

# Wesley Grove Messenger

February 2024



From the Pastor's Desk...

"Dust you are and to dust you shall return."

--- Genesis 3:19 ---



Last spring on March 22 at 7:01 pm, just as Carla and I sat down in the fellowship hall at Mt. Tabor to discuss our Lenten study, we received an unexpected phone call. It was Jonathan's phone number, but a strange voice greeted us: "Mr. Works, your son has been involved in a serious motorcycle crash. You need to go to the Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore. Your son is being airlifted there soon."

Just a few weeks earlier at the Christian celebration of Ash Wednesday, one of the pastors at the ecumenical service for the South Damascus Charge alongside Salem in Brookeville and St. Paul in Laytonville smeared ashes on our heads with this reminder, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return." On that Ash Wednesday, we had no idea what our Lenten journey would be like and just how close we would come to returning our only son to dust. Ash Wednesday is a day for us to ponder the reality that we are dust and mortal. But what happens when we are confronted by the reality that it often isn't our mortality that we must confront, but rather the mortality of a dearly beloved one?

Neither Carla nor I were ready to contemplate Jonathan's mortality. But that is exactly the point of the Easter Season, isn't it? We confess that God sent His Only Son into our world as an incarnated person. Jesus faced life and hardships, and ultimately, He was struck down. In the prime of His life as a young man, Jesus would be betrayed by His friends, condemned by His own people, and killed by an unjust government. God did not spare even His own son.

This year, on Valentine's Day, February 14, I will join Pastor Karen, Pastor Emily, Pastor Will, and many of you at Salem UMC in Brookeville. 2023's palm branches will be burned and charred. I will smear ashes on all of our foreheads. I will say to everyone who comes through my line, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return."

But the Lenten Season won't be the same as last year. Jonathan still bears the marks of his accident, and Carla and I still bear those marks in our memories. Lent is that time when we are reminded that God is powerful enough to bring all of us through the time of dust and mourning. I will think of the people in line for those ashes in just the same way that so many of you supported us with your prayers.

Lent is a time when we are reminded that we are on a journey, but not separate, individual ones. Instead, this journey is one that we are to celebrate together... our common life. No matter what event we face that reminds us that we are but dust, God has gifted us with each other and with His Son, Jesus, who overcame death for our sake, so that we might know that dust and death will not win the day. We may be dust, but thanks be to God, our hopes don't end in dust and ashes. Amen!

In Christian love,

Pastor Nick



## Lectionary Readings



### February 4, 2024

Isaiah 40:21-31  
 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c  
 1 Corinthians 9:16-23  
 Mark 1:29-39

### February 11, 2024 *Transfiguration Sunday*

2 Kings 2:1-12  
 Psalm 50:1-6  
 2 Corinthians 4:3-6  
 Mark 9:2-9

### February 18, 2024 *First Sunday in Lent*

Genesis 9:8-17  
 Psalm 25:1-10  
 1 Peter 3:18-22  
 Mark 1:9-15

### February 25, 2024 *Second Sunday in Lent*

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16  
 Psalm 22:23-31  
 Romans 4:13-25  
 Mark 8:31-38



## February Birthdays

- 1 Barbara Kunkle  
Eleanor Park
- 9 Namela Miller
- 12 YouJung Jung
- 13 Daniel Hottinger
- 14 Joel Ketchum  
Abby Horner
- 15 Susan Boyko
- 22 Shelby Kepner
- 23 Stephen Lewis
- 25 Jonathan Works



## December 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                        | \$1,290.86         |
| Organist / Pianist                              | \$1,000.00         |
| Worker's Compensation Insurance                 | \$0.00             |
| BWC Annual Conference for Lay Delegate          | \$0.00             |
| Payroll Taxes                                   | \$98.75            |
| Capital Improvement Costs                       | \$3,350.89         |
| Grass Cutting Costs                             | \$0.00             |
| Snow Plowing Costs                              | \$0.00             |
| Groundskeeper Costs                             | \$0.00             |
| Custodian's Salary                              | \$350.00           |
| Programs  | \$539.70           |
| Property Insurance                              | \$2,219.50         |
| Administrative Expenses                         | \$170.66           |
| 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                    | \$2,213.12         |
| Miscellaneous                                   | \$0.00             |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>                           | <b>\$15,532.72</b> |

### Income

|                                  |                    |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Weekly Collections               | \$9,450.00         |
| Cell Tower Rental Fee - Sprint   | \$2,232.36         |
| Rental Property Income to Church | \$2,000.00         |
| Use of Hall Fees                 | \$0.00             |
| Lion's Club Dinners              | \$0.00             |
| <b>Total Income</b>              | <b>\$13,682.36</b> |





## Fellowship News

*Becky Lewis, Chair*

The Committee met in January to plan events for the first half of the year and also set dates for the remainder of 2024. We will meet again in June to set dates for the summer and early fall. We started things off with Soup Sunday and recognition of Joe Mallon's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on Jan. 28, and we'll finish out the year on Dec. 15, with our annual Caroling & Dinner.

Other events include:

- **Sunday, February 25:** Coffee & Conversation, hosts Namela & Frank Miller, 12 pm.
- **Saturday, March 16:** Potluck Dinner and Games Night at the Monarchs with St. Patrick's Day theme, 6 pm.
- **Sunday, March 17:** Coffee & Conversation, hosts Bob & Cathy Burke, 12 pm.
- **Sunday, March 31:** Sunrise Breakfast, following 6:45 am outdoor service, hosts Becky & Brian Lewis.
- **Sunday, April 21:** Spring "Think Green" Potluck Luncheon, following service.
- **Friday, May 10:** Spring Community Yard Sale Setup, 1-5 pm.
- **Saturday, May 11:** Spring Community Yard Sale, 9 am – 2 pm.
- **Sunday, May 12:** Mother's Day Breakfast, 9:30 am.
- **Sunday, June 2:** Coffee & Conversation, host needed, 12 pm.
- **Wednesday, June 5:** Summer Meeting via Zoom, 5:30 pm.
- **Sunday, June 16:** Father's Day Breakfast, 9:30 am.
- **Friday, September 20:** Fall Community Yard Sale Setup, 1-5 pm.
- **Saturday, September 21:** Fall Community Yard Sale, 9 am – 2 pm.
- **Sunday, September 22:** South Damascus Charge Picnic, following outdoor service.
- **Saturday, November 16:** Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon, 9 am – 3 pm.
- **Wednesday, December 4:** Community Christmas Tree Lighting, 7 pm.
- **Sunday, December 15:** Caroling and Holiday Dinner, 4 pm.



Our multi-age Sunday School class is currently on hiatus for the first two weeks of February. We plan to resume meeting at 9:30 am on Feb. 18, with our Lenten book study of Tom Berlin's book, *The Third Day*. We'll read and discuss it during the six weeks of Lent leading right up to Easter.

Or if you would like to participate in this book study, but would prefer a weeknight session, we've got you covered! This same book study will also be shared on Thursday evenings at 7 pm at Mt. Tabor UMC. Contact Pastor Karen or Pastor Nick if you plan to join this weeknight group.



## Missions News

*Linda Chatterton, Chair*

A big thanks to Judy Hughes, who led this committee before I began this year!

Damascus Help is always in need, especially during the winter months when people have higher utilities and need more assistance. Please think of Help when you are in the grocery store. I look for things on sale. For example, I recently found Pepperidge Farm stuffing mix for \$0.39 a bag! Bring all donations to the vestibule.

We have a person in our WG Family who has been suffering from Long Covid for the past 18 months. Unable to work, he has lost his job, house, and car. Although he doesn't attend Sunday services, he considers WG his home church. He has relatives buried in our cemetery and has donated financially to the church over the last 5-6 years. This committee has sent him \$300 for immediate assistance, and we are collecting additional funds in the jar on the table in the vestibule. If you'd like to donate, please do so by mid-February.

There is also a basket in the vestibule for collecting donations of small bottles of shampoo, conditioner, lotion, etc. that we all find in hotel rooms while traveling. Pick up these bottles and bring them to church when you can. All donations will be given to local shelters. This is a wonderful way to help others with no out-of-pocket expenses for us!



## Administrative Council Meeting

Monday, January 15, 2024

### In Attendance:

Steven Arndt, Bob Burke, Cathy Burke, Linda Chatterton, Becky Lewis, Rick Monarch, Tammy Monarch, and Pastor Nick Works

### Opening:

Zoom meeting was opened by Bob at 7 pm.

### Devotions:

Tammy read to us from John 16:1-6 about planning and making preparations for Jesus. She concluded with a prayer for the new year.

### Prayer Requests:

- Fred Reyes & Kris Kepner, on the passing of Fred's sister, Jeanine, just four months after his mother's passing.
- Roxanne & John Riley, the Lewis' neighbors, on the death of their "pup" after being hit by a car.
- Donnie Hobbs, on the death of his wife, Ruth Ellen, and his brother, Tommy Hobbs.
- Jeff Monarch, hospitalized and suffering with kidney failure and leukemia.

### Good News:

- Christmas Season was successful with many well-attended events.
- Both Christmas Eve worship services had 49 people in attendance, both pastors in the pulpit, and live music — what a treat!
- Folks were extremely generous with the six families that we sponsored during the Holiday Season.

### Old Business:

None.

### New Business:

None.

### Minutes:

The minutes from our Nov. 13 meeting, as printed in the December newsletter, were approved by all members.

### Committee Reports:

#### Communications

- 23 cards have been sent since our last meeting.
- Website and Facebook posts are current and ongoing.
- Website Photo Gallery has been cleaned up and looks great.

#### Education

- Sunday School is going very well with an average of weekly attendance of 13.
- SS calendar was discussed. We will have a 2-week break on February 4 and 11 and then resume with our Lenten study on Sunday, February 18.
- After Easter, Pastor Nick will lead a 10-week study on history of The Church.

#### Fellowship

- Soup Sunday will be held on Sunday, January 28.
- We will also celebrate Joe Mallon's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on this day with cake and ice cream.
- A list of future events will be published in the February newsletter.

#### Finance

- There was some discussion about the cost of the

church's roof replacement. After our Trustees decide which estimate to accept, Bob will present the cost to our Finance Committee for funding, and then this Council will vote to approve the spending.

- Linda mentioned that she found an error in her spreadsheets that required her to revise and resend nine of our donors' annual giving statements.

#### Lay Leadership

- The 2024 roster was completed in October, and all positions are filled for this year.
- No concerns have been voiced to our Lay Leader in recent months.

#### Missions

- The congregation's generosity was overwhelming in December when we provided a wonderful Christmas for six families.
- The Committee is considering assisting a long-time church supporter with financial aid as he has been suffering from very serious long-term Covid effects, including losing his job and his home.

#### Trustees

- The church needs a new roof as there are several leaks throughout the sanctuary. We have received three roofing company estimates. We will discuss these at a special Trustees meeting next Thursday, January 25.
- The fire protection upgrade for the hall has been completed, and the fire inspector has an appointment on January 19 to inspect the work before providing our permit.
- The Sunday School room's overhead lighting has been upgraded to all LED bulbs.

#### Worship

- Steven and Frank Miller are being trained by Josh to run the soundboard. This will give us five volunteers for this service.
- Pastors Karen and Nick will continue to lead us every other Sunday.
- The location and time of our Ash Wednesday worship service is still TBD.
- We are seeking special music for the various services during Holy Week. Please let Cathy know if you are interested in volunteering.
- The location of the Maundy Thursday service is still TBD. Check your newsletters.
- The Good Friday service will be held at WG.
- Our outdoor Easter Sunrise Service will begin at 6:45 am with breakfast following in the hall.
- Christian Education Sunday is tentatively planned for Sunday, June 2.

#### SPRC

- Pastor evaluations and pastoral goals for 2024 were completed and submitted in December.
- The church's piano was tuned professionally in November.

#### Pastor's Report:

Pastor Nick stated that things are all going well from his perspective. He is conscientiously working on his annual goal of contacting all church members in our directory and then following up with them. He is very much looking forward to leading this spring's Church history class.

#### Closure:

- Rick volunteered to lead the devotions at our next meeting, which will be held on Monday, March 11, at 7 pm.
- Bob adjourned the meeting at 8:07 pm.



# February 2024

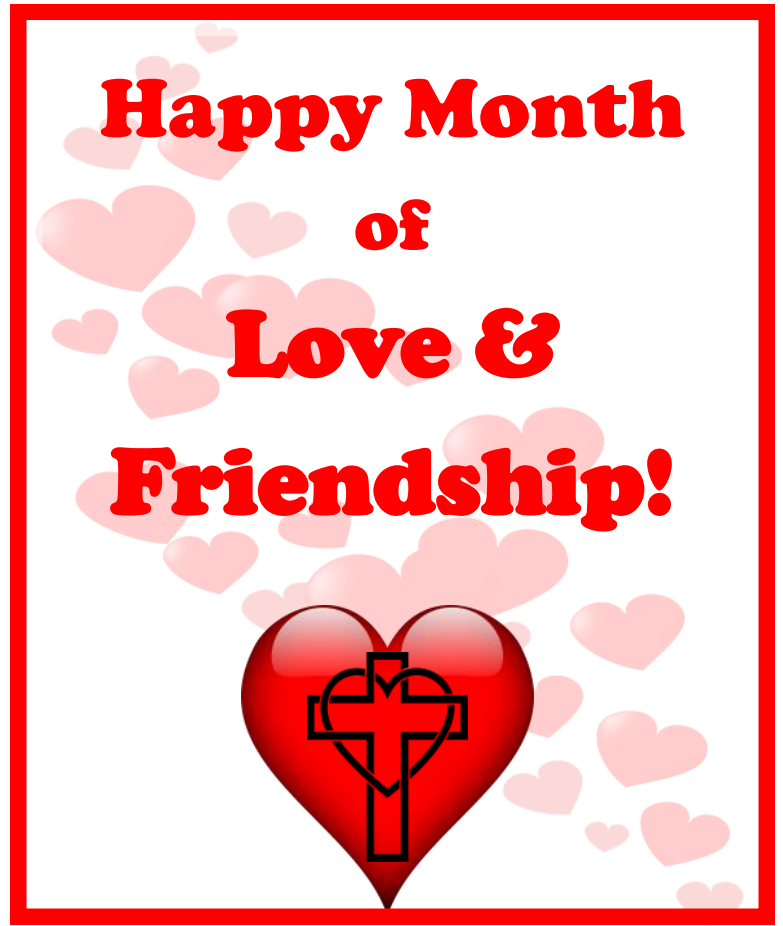


| Sun  | Mon  | Tue  | Wed   | Thu   | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|--|---|---|-----|-----|
|  |  |  |   | 1   | 2   | 3   |
| 4<br>No Sunday School<br>11:00 AM—<br>Worship Service with<br>Communion  | 5  | 6<br>6:45 PM—<br>Lions Club Dinner<br>and Meeting  | 7   | 8   | 9   | 10  |
| 11<br>No Sunday School<br>11:00 AM—<br>Worship Service   | 12   | 13   | 14<br>7:00 PM—<br>Ecumenical Ash<br>Wednesday Service<br>@ Salem UMC @<br>12 High St. in<br>Brookeville | 15<br>7:00 PM—<br>Lenten Book<br>Study, ch. 1, @ Mt.<br>Tabor UMC | 16  | 17  |
| 18<br>9:30 AM—<br>Sunday School, Len-<br>ten Book Study, ch. 1<br>11:00 AM—<br>Worship Service                                 | 19<br><i>March<br/>Newsletter<br/>Deadline</i> | 20<br>6:45 PM—<br>Lions Club Dinner<br>and Meeting | 21<br>12:00 PM—<br>Lunch Out @<br>Hornet's Nest in<br>Damascus  | 22<br>7:00 PM—<br>Lenten Book<br>Study, ch. 2, @ Mt.<br>Tabor UMC | 23  | 24  |
| 25<br>9:30 AM—<br>Sunday School, Len-<br>ten Book Study, ch. 2<br>11:00 AM—<br>Worship Service<br>12:00 PM—<br>Fellowship Hour | 26   | 27   | 28  | 29<br>7:00 PM—<br>Lenten Book<br>Study, ch. 3, @ Mt.<br>Tabor UMC |     |     |

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United Methodist Church**  
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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)



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