

# Wesley Grove Messenger

November 2023

From the Desk of Pastor Karen...

"Moses said, "Lord, show me your glory, I pray."  
And the Lord replied...

"While my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock,  
and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by;  
then I will take away my hand, and you shall see my back;  
but my face shall not be seen."

--- Exodus 33:18, 21-23 ---

In this ancient story, God takes Moses, and He puts him in a little crack or cleft in a rock atop a mountain. God was going to pass by Moses, and God wanted to let Moses catch a glimpse of God. So, God passed by, but Moses wasn't allowed to look yet. He wasn't able to look until God had already passed.

And then... Moses was able to see the place... where God had *just been*.

Our English texts usually say that Moses could "see His back," but that's an inaccurate translation. Moses caught no sight of the "body" of God. He saw the place where God *just was*.

Which makes me wonder, how often do we take the time to see the place where God *just was*? In the busyness of life, I'm not anywhere near aware or awake enough to see God's Presence. I'm answering emails and texts, making visits, writing sermons, driving my daughter to college, doing the laundry...

But, when I look back over my day, with intention, I can see God's Presence so much easier.

There is an ancient practice called the *Examen* that can be used to see where God *just was*. The Examen is a prayer, usually prayed at the end of a day, where you intentionally recall your own failures, but also God's little gifts of grace through the day. The key insight is that by taking some time to reflect or look back on the complex and often hectic experience of our day, we see things differently. We may see things we have missed, realize the importance of small moments of light, and come to appreciate the gift that is each day.

We begin with trying to find gratitude within us for everything good that has happened. This helps shift often habitual negativity toward a more hopeful way of seeing. Then, we invite Jesus to watch our day replayed like a movie before us. Seeing it as He sees it, we come to know exactly how we have been cooperating with God or not, and concretely how we could decide and act better in the future.

Though there are many variations, [Ignationspirituality.com](http://Ignationspirituality.com) offers these five steps of the Examen:

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## Lectionary Readings

### November 5, 2023

#### *All Saints Sunday*

Joshua 3:7-17  
 Psalm 107:1-7, 33-37  
 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13  
 Matthew 23:1-12

### November 12, 2023

Joshua 24:1-3a, 14-25  
 Psalm 78:1-7  
 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18  
 Matthew 25:1-13

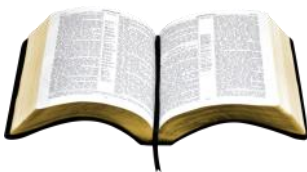
### November 19, 2023

Judges 4:1-7  
 Psalm 76 or 123  
 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11  
 Matthew 25:14-30

### November 26, 2023

#### *Christ the King Sunday*

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24  
 Psalm 100  
 Ephesians 1:15-23  
 Matthew 25:31-46



## November Birthdays

- |                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 2 David Wilson    | 17 Jed Snow        |
| 6 John Briggs     | 18 Ron Benson      |
| 11 Jay Swearingen | 23 Brian Hottinger |
| 12 Lois Kemp      | 28 Kelsey Kunkle   |
| 13 Becky Lewis    | Jane Shaub         |
| 14 Marcus Hull    |                    |

## September 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                        | \$1,250.01         |
| Organist / Pianist                              | \$0.00             |
| Worker's Compensation Insurance                 | \$0.00             |
| BWC Annual Conference for Lay Delegate          | \$0.00             |
| Payroll Taxes                                   | \$95.63            |
| Capital Improvement Costs                       | \$3,006.00         |
| Grass Cutting Costs                             | \$0.00             |
| Snow Plowing Costs                              | \$0.00             |
| Groundskeeper Costs                             | \$0.00             |
| Custodian's Salary                              | \$350.00           |
| Programs                                        | \$212.57           |
| 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                    | \$2,807.67         |
| Miscellaneous                                   | \$0.00             |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                           | <b>\$12,157.34</b> |

### Income

|                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Weekly Collections             | \$4,224.00        |
| Cell Tower Rental Fee - Sprint | \$2,232.36        |
| Use of Hall                    | \$0.00            |
| Miscellaneous                  | \$0.00            |
| <b>Total Income</b>            | <b>\$6,456.36</b> |

Remember to set your clocks back one hour before you go to bed this coming Saturday night, November 4. We want everyone to be on time for our worship service on Sunday morning!



## Fellowship News

*Becky Lewis, Chair*

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas everywhere you go... and that includes our Fellowship Hall, which will complete its transformation on Saturday morning, November 11, when dozens of local crafters fill the building with the sights and scents of The Holidays.

Get that shopping list ready and make your plan now to visit our Annual Holly Days Crafts Bazaar and Luncheon between the hours of 9 am – 3 pm: you can check names off your list, select a delicious lunch from an wide assortment of homemade soups and sandwiches, and take home something yummy from the bake sale. Speaking of which, we would welcome donations of homemade baked goods — cookies, brownies, cakes, pies, breads, and rolls. We would also greatly appreciate any jars of homemade jelly, jam, salsa, pickles, etc. Please drop off these items on Friday from 11 am to 5 pm, or on Saturday before 9 am.



Please contact Tammy Monarch (301-253-0044) or Becky Lewis (240-338-3211) if you can help with setup the previous day starting at 11 am, the event itself, or with cleanup immediately afterward.



As a “Thank You” for your support, you’re invited to lunch after the service on the next day, Sunday, November 12. Everything will be provided, and you’ll have the opportunity to browse remaining craft items and check out the remaining baked goods. If you just can’t make it either day that weekend, please know that items will remain on sale throughout the Holiday Season as long as they last.

We’ll wrap up the month with our Annual Community Tree Lighting Ceremony on Wednesday, November 29, at 7 pm. Please see Tammy if you would like to participate in the program and look for the sign-up sheet in the vestibule to contribute toward refreshments.

Please mark the following dates on your calendar for December, always the busiest month of the year:

- Friday, December 1: Annual Christmas Luncheon at Morgan’s American Grill in New Market, 1 pm.
- Sunday, December 17: Community Caroling and Dinner at the Monarchs’ Home, 4 pm.
- Sunday, December 31: New Year’s Watch Night Service, 11 am; Potluck Lunch to follow.



## Education News

*Tammy Monarch, Chair*

You are all welcome to join us any Sunday at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall for Sunday School. We usually have a very interesting, meaningful, and sometimes even lively discussion with varying ideas and opinions from folks 10 to 75 years of age. We are currently studying the Book of Psalms — its history, its story, and its meaning in our lives today. Come join us!



## Worship News

*Cathy Burke, Chair*

The Worship Committee invites everyone to the sanctuary on the morning of Saturday, November 25, to help decorate it with greens and ornaments for the Advent and Christmas Seasons. We will begin at 9 am, and we usually finish by lunchtime. Please join us if you can as the more volunteers we have, the quicker we all work together to complete the task of beautifying God’s House for Christmas.



## Holiday Happenings

### Are Just Around the Corner...

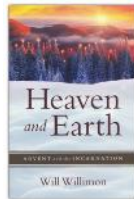


### Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service

This year, on Wednesday, November 22, our Community Ecumenical Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service will be held at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church on Route 108 in Laytonsville. Make plans to join us at 7 pm on the eve of our national holiday of giving thanks to the Great One, who is Our Lord and Savior. Let's gather together to celebrate and praise the Lord for all of the blessings that He has given us in the past year. After the service, we are invited to share some fellowship time and light refreshments in the church basement.

### Advent Book Study

During the four weeks of Advent, our South Damascus Charge will read and discuss *Heaven and Earth*, written by Will Willimon, a retired United Methodist bishop and professor at Duke Divinity School.



If you would like to participate, you will have two choices for times and methods of meeting. You can either join us in-person at 9:30 am on Sundays in the Fellowship Hall **or** in-person at Mt. Tabor UMC or virtually via Zoom at 7 pm on Thursday, November 30. This group will then decide if it will continue on Wednesday or Thursday nights throughout December. If you have not already told Tammy that you plan to participate, please do so by Sunday, November 12, so that she can order the correct number of books, and also let her know which way you will participate.



### Poinsettias

Once again this year, we'll be decorating the Sanctuary with brilliant red and white poinsettias in memory and in honor of loved ones beginning on Sunday, December 17 and lasting throughout the Christmas Season. Order forms will be available in the vestibule later this month and in the December newsletter. The cost is \$10 per plant. Contact Tammy with any questions.

### Annual Tree Lighting



Our Annual Community Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held on Wednesday, November 29 at 7 pm. As in past years, this ceremony will take place outside on the driveway in front of our Fellowship Hall. We would love to have several Scripture readers and musical soloists or duets as well as cookie bakers and refreshment servers. Please let Tammy know if you are willing to serve in any of these roles.



### Christmas Eve Worship Services

For those of you who like to plan ahead, please mark your calendars now with the times of our two Christmas Eve Worship Services on Sunday, December 24: 11:00 am and 9:00 pm. You are also welcome to attend one of our two sister churches' earlier services that day. Salem UMC will hold its service at 9:30 am and Mt. Tabor UMC at 6:00 pm.





## Christmas Luncheon

Mark your calendars now for our Wesley Grove Church Family Christmas Luncheon on Friday, December 1 at Morgan's American Grill on Route 144 in New Market. We'll gather there in the back party room at noon. The cost is \$25 per person, and this includes a choice of several sandwiches or salads, one side, a non-alcoholic beverage, dessert, tax, and tip. Please RSVP by signing up on the list in the vestibule and giving your cash or check made payable to Wesley Grove UMC to Tammy by Sunday, November 26.



## Missions News

*Judy Hughes, Chair*

The Missions Committee has decided to once again support Faith Connections with its Christmas Giving Project this year. We have asked for three small families, and we should have their names, ages, and wish lists by mid-November. We will also possibly be working with Toys for Tots and conducting a winter clothing drive for coats, hats, and gloves during the month of December.

We would like to thank all of you who donated apple and pumpkin flavored foods and drinks during the month of October. These items will help some in our community have a more "flavorful" Holiday Season!



For the month of November, we will collect sweet potato and cranberry flavored foods and drinks. Please bring these items to the display in the vestibule.

— continued from page 1 —

- Ask God for light: try to see the day through God's eyes, not merely my own; see what stands out. Some people light a candle to remind them of God's light.
- Give thanks: get in touch with gratitude for the day you have just lived is a gift from God. This can be a struggle again as negativity can dominate, but there are always some lights to focus on.
- Review the day chronologically: look back on the day just completed, being guided by the Holy Spirit. Often you will be surprised about all the things you did, people you met, and you may have forgotten much.
- Face your mistakes or shortcomings: face up to what is wrong — accept mistakes; work out what you could do better to improve.
- Look forward to the next day: ask God to help you to live a better day, commit yourself to learn and improve.

Sometimes, I forget to pray it. Sometimes, I fall asleep in the middle of it. But, never have I prayed the Examen and not seen God's Hand, God's Presence, or the *place where God just was* in my day. Here's the thing, though: if I don't take the time to look, I almost always miss it.

My prayer for you is that you will find that little crack in a rock, sit in it, and pray the Examen with your eyes wide open and see that place in your life where God *just was*.



In God's peace,  
Pastor Karen

## Administrative Council Meeting

Monday, September 12, 2023

Meeting opened by Bob at 7:00 pm.

### In Attendance:

Steven Arndt, Louise Burdette, Bob Burke, Cathy Burke, Linda Chatterton, Pastor Karen Davis, Judy Hughes, Jim Kemp, Becky Lewis, Rick Monarch, Tammy Monarch, Carol Stone, and Pastor Nick Works.

### Devotions:

Becky Lewis: *The Morning After*, reflection on 9/11.

### Prayer Requests:

- Continued healing for Greg Lynagh and Jane Shaub.
- Remember all people who were impacted by the events of 9/11.
- Royce Adams (father of Carol's neighbor) is in the hospital.

### Good News:

The A/C is once again working in the church.

### Old Business:

None.

### New Business:

None.

### Minutes from May Meeting:

Approved and accepted by all.

### Committee Reports:

#### Communications

- Since July 18, 21 greeting cards have been sent.
- We continue to post church announcements on Facebook and on our church website.
- We are working on sprucing up our website with updated photos.

#### Education

- Sunday School will resume on September 24 with a study of the Book of Psalms.
- A charge-wide book study is being planned for Advent.

#### Fellowship

- The yard sale is this weekend; about 25 tables have been rented. We would love to have donations of baked goods to sell. Setup is Friday at 1-4 pm.
- A gathering of dinner and trivia at Doc Waters Cidery is being planned for early October.

#### Finance

- Budget request worksheets for 2024 have been distributed to all committee chairs.
- All current bills have been paid.

#### Lay Leadership

We have filled all church leadership positions for 2024.

### Missions

We need to decide if we want to continue helping with the Lord's Table Soup Kitchen as it is requesting that we provide more volunteers than in past years. The decision will be made by those who usually volunteer.

### SPRC

- We are recommending that both pastors receive a 3% raise in 2024. A vote was taken, and all were in favor.
- We will be working on pastor evaluations over the next two months. If anyone has any input, please see a member of this committee by mid-November.

### Trustees

- Lights have been repaired on the church signs.
- A/C and heating work have been completed at the church.
- Additional hall gutters will be installed this Friday.
- Exterior church and hall railings will be repainted soon.

### Worship

- Service will be held outside this coming Sunday, September 17. Next Sunday, September 24, our service will return to 11 am, and Eugenia will resume playing for us.
- Laity Sunday is planned for October 15. Let Tammy know if you can help.

### Pastor's Reports:

#### Pastor Karen

- I have called, texted, emailed, and/or visited 80 persons since our last meeting in May.
- All three churches will participate in the worship service and picnic this coming Sunday at WG.
- I attended a conference on Biblical storytelling in August and learned some new techniques to add to my preaching repertoire.
- I attended Carla Works' installation service as the new Dean of Wesley Theological Seminary, and it was really meaningful and inspiring.

#### Pastor Nick

- I have met with 11 families and/or individuals in our three churches.
- Carla and I are very grateful that so many from WG attended Carla's installation service last week.
- Wesley Seminary is possibly planning a mission trip to Eastern Slovakia and Ukraine next summer. For more details, see me.

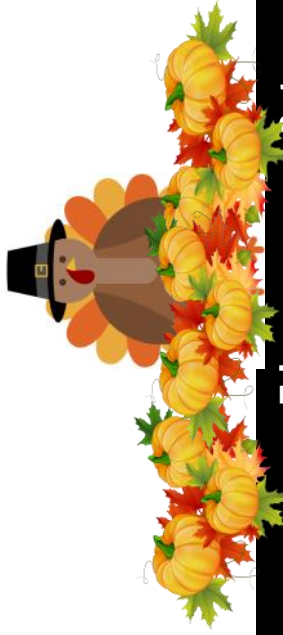
### Next Meeting:

Monday, November 13, at 7 pm.  
Devotions will be led by Pastor Nick.

### Closure:

Bob adjourned this meeting at 8:13 pm.

# November 2023



| Sun                                                                                                                                                        | Mon                                                           | Tue                                                          | Wed                                                                                                                              | Thu                                                                              | Fri                                                                                                 | Sat                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>5 <b>All Saints Day</b><br/>9:30 AM—<br/>Sunday School<br/>11:00 AM—<br/>Worship Service<br/>with Communion<br/><i>Daylight Savings Time Begins</i></p> | <p>6<br/>7:00 PM—<br/>Finance Committee Meeting</p>           | <p>7<br/>6:45 PM—<br/>Lions Club Dinner<br/>and Meeting</p>  | <p>1<br/>3:00 PM—<br/>Book Club @<br/>Judy's Home</p>                                                                            | <p>2<br/>6:00 PM—<br/>Charge SPRC<br/>Meeting @ WG</p>                           | <p>3<br/>11:00 AM—<br/>Set-Up for Craft<br/>Bazaar</p>                                              | <p>4<br/>9 AM — 3 PM<br/>Holly Days Craft<br/>Bazaar and Lunch-<br/>eon</p>    |
| <p>12<br/>9:30 AM—<br/>Sunday School<br/>11:00 AM—<br/>Worship Service<br/>12:30 PM—<br/>Fellowship Lunch</p>                                              | <p>13<br/>7:00 PM—<br/>Administrative<br/>Council Meeting</p> | <p>14</p>                                                    | <p>15<br/>12:00 PM—<br/>Lunch Out @<br/>J&amp;P in Damascus</p>                                                                  | <p>16</p>                                                                        | <p>17</p>                                                                                           | <p>18<br/><br/><i>December Newsletter<br/>Deadline</i></p>                     |
| <p>19<br/>9:30 AM—<br/>Sunday School<br/>11:00 AM—<br/>Worship Service</p>                                                                                 | <p>20</p>                                                     | <p>21<br/>6:45 PM—<br/>Lions Club Dinner<br/>and Meeting</p> | <p>22<br/>7:00 PM—<br/>Thanksgiving Eve<br/>Worship Service @<br/>St. Bartholomew's<br/>Episcopal Church<br/>in Laytonsville</p> | <p>23<br/><br/><b>Happy<br/>Thanksgiving!</b></p>                                | <p>24</p>                                                                                           | <p>25<br/>9:00 AM—<br/>Decorate Sanctuary<br/>for Advent and<br/>Christmas</p> |
| <p>26 <b>Christ the<br/>King Sunday</b><br/>9:30 AM—<br/>Sunday School<br/>11:00 AM—<br/>Worship Service</p>                                               | <p>27</p>                                                     | <p>28</p>                                                    | <p>29<br/>7:00 PM—<br/>Outdoor Communi-<br/>ty Tree Lighting<br/>Ceremony</p>                                                    | <p>30<br/>7:00 PM—<br/>Week 1 of Advent<br/>Book Study @ MT<br/>and via Zoom</p> | <p>1<br/>1:00 PM—<br/>Christmas Lunch-<br/>eon at Morgan's<br/>American Grill in<br/>New Market</p> | <p>2</p>                                                                       |

 **Wesley Grove  
United Methodist Church**  
Church Phone: 301-253-2894  
Email: [wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org](mailto:wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org)

As a congregation that covenants to walk together in Christ's love, believes that all persons are created equal before God, and affirms the inclusive love of Jesus Christ, we welcome to our work and worship all regardless of race, gender, age, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or economic circumstance.

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

**Count your blessings  
and  
thank Our Lord**



**for He is good  
Amen!**

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