

Wesley Grove **Messenger**

December 2019

From the Pastor's Desk...

Greetings in the Name of *Emmanuel: God with us!*

Now, when the king was settled in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the LORD is with you." But that same night, the word of the LORD came to Nathan, "Go, and ask my servant David, are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this place, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel by saying, why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now, therefore, you shall say to my servant David, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, I took you from a simple pasture of sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went. Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever." ~~~~~ from II Samuel 7

This reading is a conversation between King David of ancient Israel and the prophet Nathan about a dwelling. Not a home for people, but a house for God. David, in his new palace of cedar, wants to build God a palace - a temple - in gratitude. But God tells Nathan to say this, "I don't need a house."

It seems that God prefers more temporary, and less substantial, dwelling places: a tent when the people of Israel wandered in the desert, a mobile home as David and his troops moved around guarding farms and homes. God is nomadic, migratory, and wherever God's people are, God is.

During Advent and Christmas, we will retell this ancient story... God came to live in the womb of a young woman, in the person of a carpenter's son (the continuation of David's "house" or lineage), whose own traveling life illustrated God's vagabond nature. It is the season when we acknowledge that God draws near to the earth to be with and for all of us. God lives in the two-bedroom apartment with our friends and on the sidewalk where a homeless man sleeps on a heating grate to stay warm. God dwells in the refugee camp and in the slums, in the mud hut and in the five-bedroom house out in the suburbs. God inhabits the hospitals and the nursing homes; He resides where there is peace and where there is no peace; and He sits at the table teaming with food and at the one where there's an empty place this Christmas.

Where does God live right now? Perhaps God remains forever the nomad, following people wherever we go. Build God a house? No, there is no point to it. Yes, God is a wanderer, but He also has a home. It is with you. It is with me. It is with all of us. *Emmanuel: God with us!*

In God's peace,
Pastor Karen

Lectionary Readings

December 1, 2019

First Sunday in Advent — Communion

Isaiah 2:1-5
 Psalm 122
 Romans 13:11-14
 Matthew 24:36-44

December 8, 2019

Second Sunday in Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10
 Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
 Romans 15:4-13
 Matthew 3:1-12

December 15, 2019

Third Sunday in Advent — Cantata

Isaiah 35:1-10
 Luke 1:46b-55
 James 5:7-10
 Matthew 11:2-11

December 22, 2019

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Isaiah 7:10-16
 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
 Romans 1:1-7
 Matthew 1:18-25

December 24 & 25, 2019

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

Isaiah 9:2-7 & 52:7-10
 Luke 96 & 98
 Titus 2:11-14, Hebrews 1:1-12
 Luke 2:1-20, John 1:1-14

December 29, 2019

Isaiah 63:7-9
 Psalm 148
 Hebrews 2:10-18
 Matthew 2:13-23



December Birthdays

3 Cathy Burke	19 Ciarra Crawford
Matt Lind	20 Ollie Gray
6 Dave Wilson	28 Sheryl Birkhead
12 Josh Park	29 Roberta Grimes
14 Chris Lee	30 Peter Hughes
16 Nicko Hull	31 Lorie Falk



October 2019 Financial Report

Rick Monarch, Treasurer

Expenses

Apportionments	\$1,521.08
Pastor's Salary	\$1,416.66
Associate Pastor's Salary	\$578.96
Pastor's Benefits	\$597.50
Pastor's Professional Expenses	\$0.00
Church Secretary's Wages	\$1,128.50
Choir Director's Salary	\$883.34
Substitute Musician Payments	\$0.00
Payroll Taxes	\$150.07
Capital Improvement	\$0.00
Grass Cutting Fees	\$1,755.00
Snow Removal Fees	\$0.00
Custodian's Salary	\$810.00
Parsonage Expenses	\$1,045.86
Programs	\$113.00
Office Expenses	\$45.53
Trustees - Maintenance Costs	\$568.67
Total Expenses	\$10,614.17

Income

Weekly Collections	\$5,359.27
Cell Tower Rental Fee - Sprint	\$1,983.42
Cell Tower Rental Fee - Verizon	\$1,435.25
October Farm Park Food Booth Proceeds	\$2,500.00
June American Legion Dinner Proceeds	\$3,000.00
Hall Roof Project Donation	\$5,000.00
Use of Hall Fees	\$300.00
In and Out Income	\$300.00
Rental Property Monthly Payment	\$1,000.00
Monthly Donation from Evening Circle	\$300.00
Parsonage Expense Reimbursements	\$1,953.01
(from Salem and Mt. Tabor)	
Miscellaneous	\$0.00
Total Income	\$23,130.95

Administrative Council Meeting

Monday, November 11, 2019

In Attendance:

Bob Burke, Debbie Benson, Becky Lewis, Pastor Karen Davis, Steven Arndt, Jim Kemp, Rick Monarch, Tammy Monarch, Judy Hughes, Louise Burdette, Jackie Hottinger, Carol Stone

Meeting was opened by Bob at 7:31 pm.

Devotions:

Tammy read aloud from James 2:14-26. This scripture can be summed up with this statement, "Faith that doesn't lead us to doing good deeds is dead or useless." Abraham had faith in God and God was pleased with him; thus, God was pleased with Abraham's doings. We are believers and doers here at Wesley Grove.

Veterans' Day Recognition:

Jim Kemp and Steven Arndt were acknowledged as veterans.

Prayer Requests:

Kim Stiles – He had thoracic surgery, and he will never again be without oxygen; thus, this is a huge change for him and his wife.

Marty Stone – He did not have a heart attack; instead, he is experiencing stress-related pain.

Good News Items:

Great turn-out at Special Needs Western Round-Up last Saturday! We had about 40 in attendance.

Old Business:

New roof is finished on the hall.

One new toilet and two fire extinguishers have been purchased and will be installed in next few days in the hall and in the church.

Work on ballfield by both DSA and BSA has come along very well. Pavilion shed has been cleaned out and tidied up. Benches have been rebuilt and sanded down. Wood chips have been spread. They are in the process of taking down a few dead trees around the field. We have a 3-year ballfield contract with Damascus Sports Association (DSA), and we will make a public thank you to both groups at tree lighting ceremony.

New Business:

Have we ever done radon checks at WG? This is not necessary because buildings are not occupied full-time.

District-wide small church meetings are happening. Next one is Nov. 14 and then on Feb. 22. Let Tammy know if you're interested in attending and bringing information back to WG.

Training Tuesdays are occurring from 7-8:30 pm. BWC is offering webinars about different committee duties and ways to increase their effectiveness. See the November newsletter for list of dates and committees.

Old Minutes:

Becky made a motion to approve both the September and October minutes as printed in our October and November newsletters. Jackie Hottinger seconded. All present approved both of them.

Committee Reports:

Trustees –

Thanks to Jim for power-washing the cemetery fence.

We are in process of getting three estimates for removing the large dead tree behind the hall. This may possibly be done by the end of

the year.

Greeting room roof has been repainted. Thanks, Jim and Bob!

Buying a second defibrillator for the church is being discussed. Voluntary training video will be shown again at Soup Sunday in January.

Finance –

Debbie shared proposed 2020 church budget of about \$148,000, which is about \$12,000 less than 2019. We have faith that our combined income from tithing, three monthly rents, and various fundraising events will cover this proposed budget. She made a motion to approve this budget for 2020, and Steven seconded. All voted in favor. Motion passed, and this budget is now official for next year, 2020.

Christian Fellowship –

Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon is in just under two weeks on November 23 from 9 am – 3 pm.

Community Tree Lighting Ceremony will be held on Thursday, December 5 at 7 pm outside the hall.

Annual Christmas Caroling and Dinner at the Monarchs will occur on Sunday, December 22 at 4 pm.

Missions –

Toiletries are being collected for our caroling visit to nursing homes in December.

Information on Christmas wish lists and food baskets will be here soon.

Remember that we staff the Soup Kitchen on Monday, December 30.

Sunday School –

Confirmation class is running simultaneously with our Sunday School. Two youth members, Danny and Adam Wilson, will be confirmed in the spring. Attendance is averaging 10-15 people of very mixed ages each week. All are always welcome!

Family movie nights will begin again this winter. They were successful last spring and summer.

Worship –

We will be decorating the church for Christmas on Saturday, November 30 at 9:30 am. Please come and help if you can.

Our Christmas Eve Worship Service will begin at 9 pm.

Communications –

Cathy Burke will be our new chairperson in 2020, and she will hold a committee meeting in January.

SPRC –

Charge meeting is tomorrow night at WG to complete these BWC annual documents — pastor evaluations for 2019, congregational profiles for 2019, and church goals for 2020.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor Karen had nothing new to report at this time.

Next Meeting:

Our next Administrative Council Meeting will take place on Monday, January 20, 2020 at 7:30 pm.

Carol volunteered to lead devotions, and she concluded this meeting with a prayer.

Bob adjourned the meeting at 8:54 pm.

Fellowship News

Becky Lewis, Chair

Santa Claus is coming to Woodfield town, on Thursday, December 5, for our annual Community Tree Lighting at 7 pm. Won't you come out and help welcome him, as well as show a friendly face of greeting to all of our friends and neighbors from the community? Our outdoor program will focus on the message of the Christmas Star, and our indoor fellowship time after the program will feature cookies, brownies, and warm and cold drinks. If you can contribute home-baked cookies, please sign up in the vestibule; if you can help set up or serve, please let Tammy know.

Earlier that day, the Daytime Circle will host its annual Christmas Luncheon at Mt. Airy Tavern at 12:30 pm. If you haven't yet RSVP'ed to Judy or Mary Jane, please do so by Dec. 1.

Our crowded December calendar also features Coffee & Conversation, hosted by Brian and Becky, after both performances of "Take Me Home," our Christmas cantata, on Sunday, December 15. And we'll wrap it up with more food and more singing on Sunday, December 22 at 4 pm, when we take our message of carols and cheer to our friends at Pleasant View and Lorien. We'll be collecting donations of toiletries, gently-used reading materials and games, and adult diapers for the Pleasant View residents in the vestibule through that morning's service.

When the holidays are behind us, the Christian Fellowship committee will jump right into planning activities for 2020. We plan to meet on Thursday, January 9, at 7:30 pm in the fellowship hall to set the calendar for the new year, which will be listed in its entirety in the February newsletter. If you have ideas for new activities or suggestions about existing annual events, please see Becky or any other member of the Christian Fellowship Committee.

Worship News

Sue Ketchum, Chair

The Worship Committee along with other members of our church family will decorate our sanctuary for the Advent Season on Saturday, November 30, beginning at 9:30 am. Please join us if you can as the more hands we have, the quicker and easier this job is for all of us. And, of course, the result is always a joyous and beautiful place to celebrate the Holiday Season!

Our Chancel Choir and our Wesley Grove Players will present "Take Me Home," our Christmas cantata on Sunday, December 15 at both 11 am and 7:30 pm. Please bring your family and friends and join us for this beautiful reminder of the true meaning of this most special holiday. Both performances will be followed with fellowship and refreshments in our vestibule.

Our Christmas Eve worship service will be held at 9:00 pm. If this time does not suit you, feel free to celebrate and worship the birth of our Lord and Savior at one of our two sister churches. Salem will hold its service at 4:00 pm, and Mt. Tabor will hold its service at 7:00 pm.

Our church sanctuary will once again be decorated with lots and lots of beautiful poinsettias on Sunday, December 22. If you would like to purchase one or more in honor or memory of loved ones, please get a form from the church vestibule or call/email the church office. We will try to offer a choice of both red and white flowers, and the cost will be \$8.00 per plant. Please have all orders and money (either cash or a check made out to the church) turned in to the church office by Sun., Dec. 15.



Education News

Tammy Monarch, Chair

This fall, we have been remembering and discussing our earliest church memories, including Sunday School, confirmation class, youth group, and Vacation Bible School, and how all of these experiences have been part of our Christian journeys and have helped to shape the people that we have become today. Currently, we are learning about what it means to be a United Methodist. Please feel free to join us any Sunday morning at 9:30 am. We'd love to have you!

Throughout this Advent Season, we will all also focus on the feelings we experience during the days and events leading up to the birth of Jesus, including the hope of what's to come as we prepare for our Messiah, and the peace, love, and joy that come with His arrival. Each Sunday, we will light an additional Advent candle to recognize these feelings we have as we journey together toward our Savior's birth – hope, peace, joy, and love.

We will not meet for Sunday School on December 1 since many of us are still traveling for the Thanksgiving Holidays. Nor will we meet on December 15 since many of us are involved in the Christmas cantata that morning. The following Sunday, December 22, our Sunday School family will enjoy a Christmas breakfast together during our Sunday School time. We ask that each family bring something to contribute to our meal. Possibilities include breakfast casseroles, fresh fruit, juice, milk, and muffins, bagels, and/or donuts. Please let Tammy know what you plan to bring.



Missions News

Jackie Hottinger, Chair

Christmas basket food tags and wish list gift tags for four needy, local families are available in the vestibule. Their names were screened and provided to us by Faith Connections, a local community-based organization. We, at Wesley Grove, have the wonderful opportunity to share our blessings and good fortune with these families that would not have Christmas dinner or gifts without the generosity of others.

Please remember to wrap your gift(s) and attach the tag(s) provided with the recipients' names on them. This helps us to keep track of all the gifts and to know to which family each gift is going. All of the gifts and food items are due back to our church by Sunday, December 15. Or if you would like to donate money toward the purchase of perishable food items or additional gifts, please see Jackie.

Throughout this month, we will also be collecting personal goodies for the residents at Pleasant View Nursing Home in Mt. Airy. There is a list of such items on the table in the vestibule. The nursing home also welcomes gifts of gently-used purses, wallets, costume jewelry, scarves, games, cards, books, magazines, etc. We will deliver all of these items when we visit there with carols and cheer on Sunday, December 22.

Thank you to everyone who participates in any and all ways to further our mission projects throughout the year. We have such a wonderful congregation here at Wesley Grove that is always willing to help others, and that is truly a blessing to us and to our community!



Joy to the World!

Christmas Caroling and Fellowship Dinner

Sunday, December 22

Please join us for this meaningful, and fun, event. We take Christmas carols and holiday cheer to the residents at both Pleasant View and Lorien Nursing Homes in Mt. Airy, and they help us to fulfill Christ's request of us — to serve others. We will meet in the parking lot of the hall at 4:00 pm, drive together to Mt. Airy, and then return to Woodfield and the home of the Monarchs at about 6:30 pm to share together in a fellowship dinner. Please sign up in the vestibule if you will be joining us.

We are collecting the items on the list below to take to the residents at Pleasant View. If you can contribute any of these things, please have them at the church by Sunday, December 22.

- regular and slipper socks
- perfume and cologne
- soap and body wash
- hand and body lotion
- shampoo and conditioner
- aftershave and deodorant
- toothbrushes, toothpaste, denture cream
- hair bands, twisties, hair ties
- mouthwash and dental floss
- tissues and wipes
- hairbrushes and combs
- underwear (men's and women's)
- adult diapers

If you would like to make an additional Advent or Christmas offering, specially-marked envelopes are in the vestibule. Please pick one up, add your offering, and place it in the weekly collection plate. Your offering will be credited to your annual giving total and noted on your year-end statement. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



Christmas Offering

Holiday Safety

According to the Electrical Safety Foundation, more home fires occur during the winter months than at any other time of the year. Heating equipment, faulty outlets, and worn-out extension cords are three of the leading causes of home fires in the U.S. Therefore, planning and preparation are essential to your electrical safety during the busy Holiday Season. Here are some simple tips to help you and your family stay safe...

- If you haven't already done so this month, test all your smoke alarms. Replace the batteries and/or the alarms if any are not working properly.
- Plug space heaters directly into wall outlets. Do not use extension cords or power strips, which could overheat and result in fire. Do not plug any other electrical devices into the same outlets as heaters.
- Inspect heaters for cracked or broken plugs or loose connections before each use. If frayed or damaged, do not use the heater.
- Be sure all heating sources and open flames, such as candles and fireplaces, are given 3-foot buffers from other objects.
- Plan out the placement of your holiday lighting, so that no more than three strands (unless they are LEDs) are strung together.
- Outdoor electric lights and decorations should be plugged into circuits protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). If circuits are not GFCI-protected, portable outdoor GFCIs can be purchased where electrical supplies are sold and require no special knowledge or equipment to install.
- Be sure to check each product's label to determine whether it is intended for indoor or outdoor use and then utilize accordingly.
- Inspect all electrical decorations and replace any that are cracked, frayed, or have other breaks in the insulation of any wires.
- Arrange your decorations, so that no outlet is overloaded, and no cords will be pinched by furniture, placed under rugs, or walked on.



Thank You, Pastors!!!

Many, many thanks to our two pastors for another fantastic year at Wesley Grove and in the South Damascus Charge! As the end of this year approaches, we want our pastors to know how much we love and appreciate them.

To this end, we treated Pastor Karen to a special day in Lancaster County, PA, at the Sight & Sound Theater for the spectacular musical production of "The Miracle of Christmas," and then we went on to a delicious lunch at the Plain and Fancy Pennsylvania Dutch Restaurant. Unfortunately, Pastor YouJung was not able to join us on this trip as she had classes at Wesley Seminary that day.

We know that many of you also like to show your appreciation and share your Christmas greetings with our pastors in your own ways. Some of you like to bake them goodies or make them homemade jams and jellies. Still others like to give them special ornaments or other Christmas items. And, of course, all of us want to share our own special seasonal greetings and cards with them. So, to collect these items, two specially-decorated boxes will be placed in the vestibule during the month of December. Please think of how your family wants to share Christmas with our two pastors and add your own cards, thoughts, and gifts to these boxes by Christmas Eve.



Starting again in January, we would like to bring back the congregational spotlight on a regular basis. In order to do this, Tammy needs folks to volunteer to be interviewed and/or to write a simple autobiographical article. This does not have to be long or fancy nor does it have to include any personal details that you do not want shared.

We just want to get to know each other a little bit better by learning where we grew up, how many siblings we have, what schools and colleges we attended, where we have lived and worked over the years, how many kids and grandkids we have, and what we enjoy doing in our free time. We promise it won't take anyone more than thirty minutes, so if you are willing to share a little about yourself, please email or call the church office at 301-253-2894, and let Tammy know to put you on the 2020 newsletter schedule.

Thanks so much in advance. Since we are all one big church family, it's really nice to know a little more about each of us, our families, and our personal lives.





Annual Christmas Luncheon

Mt. Airy Tavern

Thursday, December 5
12:30 pm

Everyone is welcome to attend!

We will be able to order from either the lunch or the dinner menu, and we will pay for our meals directly to the waitress that day.

Please RSVP to Judy or Mary Jane
no later than Sunday, December 1.

Thanks to all of you for the many prayers, cards, calls, food, and visits following Sandi's unexpected transition to her new, heavenly, eternal home. All of you here at Wesley Grove mean so much to us.



*With much love,
Ollie and Sharon*

Please Join Us...

Community Tree Lighting Ceremony

Thursday, December 5 at 7 pm
in the Hall Parking Lot

Local Boy Scouts, ball teams, Lions Club, and our Chancel Choir will all be participating. Please bring an unwrapped Toy-for-Tots if you can. Refreshments will be served inside after the ceremony. Sign-up sheet to bring Christmas cookies is located in the vestibule.



Community Prayers

Faith Connections of Damascus has started a church prayer list, from which all of our local congregations are asked to pray for two of our area churches and their various ministries each month. For December, together as a community of believers, we will pray for:



- **Iglesia Pentecostal Camino de la Vida**
- **Clarksburg United Methodist Church**

We all know just how great and miraculous the power of group prayer can be!

A big, huge thank you goes out to all of you that helped to make our annual Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon a

huge success! We had plenty of helpers on our two set-up days as well as on the day of this event. We also had an abundance of shoppers – a great thing for us and for our crafters! At the point of this printing, it appears that our profit will be about \$2,500. We greatly appreciate all of you and all that you do to make our fundraisers so successful!



Our Sympathies are extended to...

Denny Duvall, his mother Betty, and his Family - His wife, Judy, passed suddenly on November 23 from a brain aneurism. Judy leaves behind two daughters, Shana and Amy, sister-in-law Tina, and brother-in-law Bill as well as husband Denny and beloved mother-in-law, Miss Betty.

Please know that our condolences go out to all of you at this very sad time in your lives, and we ask that our Lord Jesus Christ be with you today and surround you in the days ahead with peace, hope, love, and understanding.

December 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 <i>1st Advent Sunday</i> No Sunday School 11:00 AM - Worship Service with Com- munion	2	3 6:45 PM - Lions Club Dinner 7:00 PM - Cantata Actor Practice	4 7:00 PM - Choir Practice	5 12:30 PM - Christ- mas Luncheon at Mt. Airy Tavern 7:00 PM - Tree Lighting Ceremony	6	7
8 <i>2nd Advent Sunday</i> 9:30 AM - Sunday School 11:00 AM - Worship Service with Com- munion	9	10 7:00 PM - Cantata Actor Practice	11 7:00 PM - Choir and Actor Practice	12	13	14 10:00 AM - Cantata Dress Rehearsal
15 <i>3rd Advent Sunday</i> No Sunday School 11:00 AM - Cantata during Service 7:30 PM - Cantata <i>Poinsettia Deadline</i>	16	17 6:45 PM - Lions Club Dinner	18 7:00 PM - Choir Practice <i>January Newsletter Deadline</i>	19	20	21
22 <i>4th Advent Sunday</i> 9:30 AM - Sunday School Breakfast 11:00 AM - Worship Service <i>Poinsettias in Church</i> 4:00 PM - Caroling & Dinner	23	24 9:00 PM - Christmas Eve Worship Service	25 <i>Merry Christmas to All!</i>	26	27	28
29 9:30 AM - Sunday School 11:00 AM - Worship Service	30 1:00 PM - Soup Kitchen at Epworth UMC in Gaithersburg <i>Pastor YouJung leaves for Korea</i>	31	1 <i>Happy New Year!</i>	2	3	4



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



Christmas Cantata

"Take Me Home"

Sunday, December 15
11:00 am and 7:30 pm

Gather your family and friends
and join us for
this very special musical presentation
of the true meaning of Christmas!

Refreshments will follow.

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

Wesley Grove United Methodist Church
23640 Woodfield Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20882