

# Wesley Grove **Messenger**

September 2024

From the Pastor's Desk...

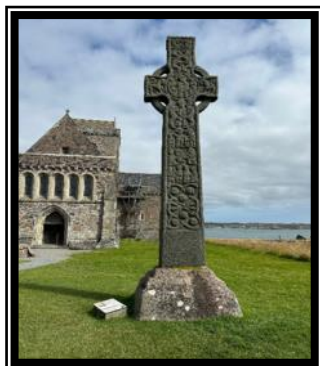
## **The Power and Endurance of a Small Group of Faithful Believers**

Imagine a small gathering of people who gather for worship on a regular basis. Say 15 to 20 folks. Can you see a group like that in your mind? Now, imagine they live during a time of division and great unrest. Due to the onset of new technologies, the old political structures are beginning to fragment. This community also lives during a time when Christianity is beginning to wane, and the Church struggles to capture the imagination of most of the people who live around this religious community. Imagine that this religious community has no couples that are of childbearing age, and there are only a couple of younger community members. Do you think this group has reason to question whether they will be around in 15 or 20 years? Do you think it might be understandable if they wonder what God may have in store for them as they seek to live as disciples in their world? Maybe they are uneasy about their future, maybe they understand that they are in a precarious position, and maybe they are right to ask questions about how their mission will impact their future.

Last month, I visited a small religious community in a remote area of Scotland. It was birthed during a truly dangerous time in history with a small group of fifteen members. The monastery at Iona began in the year 563 when its founder, St. Columba of Ireland, had grown tired of the constant political unrest in that country. So, he took a small group of followers and relocated to the small island of Iona to escape political division and re-center their lives around the worship of God and devotion to the work of God in their midst.

Rather than shrivel into obscurity as members succumbed to old age and disinterest, Iona re-ignited a religious awakening in Britain. The island had been solidly Christian until the Roman Empire withdrew, and the populace reverted to mild paganism. But with the advent of the Iona community and its re-centering on the worship and work of God, Christianity rebounded in Britain for the next 1500 years. When I visited Iona, I drew inspiration that a small group of believers, even a group with no prospects of rejuvenation through birthrates, can lead to a spiritual reawakening simply by being dedicated to the worship of God and being committed to living faithfully with God.

I know that some of us are worried about what our place is in the future of Christianity in our world, but Iona proves to us that God can move and work powerfully in small religious communities. We must trust Him and pray we have the courage to live our lives as faithful believers. I don't think St. Columba went to Iona to begin a religious reawakening; instead, I think he went there to live a faithful life. That must be our goal. We can then leave our legacy to The One who makes legacies: God Almighty.



*This is St. Martin's Cross, located outside the Great Abbey of Iona. It has stood on this very spot for the last 1200 years and tells the story of the community of Iona and the Biblical characters from which it drew inspiration.*

Blessings,  
Pastor Nick

## Lectionary Readings



### September 1, 2024

Song of Solomon 2:8-13

Psalm 45 or 72

James 1:17-27

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

### September 8, 2024

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

Psalm 124 or 125

James 2:1-17

Mark 7:24-37

### September 15, 2024

Proverbs 1:20-33

Psalm 19

James 3:1-12

Mark 8:27-38

### September 22, 2024

Proverbs 31:10-31

Psalm 1

James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a

Mark 9:30-37

### September 29, 2024

Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; 9:20-22

Psalm 124

James 5:13-20

Mark 9:38-50



## July 2024 Financial Report

*Rick Monarch, Treasurer*

### Expenses

BWC Mission Share	\$1,432.38
Senior Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary)	\$835.33
Associate Pastor's Salary (1/3 of total salary)	\$331.59
Church Secretary's Wages	\$1,093.95
Organist / Pianist	\$0.00
Worker's Compensation Insurance	\$0.00
BWC Annual Conference for Lay Delegate	\$311.79
Payroll Taxes	\$109.05
Capital Improvement Costs	\$7,100.00
Grass Cutting Costs	\$0.00
Snow Plowing Costs	\$0.00
Groundskeeper Costs	\$0.00
Custodian's Salary	\$350.00
Programs	\$19.98
Property Insurance	\$0.00
Administrative Expenses	\$300.82
South Damascus Charge Treasury	\$120.91
Trustees - Maintenance Costs	\$1,152.65
Parsonage Property Taxes	\$3,438.90
Montgomery County Solid Waste Tax	\$378.78
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$16,976.13</b>

## Return to Fall Schedule

Beginning on Sunday, September 29, our weekly worship service time will return to 11 am.

On this same day, we also will resume our one-room Sunday School class. This class meets at 9:30 am in our Fellowship Hall and will be co-led by Pastor Nick, Pastor Abby, and Tammy. Folks of all different ages and Christian educational backgrounds are welcome and encouraged to join us for our weekly discussions. This fall, our theme will be "Holy Heroes: The Gospel according to DC & Marvel."

### Income

Weekly Collections	\$5,632.00
Cell Tower Rental Fee from Sprint	\$2,299.33
Rental Property Income	\$2,000.00
Roofing Project Collections	\$200.00
Miscellaneous	\$292.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$10,423.33</b>





# Fall Community Yard Sale



**Saturday, September 21  
9 am to 2 pm**

**To reserve your \$20 space now,  
call Tammy at 301-253-0044.**

Rental tables are available  
for an additional \$5 each.

**If you can help this day,  
contact Becky at 240-338-3211  
to volunteer your services.**

We also need donations of baked goods  
packaged in individual servings.

## September Birthdays

- 1 Lauren Horner  
Jon Lee  
Carol Stone
- 5 Stephanie Diaz
- 7 Tina Green
- 10 Shane Kepner  
Sally Lewis
- 11 Doug Gaither
- 23 Max Lynagh
- 24 Tony Bowie  
Gay Linthicum
- 27 Luke Horner
- 30 Jackie Hottinger



## Damascus HELP Food Collection

During the month of September, we will continue to collect food for the Damascus HELP Food Pantry. This nonprofit organization provides food, rides, diapers, and medical supplies to those in need in the Damascus/Clarksburg community.

During each week in the month of September, we will collect the following food items:

- Sunday, Sept. 1 – Sugar and Flour
- Sunday, Sept. 8 – Tea Bags and Coffee
- Sunday, Sept. 15 – Macaroni/Pasta/Rice
- Sunday, Sept. 22 – Tomato Sauces
- Sunday, Sept. 29 – Canned Tomatoes

Please place all donations under the table in the church vestibule in the boxes marked Damascus HELP. Thank you in advance for your generosity!

## Best Wishes and Much Success

*to All of Our Students,  
Teachers,  
and*

*Supporting School Staff  
who are all returning to their schools,  
buses, and classrooms this month!*

*May Our Good Lord Bless You All!*

*back to  
School*



## Fellowship News

*Becky Lewis, Chair*

September brings summer to a close, and the Christian Fellowship Committee will close it down with our traditional busy weekend featuring the Fall Community Yard Sale and the Charge Picnic on September 21 and 22, respectively.



Although that weekend is approaching fast, you've still got time to clean out your closets and get your name on the list to rent a space at a cost of \$20. Or, if you find just a few "treasures" hidden in your home, you can donate them for the church to sell. Donated items can be dropped off at the hall through 1 pm on Friday, September 20. Please contact Tammy at 301-253-0044 to reserve a space or to make arrangements to drop off items.

Setup and pricing help is needed on Friday from 1 to 4 pm; the event itself runs from 9 am to 2 pm on Saturday, with set-up and clean-up help needed before and after. If you can help with pricing and setup on Friday or with the event itself on Saturday, please contact Becky at 240-338-3211.



As always, donations of baked goods such as cookies and brownies packaged in individual servings are appreciated. (Items without icing are preferable as the bake table is located outdoors.) And if you're not helping with the event, be sure to stop by for a cooked-to-order breakfast sandwich or a burger or sausage hot off the grill for lunch!

The next day, Sunday, September 22, we'll gather with our brothers and sisters from Mt. Tabor and Salem for a joint outdoor

worship service under the pavilion at 10 am. (Please note that our worship service returns to 11 am the following Sunday, September 29). After the service, we'll have a time for light appetizers and visiting before our potluck picnic luncheon around noon. Please bring a dish or two to share; the committee will provide drinks, paper goods, and meats.



Join us on Friday, September 27 for a fun outdoor evening of roasting hot dogs, making s'mores, participating on the WG trivia team, and of course, sampling some cider (both hard and soft) at Doc Waters Cidery on Wildcat Road. We'll gather there at 5:30; we have a fire-pit and picnic table reserved until 9 pm. Bring a chair, a flashlight, and a dish or two to share. You may also want to bring a blanket. Hot dogs, buns, condiments, and s'more makings will all be provided. Please sign up in the vestibule, so we can plan accordingly.



Looking ahead into the fall, please make plans to join us for these upcoming events:



- Holly Days Craft Bazaar and Luncheon on Saturday, November 16 @ 9 am to 3 pm



- Community Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony on Wednesday, December 4 @ 7 pm



*Joy to the World!* • Christmas Caroling and Fellowship Dinner on Sunday, December 15 @ 4 pm

And finally, we could use a volunteer to host our Coffee & Conversation Fellowship Time in October; please see Becky if you'd like to host this.



## Mission News

*Linda Chatterton, Chair*

The Damascus Community Fair, which will occur on September 6–8 at the Damascus VFD's Activities Center grounds, is looking for donations for its silent auction fundraiser. These donations could take the form of a service, item, gift basket, or gift certificate. There is not much time between now and the Fair, but if you wish to donate, please contact Irish1der@hotmail.com.

On May 31, the local organization that WGUMC has partnered with for years, Faith Connections, closed due to lack of funding and volunteers. Damascus HELP is now struggling to fill the void left behind and desperately needs volunteers and resources. There are many things you can do to help that don't take much time or effort. Please help us keep HELP alive and actively filling the needs within our local community!

At this time, we would like to ask all of you to donate the food items that Damascus HELP needs to refill its food pantry. Those items are listed on page 3 of this newsletter.

This summer's Annual School Supply Drive, originally a Faith Connections community project, was taken over successfully by a new organization called Faith in Action. Please read its thank you letter printed after this article.

The Holiday Giving Program will continue under the name of "Faith Provides" and will be coordinated by a volunteer from St. Paul Catholic Church. If you remember last year, there were still many unmet needs in the week prior to Christmas. So, please be thinking now about maybe putting aside a little extra money for the upcoming gift drive in December. Further details will be provided in the coming months.

## Thank You from Faith in Action



Faith in Action wants to thank all of you for donating backpacks, school supplies, and monetary funds to the Annual Damascus-Clarksburg Area School Supply Drive! With your help, we provided more than 270 students in local schools with new school supplies and backpacks just before the start of school. With so many generous donations, we also were able to bless many counselors with much-needed extra backpacks and supplies. In addition, we gave out more than 60 backpacks and supplies at a community event in Germantown. And we are still getting even more school requests and are blessed to have the supplies to meet these needs as well... thanks to all of you!

The Damascus-Clarksburg Area continues to be a real blessing to our underserved neighbors. Thank you for spreading God's love and helping to make a difference in so many young lives.

We are so grateful for all who donated, including Cedarbrook Community Church, Clarksburg Church, Damascus Grace Fellowship, Damascus Lion's Club, Damascus United Methodist Church, First Baptist Church, Greenridge Baptist Church (who also provided a space to sort and pack), Montgomery United Methodist Church, NFP, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Rockville Bible Church, St. Anne's Episcopal Church, St. Paul Catholic Church, Upper Seneca Baptist Church, Wesley Grove United Methodist Church, and many individuals and local families.

Again, the generosity of our wonderful community to donate supplies, backpacks, time, and talents to help others is truly a blessing that sets our community apart from so many others. Thanks to all of you!!!



## CROP Walk

On Sunday, October 6, Damascus will hold its 54<sup>th</sup> Annual CROP Walk. This event will take place from 2-4 pm at Damascus Regional Park on Kings Valley Road. Registration for all walkers will begin at 1:30 pm under the picnic shelter at the beginning of the 3.6 mile, paved, walking trail.

If you are free this day, consider heading outside and joining in this annual walk to raise funds to fight hunger both here within our community and around the world. If you do plan to participate, please call Rita Noble of Damascus HELP at 301-253-8929 to register or visit the website below for further details.

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2024/event/damascusmd>



## Annual Church Conference



Please mark your calendars now for our annual South Damascus Charge Church Conference on Saturday, November 9 at 12:30 pm. This important business meeting will be livestreamed via Zoom. The link will be sent out the week before.

For those of you needing to complete reports and documents for this conference, please do so by Monday, September 16, and submit them to Tammy by that date.



## Welcome to Our New Worship Music Leader, Jeremy Eikenberry!

Jeremy, who lives locally on Wildcat Road, will begin to lead us in singing our worship songs on the first Sunday in September. He is a music teacher, who is proficient in several instruments; his favorite being the guitar. He has also sung in various choirs and ensembles throughout his life. We are excited to welcome Jeremy and his family into our congregation!



## Congratulations and Best Wishes to Pastor Abby!

While we are all selling used books, housewares, and games at our Fall Community Yard Sale on Saturday, September 21, Pastor Abby and her fiancée, James Byng, will be married. The ceremony will take place at the Natural Bridge Historic Hotel in Natural Bridge, Virginia. The happy new couple will honeymoon in Ireland several weeks later in mid-October.

We wish them all the very best that life has to offer — joy, peace, love, and happiness — and we ask that Our Most Gracious God bless them every day of their new life together as a married couple!



## Just for Fun!

How many words can you make from the eleven letters in —

### WEDDED BLISS

Here are a few to get you started...

1. wed
2. bed
3. weed
4. deed
5. side

Send your totals to Tammy, and we'll see who can come up with the most this time!

# September 2024



	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1		2 Happy Labor Day!	3 5:00 PM— Lions Club Dinner and Meeting	4	5	6	7
8	10:00 AM— Worship Service with Communion	9 6:00 PM— Finance Committee Meeting 7:00 PM— Administrative Council Meeting	10	11	12 7:00 PM— Lay Leadership Committee Meeting via Zoom	13	14
15	10:00 AM— Worship Service	16 6:30 PM— SPRC Meeting <i>All Church Conference Data Due</i>	17 5:00 PM— Lions Club Dinner and Meeting	18 12:00 PM— Lunch Out at The Links at Challedon in Mt. Airy	19 <i>Deadline for October Newsletter Submissions</i>	20 1:00 to 4:00 PM— Yard Sale Drop-Off and Set-Up	21 9 AM to 2 PM— Fall Community Yard Sale <i>Happy Weeding Day, Pastor Abby!</i>
22	10:00 AM— Charge Outdoor Worship Service 12:00 PM— Church Picnic	23 7:00 PM— Board of Trustees Meeting	24	25 3:00 PM— Book Club— location TBA	26	27 5:30 PM— Picnic Dinner and Trivia at Doc Waters Cider	28
29	9:30 AM— Sunday School Resumes 11:00 AM— Worship Service 6:00 PM— Hymn Sing at First Baptist of Damascus	30					

# **Wesley Grove United Methodist Church**

Church Phone: 301-253-2894  
Email: [wgumc@wesleygroveumc.org](mailto:wgumc@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 to our work and worship all —**  
regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, age,  
ability, sexual orientation, and/or economic  
circumstance.

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

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# **Join Us!**

## **Sunday, September 22**

beginning at 10 am

# **Outdoor Worship & Pot-Luck Picnic**

**Bring  
lawn chairs  
and  
a dish (or two)  
to share!**

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

**Wesley Grove United Methodist Church**  
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