it isn't dead. Still today, I know of many Christians who live in Turkey and practice their faith. They stand as a witness to the way of Christ in a world that is openly

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## Lectionary Readings

**October 1, 2023**  
**World Communion Sunday**

Exodus 17:1-7  
 Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16  
 Philemon 2:1-13  
 Matthew 21:23-32

**October 8, 2023**  
 Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20

Psalm 19  
 Philemon 3:4b-14  
 Matthew 21:33-46

**October 15, 2023**  
**Laity Sunday**

Exodus 32:1-14  
 Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23  
 Philemon 4:1-9  
 Matthew 22:1-14

**October 22, 2023**  
 Exodus 33:12-23

Psalm 99  
 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10  
 Matthew 22:15-22

**October 29, 2023**  
 Deuteronomy 34:1-12

Psalm 90:1-6, 13-17  
 1 Thessalonians 2:1-8  
 Matthew 22:34-46



## August 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                        | \$784.32           |
| Organist / Pianist                              | \$0.00             |
| Worker's Compensation Insurance                 | \$0.00             |
| BWC - Annual Conference - for Lay Delegate      | \$0.00             |
| Payroll Taxes                                   | \$60.00            |
| Capital Improvement Costs                       | \$800.00           |
| Grass Cutting Costs                             | \$1,215.00         |
| Snow Plowing Costs                              | \$0.00             |
| Groundskeeper Costs                             | \$0.00             |
| Custodian's Salary                              | \$420.00           |
| Programs                                        | \$515.27           |
| Property Insurance                              | \$0.00             |
| Administrative Expenses                         | \$136.22           |
| 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                    | \$5,259.93         |
| Miscellaneous                                   | \$0.00             |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                           | <b>\$13,489.98</b> |

### Income

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Weekly Collections             | \$4,290.00        |
| Cell Tower Rental Fee - Sprint | \$2,232.36        |
| Use of Hall                    | \$200.00          |
| Miscellaneous                  | \$0.00            |
| <b>Total Income</b>            | <b>\$6,722.36</b> |



## Education News

Our one-room Sunday School has resumed meeting on Sunday mornings at 9:30 in the hall. This class is co-led by Pastor Karen, Pastor Nick, and Tammy. All are invited and welcome to join us as we read and study the Psalms this fall season. Please feel free to come any Sunday morning!



# Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon



**Saturday, November 11  
9 am to 3 pm**

Make plans to come out and join us as we begin the Holiday Season with our annual Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon! We plan to have about 20-30 assorted crafters selling a variety of handmade wares from fused glass and beaded jewelry to knitted scarves and dried flower arrangements to Christmas ornaments and wreaths.

The church will also have many wonderful items to sell including holiday gift baskets, painted wooden figures, table linens, ornaments, and Christmas decorations. If you have any craft items to donate, please let Tammy know.

As in past years, we will sell beverages and lunch items including homemade soups and freshly made sandwiches throughout the day as well as delicious home-baked goods. All donations of cookies, brownies, cakes, pies, breads, and rolls will be gratefully accepted as will any home-made candies, jellies, jams, salsas, pickles, etc. Please bring these donations to the hall between 11 am and 4 pm on Friday, November 10, the day before the bazaar.



If you can help on the day of this bazaar with selling crafts or working in the kitchen, please contact Becky at 240-338-3211 or Tammy at 301-253-0044 to volunteer your services.

## October Birthdays

- 2 Louise Burdette
- 3 Cooper Verner
- 4 Suzie Diddle
- 6 June Ward
- 9 Don Hobbs
- 16 Paul Eisenhaur
- 18 Tim Horner  
Alicia Wilson
- 21 Joyce King  
Abby Crawford
- 25 Allan Snyder  
Mary Jane Walter
- 27 Braden Green
- 30 Charlie Stone



## Damascus HELP Food Collection

It's October, and that means it's fall, and it's time for pumpkins and apples!

Over the next five Sundays, we will collect foods for the Damascus HELP Food Pantry that feature these two fall favorites.

So, as you are grocery shopping this month, be creative, look around, and pick up some extra apple cider, pumpkin muffin mixes, applesauce, apple jellies, pumpkin-flavored teas and coffees, apple snack bars, pumpkin pop-tarts, and/or Apple Jacks cereal to donate. These foods will all help needy families within our community to celebrate some of the flavors, tastes, and smells of fall.

Please bring all donations to the collection site in the vestibule by Sunday, October 29.



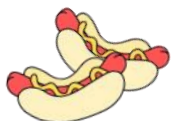
## Fellowship News

*Becky Lewis, Chair*

September saw us bid farewell to summer, and now, as we begin the month of October, we welcome fall with a visit to Doc Waters Cidery. Make plans to join us on Friday, October 6 as we gather at the Cidery located at 22529 Wildcat Road from 5-9 pm for a dinner of hot dogs and marshmallows roasted over an open fire and an evening of team trivia beginning at 7 pm.



We will supply the hot dogs, buns, condiments, marshmallows, graham crackers, chocolate, and paper products. Folks should bring a dish or two to share, the necessary serving utensils, lawn chairs, blankets (if they wish to sit on the ground and/or bundle up!), and flashlights might be handy as we pack up to leave.



Of course, various ciders and other snacks will be available for purchase. If you would like a different type of drink, please bring your own. Parking is plentiful and free, but be aware that this event is outside on a farm, and therefore, the ground can be a bit uneven for walking.

Please sign up in the vestibule, so we know about many folks will be joining us. Or call Tammy at 301-253-0044 to have your name added to the list.

Also in October, Joyce and Henry King will host Coffee and Conversation on Sunday, October 15, which is also Laity Sunday.

Our Annual Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon is coming up fast on Saturday, November 11. Donations of craft items

and baked goods are greatly appreciated. Please let Tammy or Becky know if you can help with set-up on November 10 or with the event itself on November 11.



## Save the Dates!

Don't blink; the Christmas Holiday Season will be here before we know it! Therefore, we are already making plans for this most wonderful time of the year...

Please save these dates:

- Community Tree Lighting Ceremony on Wednesday, November 29 at 7:00 pm
- Caroling & Dinner at the Monarchs on Sunday, December 17 at 4:00 pm
- Christmas Luncheon — Watch for details in upcoming Sunday bulletins and in our November newsletter.

## CROP Walk



On Sunday, October 8, Damascus will hold its 52<sup>nd</sup> CROP Walk. This event will take place from 2-4 pm at Damascus Regional Park. Registration for all walkers will begin at 1:30 under the picnic shelter at the beginning of the trail.

If you are free this day, consider heading outside and joining in this annual walk to raise funds to fight hunger both here in our community and around the world.





## It's Bingo Time!

The Damascus Volunteer Fire Department will host its fall fundraiser night consisting of a fried chicken and ham dinner and 20 games of bingo on Friday, October 27. The doors will open at 5 pm; dinner will be served from 5:30-7:00; and the games will begin at 7 pm. Tickets cost \$50 each and are available from Jim and Lois Kemp. Call them at 301-253-2859 to reserve yours today!

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## Church Conference

Our annual South Damascus Charge Church Conference will be held on Saturday, October 28 at 12:30 pm. One of our BWC elders will preside over this livestreamed conference. Please let Tammy know if you plan to participate, and she will provide you with the necessary documents ahead of time as well as forward you the Zoom link.

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## Lunch Out

On Wednesday, October 25, we will join together for our monthly fellowship luncheon at Ledo's Pizza and Pasta in Damascus at 12 pm. Everyone in our church family is invited and welcome to join us!

## Community Dinner and Bake Sale



St. Paul UMC on Rt. 108 in Laytonsville will hold its fall fundraiser dinner on Friday, October 13 from 4:00-7:30 pm. The menu includes all of your delicious southwest favorites — BBQ pork and brisket, smoked wings, shotgun shells, and assorted sides. Adult dinners cost \$20; dinners for children (ages 8-12) are \$15, and young children (ages 0-7) are free.

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## Damascus Lions Fundraiser Breakfast

The Damascus Lions Club will hold a fundraiser breakfast buffet of pancakes, sausage, and eggs on Saturday, October 28 from 7-11 am at Damascus United Methodist Church. Tickets cost \$15 for adults and \$7 for children aged 4-10. Small children ages 0-3 are free. You can buy your tickets at the door or ask any Lion to buy them in advance.

The Lions will also host both a bake sale and a craft sale at this event.

In addition, the Montgomery County Police will be present to collect any old medications (both prescription and OTC) on this day, which is "National Drug Take-Back Day."

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hostile to them. Likewise in another area of the world that was once a stronghold of The Church – Egypt; The Church was once a truly powerful institution. But today, after hundreds of years of Muslim rule, Christians make up less than 20% of the population, but they are still there, faithful as ever. In fact, I have a great friend who is the Dean of the Cairo Theological Seminary for the Coptic/Presbyterian Church.

Thus, The Church is not completely dead in Turkey or in Egypt, and this gives me hope that Christianity in America still has several options. God may light a flame of revival in our midst in the next 25, 50, or even 100 years, and The Church could rebound and become stronger than ever. Or The Church in America could go the way of Turkey or Egypt and become a minority religion in a large sea of non-religiousness. But no matter which option takes place, I have hope that The Church will continue to serve as a witness to The Kingdom of God at work in the world.

Now, do I have hope for our church? Recently, I have read several articles about why people have stopped attending church. There are countless theories given; some I find reasonable, and some I dismiss as just plain silly. But one article says that for so many, The Church no longer matters because it no longer delivers what people need: a strong sense of community. 50 or 100 years ago, churches were the glue that held local communities together. You married within your church community. You celebrated the moments of life --- baptisms, funerals, recitals, pageants --- within your church community. You gathered for worship

and fellowship, not just on Sundays, but all through your life with the members of your community that you called your church. American Christianity seems to have lost this deep sense of community.

But I do notice this deep feeling still present here within this Wesley Grove Church family. This church seems to hold onto much of that older Christian community model, and I am hopeful that this strength can endure even in a world which turns toward secularism and away from the Christian faith. I have a good deal of hope for Wesley Grove, and I do believe we can continue to be a small community of faith trying to live faithfully as witnesses of God's Kingdom. With God's help, that is... :)

Peace and blessings,
Pastor Nick



October 2023



| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|--|---|--|---|--|
| 1 Worldwide Communion Sunday
9:30 AM—
Sunday School
11:00 AM—
Worship Service | 2
7:00 PM—
Worship Committee Meeting via Zoom | 3 | 4
3:00 PM—
Book Club at Linda's Home | 5 | 6
5:00 PM—
Hot Dog Dinner & Trivia Night at Doc Waters Cidery | 7 |
| 8
9:30 AM—
Sunday School
11:00 AM—
Worship Service
2:00 PM—
CROP Walk | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12
7:00 PM—
Missions Committee Meeting | 13
4:00-7:30 PM—
BBQ Dinner and Bake Sale at St. Paul UMC in Laytonsville | 14 |
| 15 Laity Sunday
9:30 AM—
Sunday School
11:00 AM—
Worship Service
12:00 PM—
Fellowship Hour | 16 | 17
6:45 PM—
Lions Club Dinner and Meeting | 18
<i>Deadline for November Newsletter Submissions</i>

<i>Nick to Korea</i> | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22
9:30 AM—
Sunday School
11:00 AM—
Worship Service | 23
7:00 PM—
Board of Trustees Meeting | 24 | 25
12:00 PM—
Lunch Out at Ledo's in Damascus | 26 | 27
5:00 PM—
Chicken Dinner & Bingo Fundraiser at DVFD | 28
7:00-11:00 AM—
Lions Breakfast
12:30 PM—
Charge Conference via Zoom |
| 29
9:30 AM—
Sunday School
11:00 AM—
Worship Service

<i>All 2024 Budget Requests due to Rick</i> | 30 | 31
Happy Halloween!
 | | | | |

Wesley Grove United Methodist Church

Church Phone: 301-253-2894
Email: WGUMC@wesleygroveumc.org

As a Church Family that...

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

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

We're on the Web!
wesleygroveumc.org

United Methodist Laity Sunday

Sunday, October 15

**during our
Worship Service
at 11 am**

Contact Tammy at 301-253-0044
to volunteer to read Scripture,
lead a prayer, greet worshippers,
and/or sing a solo or duet.

To unsubscribe, please call the Wesley Grove UMC Office (301-253-2894) or email WGUMC@wesleygroveumc.org

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