

Wesley Grove Messenger

January, 2024



From the Pastor's Desk...

Happy New Year! Happy 2024!

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

This story has shown up in my Facebook feed several times. It was a particularly good one, so I thought... why not share it here for you all to enjoy too? There are many different versions of this story; I received this one from St. Alban's Episcopal Church.



An elderly woman had two large pots. Each hung on the ends of a pole which she carried across the top of her back.

One of the pots had a crack in it while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walk from the stream to her house, the cracked pot always arrived only half full.

For a full two years, this went on daily, with the woman bringing home only one and a half pots of water. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor, cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfection, and felt miserable that it could only do half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be bitter failure, it spoke to the woman one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house." The old woman smiled and asked, "Did you notice the flowers on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side?"

"That's because I have always known about your flaw, so I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them."

"For two years, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the kitchen table. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."

Moral of the story: Each of us has our own unique flaw(s). But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in them.

So, to all of my crackpot friends... Have a Happy New Year! And remember to slow down and smell the flowers on your side of the path!

Happy New Year, and may God bless you all with faith, hope, and confidence in 2024!

Pastor Karen

Lectionary Readings



January 7, 2024

Epiphany Sunday

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

Pastor Nick, preaching

Isaiah 60:1-6 or Genesis 1:1-5
 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14 or Psalm 29
 Ephesians 3:1-12 or Acts 19:1-7
 Matthew 2:1-12 or Mark 1:4-11

January 14, 2024

Pastor Karen, preaching

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

John 1:43-51



January 21, 2024

Pastor Nick, preaching

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

Psalm 62:5-12

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Mark 1:14-20



January 28, 2024

Pastor Karen, preaching

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Psalm 111

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Mark 1:21-28



January Birthdays

- 11 Betty Duvall
- Nick Works
- 15 Delaney Hagy
- 16 Brian Lewis
- 20 Lewis Burdette
- 30 Joe Mallon



November 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	\$1,299.03
Organist / Pianist	\$600.00
Worker's Compensation Insurance	\$321.00
BWC - Annual Conference - for Lay Delegate	\$0.00
Payroll Taxes	\$99.38
Capital Improvement Costs	\$1,500.00
Grass Cutting Costs	\$945.00
Snow Plowing Costs	\$0.00
Groundskeeper Costs	\$322.00
Custodian's Salary	\$420.00
Programs	\$97.29
Property Insurance	\$0.00
Administrative Expenses	\$199.78
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	\$1,944.03
Miscellaneous	\$0.00
Total Expenses	\$12,046.75

Income

Weekly Collections	\$5,695.00
Cell Tower Rental Fee - Sprint	\$2,232.36
Rental Property Income to church	\$2,000.00
Use of Hall	\$0.00
Lion's Club Check	\$0.00
Total Income	\$9,927.36



Happy New Year





Missions News

Linda Chatterton, Chair

First, I want to recognize our outgoing chairperson, Judy Hughes, who has led and participated in this committee for many years. We all greatly appreciate her efforts in leading our church in reaching out and helping others in need.

December was truly miraculous for our small congregation! I'm talking about the incredible generosity from everyone. We collected Toys for Tots, and along with donations from the families in the Damascus Sports Association, I had a very full car to deliver to the U.S. Marines.

For many years, this committee has been supporting local needy families at Christmas in partnership with Faith Connections. Over the past couple of years, I have had the privilege of joining Judy to deliver these gifts and grocery gift cards. There are always lots of calls back and forth trying to arrange convenient times and drop-off locations, but Christmas 2023 was very different.

We learned after we had taken care of our original three families that there were more than 90 families still on the waiting list for church donors. So, on the 10th of December, some of us talked after that day's worship service and decided we should support some additional families this Christmas Season, and we took on another four. That evening, I sent out an email appeal to all of you, and the response was overwhelming. We were easily able to take care of those additional children and provide grocery gift cards to their families as well!

The delivery of the gifts was a unique experience. Everyone was easily available during the morning. We had two Hispanic, one Chinese, two African American, and two white families. One consisted of a single mother who is blind, who was taking care of

her little girl and her uncle who is in hospice in her apartment. She called to thank me again afterwards. One of the Hispanic families wouldn't answer the door, so I called, and between my feeble Spanish and her limited English, I gathered that she wanted me to wait for her. A few minutes later, a man came out the front door, hiding his face and saying, "I ashamed..." with tears. He had been too embarrassed to come and answer the door. We tried to talk, and then his brother, via phone, translated for us. I told him not to feel bad, that my job was to help the church do good things and he was part of that, so please not to deny us that privilege. He got it, smiled, and we shook hands.

Another family included a lady who had lived in Damascus, but had recently moved to Olney, having bought a little townhouse after years of saving. Unfortunately, her husband died two months after they moved in. She and her two little girls were buried in grief. She was so sad when I arrived, but smiled when she saw the gifts and grocery card. She followed me out to my car, asked if she could hug me, and said she finally felt that Christmas was coming to her sad little family. Another woman sent me the following text:

iMessage
Tuesday 11:22 AM

I especially want to thank you for sending the gift to our house in such cold weather. I was tempted to invite you for a hot cup of tea just now. It's a pity that I can't speak English. The children must be very happy to see so many presents. Thanks again from the bottom of my heart. Wishing you a merry Christmas!



All in all, it was a most uplifting and fulfilling experience for me, and I wanted to share it with all of you who made it possible. From the bottom of my heart, thank you and thank God, who saw that our gifts went to all the right people!

Education News

Tammy Monarch, Chair



After taking a two-week break during the Christmas Holidays, we plan to resume our Sunday School class on Sunday, January 7. On this day, Pastor Nick will lead us in a lesson on Epiphany and the Baptism of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Throughout the month of January, we will continue with weekly lessons focusing on various aspects of our Christian life. Feel free to join us any Sunday in the Fellowship Hall at 9:30 am.

Please note that there will be no Sunday School classes during the month of February. We will resume our class on Sunday, March 3 with our Lenten Season book study.



Fellowship News

Becky Lewis, Chair

Planning for our 2024 fellowship activities will take place at this committee's semi-annual meeting on Wednesday, January 3, at 5 pm, on Zoom. If you have a suggestion or new idea for an event or activity to be added to our annual schedule, please let any member of this committee know before the meeting.



Good-bye to Christmas and Hello to Winter!

On the morning of Saturday, January 13, beginning at 9 am, we will take down and put away all of the beautiful Christmas decorations in our Sanctuary and vestibule. We plan to replace them with our lovely blue and white winter decorations. Please make plans to help us with this annual project. The more folks we have helping, the quicker this job will get done. Thanks in advance!



How many words can you make from the letters in

RESOLUTIONS?

Remember they must be English words. Abbreviations, acronyms, and slang words are not permitted.







1. rest	11.
2. nest	12.
3. less	13.
4. lesson	14.
5. rot	15.
6. note	16.
7. louse	17.
8. Louise	18.
9.	19.
10.	20.

Here are a few to get you started...

Good luck, and have fun! Without too much thought or time, you should be able to make 30-40. :)



January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 <i>Happy New Year!</i>	2	3 5:00 PM— Fellowship Com- mittee Meeting via Zoom	4 7:00 PM— Communications Committee Meet- ing via Zoom	5	6
7 <i>Epiphany Sunday</i> <i>Baptism of the Lord</i> <i>Sunday</i> 9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service with Communion	8 7:00 PM— Finance Committee Meeting	9 7:00 PM— Worship Commit- tee Meeting Via Zoom 	10 3:00 PM— Book Club Meeting at Tammy's House	11 	12	13 9:00 AM— Take Down Christ- mas Decorations and Put Up Winter Ones
14 9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	15 7:00 PM— Administrative Council Meeting	16 6:45 PM— Lions Club Dinner and Meeting	17 12:00 PM— Lunch Out @ Twin Arch Tavern in Mt. Airy	18 <i>February Newsletter Deadline</i>	19	20
21 9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	22 7:00 PM— Board of Trustees Meeting	23	24 	25	26	27
28 9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	29 	30	31			

 **Wesley Grove
United Methodist Church**
Church Phone: 301-253-2894
Email: 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



We Wish All of You A Very Happy and Heathy 2024!

As you're making your
New Year's Resolutions,
how about resolving to attend church
a little more in this coming year?

You can do this in one of two ways —
either in-person or via Zoom —
every Sunday morning at 11 am.

We'd love to have you,
and there's always a pew open
for you and your family!

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

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