

Wesley Grove **Messenger**

March 2024

From the Pastor's Desk...

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

Goodbyes can be difficult. Whether saying farewell to a loved one who has died or letting go of your child's fingers at the bus stop, goodbyes can rip tender pieces of the soul and leave us with inward grief not visible to others. Any loss, big or small, can feel overwhelming as it presses painfully against our happiness. But goodbyes are inevitable, loss unavoidable, and sadness inescapable.



"The word *goodbye* — originally 'God-be-with-ye' or 'Go-with-God' — was a recognition that God was a significant part of the going," writes Joyce Rupp in *Praying Our Goodbyes*. "When you dreaded or feared the journey, there was strength in remembering that the One who gave and cherished life would be there to protect and to console. Goodbye was a blessing of love, proclaiming the belief that if God went with you, you would never be alone; that comfort, strength, and all the other blessings of a loving presence would accompany you." (pp. 17-18)

If we allow our losses to bruise and shatter us, we can become paralyzed, unable to move forward, locked in a tomb of our own making. Our spiritual and physical health demand that we learn the art of "letting go," a practice that teaches us to be patient with ourselves as we acknowledge painful emotions and allow God to heal us as we seek our new beginnings.

During the Season of Easter, we proclaim the resurrection of Jesus, the One who was raised from a dark and empty place, changed and transformed into fullness of life by our Loving God. Spring is also a season of watching that which was once dead return to life. Both the secular and sacred remind us that with every goodbye, there is also a hello. And with every hello, there is also a goodbye. Perhaps it is time for us to let go of some of the burdens that weigh heavily upon us: grief, loss, betrayal, trying to be the best, brightest, and most beautiful. But we must first acknowledge the deep internal ache within each of us and then trust that God will lead us through our sadness and into resurrection.

"When we learn to say goodbye, we truly learn how to say to ourselves and to others: "God be with you. I entrust you to God. The God of strength, courage, comfort, hope, and love is with you. The God who promises to wipe away all tears will hold you close and fill your emptiness. Let go and be free to move on. Do not keep yourself from another step in your homeward journey." (Rupp, p. 30)

Moving forward requires that we let go of what binds us to the past; to surrender that which has power over our aching hearts and give God those losses which are controlling our lives. The Season of Resurrection awaits us all if we just remain strong and say goodbye to that which keeps us from moving toward our new "hellos."

In resurrection hope,
Pastor Karen

Lectionary Readings



March 3, 2024

Third Sunday of Lent

Exodus 20:1-17

Psalm 19

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

John 2:13-22

March 10, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Numbers 21:4-9

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

Ephesians 2:1-10

John 3:14-21

March 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jeremiah 31:31-34

Psalm 51:1-12

Hebrews 5:5-10

John 12:20-33

March 24, 2024

Palm & Passion Sunday

Isaiah 50:4-9

Psalm 31:9-16 or 118:1-2, 19-29

Philemon 2:5-11

Mark 11:1-11 or 14:1—15:47



March 31, 2024

Easter Sunday

Acts 10:34-43

Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

John 20:1-18 or Mark 16:1-8



The Lenten Season
is upon us.

*What have you given up
for Our Lord this year?*



January 2024 Financial Report

Rick Monarch, Treasurer

Expenses

BWC Mission Share	\$1,432.38
Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary)	\$1,610.33
Associate Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary)	\$417.67
Church Secretary's Wages	\$1,497.87
Organist / Pianist	\$300.00
Worker's Compensation Insurance	\$0.00
BWC - Annual Conference for Lay Delegate	\$0.00
Payroll Taxes	\$114.59
Capital Improvement Costs	\$2,793.00
Grass Cutting Costs	\$0.00
Snow Plowing Costs	\$2,620.25
Groundskeeper Costs	\$0.00
Custodian's Salary	\$350.00
Church Programs	\$451.17
Property Insurance	\$0.00
Administrative Expenses	\$455.87
Charge Treasury - Parsonage Expenses	\$402.58
Charge Treasury - Professional Expenses	\$113.92
Charge Treasury - Medical Insurance Costs	\$305.00
Charge Treasury - Retirement Contribution	\$342.20
Charge Treasury - Administrative Costs	\$15.34
Trustees - Maintenance Costs	\$2,327.46
Miscellaneous	\$15.34
Total Expenses	\$15,564.97

Income

Weekly Collections	\$3,802.75
Cell Tower Rental Fee from Sprint	\$2,232.36
Rental Property Income to Church	\$4,000.00
Rental Fees for Use of Hall	\$0.00
Yearly Evening Circle Contribution	\$3,600.00
Total Income	\$13,635.11

Daylight Savings Time

begins at 2 am on Sunday, March 10.
Please remember to set your clocks
ahead one hour
before you go to bed that night.





Fellowship News

Becky Lewis, Chair

March Madness competition is upon us! And no, not the annual NCAA Basketball Tournament, but the annual **Wesley Grove Games Night** competition! The fun takes place, as usual, at the home of Rick and Tammy Monarch, 9620 Watkins Road, on Saturday, March 16, at 6 pm. Please bring a dish to share (appetizer, main dish, and/or dessert), and any games that you think will challenge the group. Sign up in the vestibule to give our hosts an idea of how many will attend.

On the following day, Sunday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day), Cathy and Bob Burke will host **Coffee and Conversation** after the worship service. Make plans to stay for a while and catch up with our church family.

And then, we'll wrap up the month's activities with **breakfast following the Easter "Sonrise" Service** on Sunday, March 31. Becky and Brian Lewis will host, and everything will be provided. Look for the sign-up sheet for this event in the vestibule.

And of course, it's never too soon to start cleaning out your closets and planning for our **Spring Community Yard Sale** on Saturday, May 11.



Education News

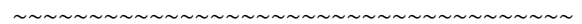
Tammy Monarch, Chair

The Season of Lent has begun, and we have started this year's **Lenten Book Study** on Thursday nights at Mt. Tabor UMC at 7 and on Sunday mornings at 9:30 at Wesley Grove. This study, led by our two pastors, is based on the book called *The Third Day* by Tom Berlin, a Methodist pastor and bishop in the Florida Conference. Each chapter focuses on a different disciple's reaction to the events that occurred in the life of Jesus from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday. If anyone else would still like to join us, please know it is never too late. Just show up, and we'll find you a chair!

Do you have questions about the **history of the Church**? Maybe something like: *Why and how did the Church grow substantially in the aftermath of the ministry of the Apostles? What led*

Martin Luther to break from the Roman Catholic Church in 1517? Why did John and Charles Wesley begin a revival movement among the poor and disenfranchised in Great Britain in the 1740's? What factors contributed to the Church being a predominantly Jewish movement in the 1st Century centered around the Mediterranean Sea to a global, religious community that spans all seven continents with nearly two billion followers today?

The History of the Church and the Christian Movement provide answers to these questions and to so many more. Have we piqued your curiosity yet? If so, and you are indeed wondering about the answers to these and other similar questions, then plan to join us as we, the entire South Damascus Charge, examine **the 10 most decisive turning points in the history of Christianity**. We will study these 10 moments together on Thursday nights, beginning on April 4 at 7. We plan to both meet in person (location still TBD) and livestream our sessions via Zoom. Please let Tammy know by Sunday, March 24 if you will be joining us for this spring study, so that she can order the correct number of books.



Missions News

Linda Chatterton, Chair

Wesley Grove has received a **thank-you note** from a gentleman who has been a long-time contributor and has recently fallen on hard times. In late January, we sent him a donation from the church.

His note says: *"It's great to know the world is full of such generous people like you. I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude for the monetary gift — it came at just the right time. As soon as I can, you'll get it and more back, in Jesus' Name. God bless you all."*

In February, we returned to **collecting the mini soaps and small bottles of shampoo, conditioner, lotion, etc.** that you pick up from hotel stays. Once we collect a good amount, we plan to deliver them to a local shelter, where they will be distributed to its residents. We have already gathered quite a few and will continue to do so throughout the spring. Thank you to those who have already been collecting and donating.





Easter Flowers

If you would like to order flowering plants for Easter, please pick up an order form in the vestibule. We hope to have daffodils, hyacinths, tulips, and Easter lilies all as choices again this year. These plants cost \$12 each; order forms and money (cash or checks made payable to WGUMC) are due back to the church office by Palm Sunday, March 24. Plants will be available to take home after the 11 am worship service on Easter morning.



Did you know...

... that the idea of spring cleaning has its origins in the Season of Lent, which is now upon us?

During this time, we are asked to pray, fast, abstain from something that we enjoy, spend more time with our Lord, serve the community, and/or clean out the clutter in our lives. Basically, we are to live our lives simply, just as Jesus lived His.

One way that we can do this is to clean up and clean out our homes. Each year, we find that we have all stored more and more stuff in our houses, and spring is the perfect time to declutter them and get a “fresh start” again!

If you find that you have things that you no longer want, but someone else may, then you might consider reserving a spot at our Community Yard Sale on Saturday, May 11. Call Tammy at 301-253-0044 to book your space.

Or you may find that you have items that belong at the church or at the hall. In recent years, we have noticed that some things seem to be missing or their numbers have decreased. Here is a list of some things that you might find in your homes. If so, and you still use and/or want them, then, indeed, please keep them, but if you no longer have a use for some of these items, then please return them to their appropriate locations.

- Wesley Grove blue aprons
- Choir books and CDs
- Hymnals and Bibles from the pews
- Dishes from the hall kitchen
- Books from the church library
- Church and hall keys

In fact, if you do have a church, hall, parsonage, and/or pavilion key, please let Tammy know, so that she can update the master list in the church office. Thanks in advance for your help with this annual spring clean-up project!

March Birthdays

- 4 Linda Chatterton
- 8 Steven Arndt
- 9 Kathi Johnson
- 15 Chan Ketchum
- Lily Hagy
- 17 Debbie Benson
- 19 Emma Lynagh
- 22 Debbie Snyder
- 24 Gary Rogers
- 27 Carla Works
- 28 Jaime Crawford
- 30 Tammy Monarch





Holy Week Services

Make plans now to join us for these special worship services during the last week of Jesus' life:

- Palm Sunday** — March 24 @ 11 am @ WGUMC
- Maundy Thursday** — March 28 @ 7 pm @ Salem
- Good Friday** — March 29 @ 7 pm @ WGUMC
- Easter Sunday** — March 31 @ 6:45 am (outdoor) & 11 am (indoor) @ WGUMC

March 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
3rd Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service with Communion	4 7:00 PM— Finance Commit- tee Meeting	5 6:45 PM— Lions Club Dinner and Meeting	6 3:00 PM— Book Club @ Joyce's Home in Mt. Airy	7 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC	8 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC	9 Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before you go to bed tonight.
10th Sunday in Lent 9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	11 7:00 PM— Administrative Council Meeting	12 7:00 PM— Administrative Council Meeting	13 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC	14 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC	15 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC	16 6:00 PM— Potluck Dinner & Games Night at the Monarchs' Home
17th Sunday in Lent  9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service 12:00 PM— Fellowship Hour	18 April Newsletter Deadline	19 6:45 PM— Lions Club Dinner and Meeting	20 12:00 PM— Lunch Out @ Los Aztecas in Mt. Airy	21 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC	22 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC	23 7:00 PM— Lenten Book Study @ Mt. Tabor UMC
24 Palm Sunday  9:30 AM— Sunday School 11:00 AM— Worship Service	25 7:00 PM— Board of Trustees Meeting	26 7:00 PM— Board of Trustees Meeting	27 7:00 PM— Maundy Thursday Worship Service @ Salem UMC	28 7:00 PM— Maundy Thursday Worship Service @ Salem UMC	29 7:00 PM— Good Friday Wor- ship Service @ WGUMC	30 7:00 PM— Good Friday Wor- ship Service @ WGUMC
31 Easter Sunday 6:45 AM— Sunrise Service 7:30 AM—Breakfast 11:00 AM— Worship Service						



Wesley Grove United Methodist Church

Church Phone: 301-253-2894

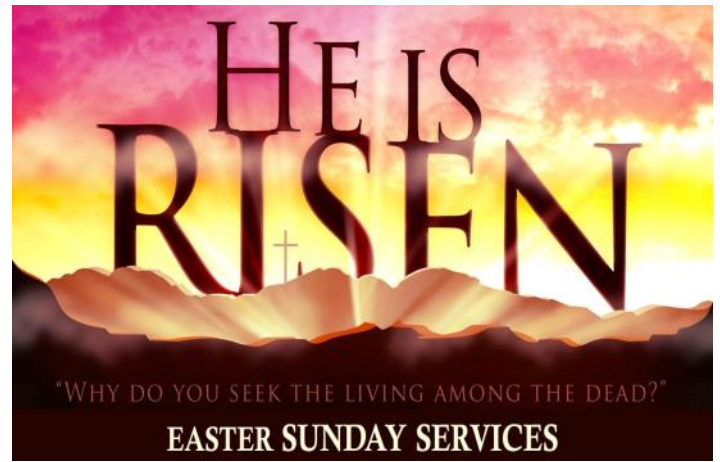
Email: wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org

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



Outdoor "Sonrise" Service @ 6:45 am

Next to our Ballfield Pavilion
Breakfast Immediately Following
in the Fellowship Hall

Traditional Worship Service @ 11 am

in the Sanctuary

*Join Us for One or Both to Celebrate
Our Risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!*

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

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