

Wesley Grove Messenger

December 2014

Dates to Remember

Wednesday, December 3
Daytime Circle Holiday Luncheon at
Barbara FritchieNOON
Choir.....7:00 PM

Saturday, December 6
Meet & Greet with Santa
Special Needs.....2:00-4:00 PM
Community4:00-5:00 PM
Youth Party5:00 PM

Wednesday, December 10
Choir.....7:00 PM

Saturday, December 13
Cantata Rehearsal 9:30 AM

Sunday, December 14
Cantata 11:00 AM & 7:30 PM

Monday, December 15
Finance (if needed)7:30 PM

Tuesday, December 16
Vitality Team Meeting7:30 PM

Wednesday, December 17
Choir.....7:00 PM

Thursday, December 18
Newsletter Deadline.....NOON
Evening Circle/UMM Holiday Party
@the Falks 7:00 PM

Saturday, December 20
Men's Prayer Breakfast 8:00 AM
Live Nativity Preparation3:00 PM
Live Nativity6:00 PM

Sunday, November 21
Caroling & Dinner4:00 PM

Wednesday, December 24
Christmas Eve Services
Family Service7:30 PM
Candlelight Service11:00 PM

Thursday, December 25
Christmas.....OFFICE CLOSED

Friday, December 26
Christmas Holiday ... OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, December 27
Live Nativity (snow date)6:00 PM

From the Pastor's Desk

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." (Isaiah 40:3-5)

Happy Hallowgivingmas! Merry Christthansween! Come on! Don't you feel that the Christmas season has been going on since, well, since before Halloween? Michael's had Christmas trees in the store way before October 31! Halloween and Thanksgiving and Christmas seem to have been blended together into one extremely long Christmas shopping season! Where are the days when the Christmas season didn't start until Santa rode into town on Thanksgiving Day? And by town, I mean New York City, because the **real** Santa comes into New York for the day, despite the fact that my father insisted he comes into Philadelphia in the Gimbel's Thanksgiving Day Parade. But Daddy was wrong. Santa, Mr. Claus himself, rides the float in the Macy's Thanksgiving Parade. But I digress ...

I remember dancing around our living room one year, after Santa hit Macy's, singing "Christmas is here! Christmas is here!" But truly, I was wrong.

When Santa hits New York or Philadelphia or any other city, Christmas may be on the way, but Advent is right around the corner, starting the very next Sunday. The Advent season consists of the four Sundays before Christmas and Christmas

(Continued on page 3)

Lectionary Readings

December 7, 2014

Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

December 14, 2014

Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Psalm 126

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 21, 2014

Fourth Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:47-55

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38

December 24, 2014

Christmas Eve

"Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalm 96

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-20

December 25, 2014

Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm 98

Hebrews 1:1-4 (5-12)

John 1:1-14

December 28, 2014

First Sunday after Christmas Day

Isaiah 61:10-62:3

Psalm 148

Galatians 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

December 31, 2014

Watch Night or New Year's Eve

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Psalm 8

Revelation 21:1-6a

Matthew 25:31-46

December Birthdays

1	Ben Allman	19	Michael Morris
3	Cathy Burke		Ciarra Crawford
4	Michelle Johnson	20	Ollie Gray
6	Dave Wilson	24	Ed Trewhella
11	Joshua Park	29	Robertta Grimes
12	Michael Davis	30	Peter Hughes
	Mollie Davis	31	Lorie Falk
	Anita Taylor		
14	Chris Lee		

Please "Help" Damascus Help!

Damascus Help would like you to consider designating your United Way and Combined Federal Campaigns' contributions to Damascus Help, Inc. Our designation code for United Way is 8425 and for the Combined Federal Campaign, 30335.

Damascus Help is an all-volunteer organization that helps people in our service area of Damascus, Clarksburg, Hyattstown, north Laytonsville, Frederick County south of Route 75, and Germantown north of Brink Road. We provide food, holiday meals, financial assistance, furniture, and transportation to those in need. For further information, call us at (301) 253-4100 or visit <http://www.damascushelp.org>.

(Pastor 's Desk, continued from page 1)

Eve. In this season, Christians celebrate the coming of the Christ Child and anticipate the return of Christ in his Second Advent. It is not simply about celebrating a historical event that occurred more than 2,000 years ago, but also about waiting for the promised return of Christ.

Do you remember, as a child, the buildup to Christmas Day? The joyful anticipation of what would be under your tree? The anticipation building day by day, from Thanksgiving to Christmas? I can still search deep in my memory and remember the happiness of that anticipation again. That is the joy of Advent. Not in anticipating the presents under the tree, but in anticipating the one who came to give us the present of salvation. The anticipation of the one born in a lowly manger who would die on the cross because he loves you and me so much that he gave us the ultimate gift.

The Bible has many stories about waiting, anticipation, getting ready. We just completed the Hebrew Bible lessons on Moses, the Exodus, and the trip to the Promised Land in this fall's lectionary. The Hebrew people waited for someone to save them from Pharaoh. They waited to enter the Promise Land. And the Hebrews waited a very long time for the birth of the Messiah. The wise men followed the star a great distance in anticipation of worshipping the Christ Child. Our faith stories remind us that while it is hard to wait and travel long difficult roads, the times of waiting and anticipation teach us to slow down and pay attention to how God moves in and through us and others. As we travel once again this year toward Bethlehem and prepare to greet the newborn babe wrapped in

swaddling clothes, lying in the manger, let us travel it in breathless anticipation. This is what the season of Advent is all about: preparing, waiting, anticipating, and looking forward to the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ Emmanuel.

Too often, we allow retailers to rush us through this time of wonder, this time of preparation. Too often, we think it is about the perfect gift, forgetting that we have already been given the perfect gift. Therefore, we fill our days to the brim and allow others to rush us from Point A to Point B and we cheat ourselves out of Advent.

I invite you to make this Advent a time of joyful, breathless anticipation. Don't let the retailers and advertisers con you into believing it is about the latest fads, the newest and biggest gadgets. Don't let them cheat you out of Advent. This isn't the Christmas season: That is the 12 days between Christmas and Epiphany. This is Advent, the season of anticipation, the season of preparation for the coming of the King. Sing the wonderful Advent hymns in breathless anticipation. When you hear the words, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel..." remember your childlike eagerness for the coming of Christmas, the celebration of Jesus' birth. Enjoy it. Enjoy it for yourself. Enjoy it with your family. I found an Advent Calendar on the UMC Discipleship Ministries website and have shared it with you in this newsletter. I pray that it helps you "... prepare the way of the Lord" this Advent season. Please enjoy it and may it bless you from the first Sunday of Advent through Christmas Day. May God bless you and your family this Advent season.

Pastor Linda



Live Nativity

December 20th

6:00 - 8:00 PM

Join us for A Night in Bethlehem...

Saturday, December 20th 6:00 - 8:00 PM

At the Gazebo on the corner of Route 124 & Route 108
Damascus, MD

You will enjoy the serene & gentle live display of the night
our Savior Jesus was born.

Warm drinks & cookies will be served.

Presented by:

South Damascus Charge

Wesley Grove United Methodist Church

Mt. Tabor United Methodist Church

Salem United Methodist Church

Christian Fellowship News

Becky Lewis, Chair

Here comes Santa Claus, here comes Santa Claus, right down the "Woodfield Bypass" on Saturday, December 6. Santa will meet and greet our Special Needs Friends in the Education Building from 2 to 4 p.m., and the community's children from 4 to 5 p.m. His elves will serve hot chocolate, milk, and cookies to all of their guests, and everyone will receive a free 4 x 6 print to commemorate the visit. There will also be crafts and a carol sing-along.

Members of our Sunday School are encouraged to stick around for their holiday party immediately afterward. The event starts at 5 p.m. (come at 4:45 p.m. if you want to visit Santa too). Each participant should bring a wrapped gift (cost \$10 to \$15) for a Secret Santa Gift Exchange, followed by dinner and a movie in the Education Building. All of our young people are welcome to attend; please let Carol Stone know your plans so she can make dinner arrangements.

Speaking of our church's youth, they, along with their parents and church friends, helped raise \$1,633 for CROP when they walked following the worship service on October 12. A total of 17 walkers walked 182 laps, averaging 11 laps per walker. Thanks to them and to the 40 church members who sponsored them! Our total donation to CROP also included "tips" from the October Turkey & Oyster Dinner. CROP is a program of Church World Service that aims to eradicate hunger and poverty throughout the United States and the world.

In the same spirit, members of our church family will minister to the community on Sunday, December 21, when we take carols and

cheer to our shut-ins and to nursing home residents. Please meet at the Education Building at 4 p.m. to form carpools; after caroling ends, we will gather at the home of Rick and Tammy Monarch, 9009 Kimblehunt Drive, for a fellowship meal of soup, pork barbecue, and salad. The meal is provided by the Christian Fellowship Committee; please bring a tin of cookies to use to help spread cheer as we carol. Look for the sign-up sheet in church to give Rick and Tammy an idea of how many guests to expect.

Elaine and Randy Falk will serve as hosts for another annual holiday event, the joint Evening Circle/United Methodist Men appetizer and dessert party. Look for the sign-up sheet for that evening of good cheer at 21 Clearwater Court on Thursday, December 18, at 7 p.m.

Those two groups have other efforts going on during December as well: The Evening Circle will continue their self-service Christmas Shop in the "Youth Room" throughout the holidays, and the UMM will put up the outdoor Nativity scene sometime in early December. Check with Brian Lewis for the "good weather day" that has been selected.

All of those events tell you that our December schedule is a very busy one, so it should be no surprise that Ladies Lunch Out and our after-service Coffee and Conversation will take a break this month, resuming in January. And looking ahead to the winter, we'll follow up on the success of the last year's International Pot Luck with a "Winter Picnic" pot luck featuring hamburgers, hot dogs, and all your favorite summer foods. Look for more details in the January newsletter.

Missions News

Jackie Hottinger, Chair

Look for the basket in the Greeting Room with food tags and gift wish list tags for the Christmas baskets for five local needy families. There are also boxes for the donations. Please remember to wrap your gifts and attach the color coded tags with the person's name on it. All of the gifts and food items are due back to church on Sunday, December 14. If you would like to donate money for perishable items or to purchase a gift, please see Jackie Hottinger.

We are continuing to collect toiletry and personal care items and trinkets for the residents at Pleasant View Nursing Home until Sunday, December 21, if you would like to donate some goodies to these very needy people.

Thank you to everyone who donated special food items for the Damascus Help food pantry.

Our missions program for 2014 was very successful. We should be proud of all we accomplish as a small church. Have a blessed New Year!

Flower Sponsors

Doug Gaither, Worship Chair

December 2014 is the last month we will be purchasing fresh flowers for the altar. Please see any member of the Worship Committee if you have any questions or concerns.

October Financial Report

Rick Monarch, Treasurer

Expenses	
Apportionments	\$1,458.25
Pastor's Salary	\$1,676.16
Pastor's Benefits	\$860.72
Housing Allowance	\$813.92
Church Secretary's Salary	\$840.00
Payroll Taxes	\$61.96
Grass Cutting and Snow Removal	\$1,070.00
Custodian's Salary	\$480.00
Programs	\$480.13
Office Expenses	\$50.00
Trustees - Maintenance	\$2,578.72
Miscellaneous Adjustment	-\$466.91
Total Expenses	\$9,902.95

Income	
Weekly Collections	\$5,804.24
Cell Tower - Sprint	\$1,710.91
Cell Tower - Verizon	\$1,238.06
Grocery eScripts	\$2.46
Use of Hall	\$0.00
Interest Income	\$6.16
Housing Allowance Reimbursement	\$813.92
Evening Cantata Collection	\$149.00
Total Income	\$9,724.75
October 1, 2014 Balance	\$29,755.31
October 31, 2014 Balance	\$29,577.11

Administrative Council Meeting November 10, 2014

Jackie Hottinger, Secretary

In attendance: Mike Sherwood, Pastor Linda Yarrow, Rick Monarch, Jackie Hottinger, Tammy Monarch, Judy Hughes, Lewis Burdette, Scott Iles, Andi Brickman, Becky Lewis, Randy Falk, Jim Kemp, Ollie Gray

Guests: Bob Burke, Karen Allman

Devotional: Jackie Hottinger shared a devotional based on Hebrews Chapter 8 on how we respond to Christ's sacrifice for us by doing good and sharing with others. She then read a short prayer.

Good News Items: Turkey and oyster dinner was a success, Trunk or Treat was lots of fun, movie theme song sing-along for our special needs friends was well received, CROP Walk raised more than \$1,400 and Laity Sunday had good volunteer participation.

Action Items: Rick Monarch made a motion to accept the October 13, 2014, minutes as written and published, Judy Hughes seconded, vote taken and approved as written.

Committee Reports:

Finance – Jim Kemp: Collections are steady and we served a nice dinner at the Fire Department banquet. Copies of the 2015 budget were distributed for discussion.

Christian Fellowship – Becky Lewis: Santa is coming on December 6. We will have a Live Nativity on December 20 in Damascus.

Missions – Jackie Hottinger: We are sponsoring five local needy families with Christmas food baskets and gifts.

Old Business: Need status of sound system upgrade.

New Business: Parking lot lights for the back lot and playground will be provided and installed by Potomac Edison. Karen is coordinating the project with them. We will not have a meeting in December.

Action Items: Jim Kemp made a motion to accept the 2015 budget of \$146,149.84. Tammy Monarch seconded, vote taken and motion passed.

Kudos from the Chairman of the Board: In the three years that I have been Ad Board Chair, the amount of work put out by the committees of this church was simply phenomenal. In all aspects (to the astonishment of the District), we were the standard by which goals and accomplishments were measured. We provided food for needy and hungry children, along with school supplies. We participated in St. Martin's Soup Kitchen, providing food for the hungry. We did Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for families in need, developed and hosted programs for special needs individuals, established a music program that enhanced our church services and became part of our outreach to the community, as well as providing three cantatas each year. The education program expanded from just VBS (which was always a success) to a large and active Sunday School as the number of children attending grew. The joy is that the parents attend and help as well. We have reached out into the community and our attendance is growing. This is not the time to rest on our laurels though. We need to keep it up, ramp it up, and reach out further and deeper to bring Jesus into the community by our words, thoughts, and actions. Our Vitality Committee will help with that, but it is us who will make

(Continued on page 10)

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!

a musical drama

Hardly anyone would dare to argue with this all-too-familiar phrase about Christmas: It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year! But why? What is it that makes the Christmas season so special? This Musical Drama will give insight into the spirit of the season with a great blend of familiar classic favorite carols and some brand new songs sure to become your new favorites. The musical is set in a small town, as the local church choir gets ready for the annual Christmas presentation. Sit back and listen to the heart-felt story of the miracle that took place in this small town many years ago....

Sunday, December 14

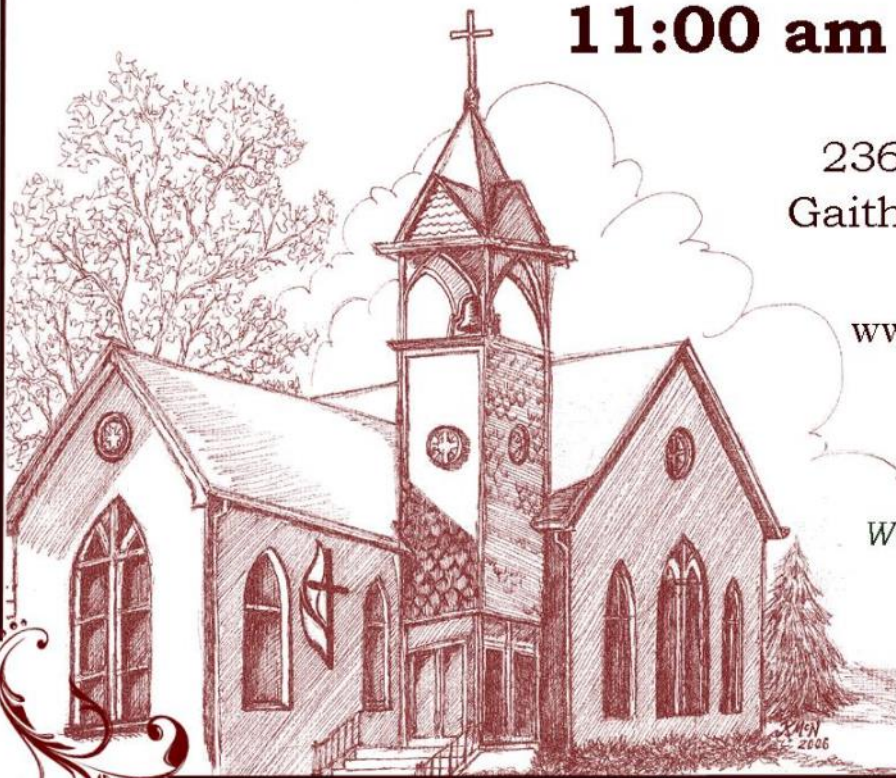
11:00 am & 7:30 pm

23640 Woodfield Road
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301-253-2894

www.wesleygroveumc.org

*Presented by the
Wesley Grove Chancel Choir
& Players*



DECEMBER 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7:00 PM Advent Bible Study @ Mt. Tabor	2 10:00 AM Advent Bible Study @ Salem 6:45 PM Lions Club	3 NOON Daytime Circle Holiday Luncheon @ Barbara Fritchie 7:00 PM Choir	4 7:30 PM Advent Bible Study at the Burkes' Home	5	6 Meet & Greet with Santa <i>Special Needs 2-4</i> <i>Community 4-5</i> 5:00 PM Youth Party
7 9:30 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship Communion	8 7:00 PM Advent Bible Study @ Mt. Tabor	9 10:00 AM Advent Bible Study @ Salem	10 7:00 PM Choir	11 7:30 PM Advent Bible Study at the Burkes' Home	12	13 9:30 AM Cantata Rehearsal
14 9:30 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Cantata 7:30 PM Cantata	15 7:00 PM Advent Bible Study @ Mt. Tabor 7:30 PM Finance (if needed)	16 10:00 AM Advent Bible Study @ Salem 7:30 PM Vitality Comm.@DD/BR	17 7:00 PM Choir	18 NOON Newsletter Deadline Evening Circle/ UMM @the Falks' Home 7:00 PM	19 7:30 PM Advent Bible Study at the Burkes' Home	20 8:00 AM Men's Prayer Breakfast 2:00 PM Prep 6-8:00 PM Live Nativity
21 9:30 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship 4:00 PM Caroling & Dinner	22 7:00 PM Advent Bible Study @ Mt. Tabor	23 10:00 AM Advent Bible Study @ Salem	24 7:30 PM Family Service 11:00 PM Candlelight Service	25 OFFICE CLOSED Merry Christmas!	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27
28 9:30 AM Sunday School 11:00 AM Worship	29	30	31			

Vitality Committee News

Tammy Monarch

Our Charge Vitality Committee will meet at Dunkin' Donuts/Baskin Robbins in Damascus on Tuesday, December 16, at 7:30 pm. You are all welcome to join us! We will be finishing plans for our Charge Live Nativity, which will be located in the center of Damascus on Saturday, December 20, from 6 to 8 p.m. We will also begin to plan for 2015. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please feel free to come or to share with me ahead of time, and I will share them with the committee.

On December 20, we will meet at the Education Building at 3 p.m. to assemble props, costumes, tables, refreshments, lighting, sound system, etc. We will then drive all materials and supplies to Damascus Park about 4 p.m. We need actors and actresses, singers, greeters, bakers, etc. from all three churches that evening. Please let me know at (301) 253-0044 if you can help with any or all parts of this exciting and wonderful event, which we hope will become an annual tradition. What better way to spread the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ than to share it with all of our friends and neighbors in the center of our hometown just five days before Christmas?

Sunday School News

Tammy Monarch, Education Chair

In case you haven't stopped by the Education Building recently on a Sunday morning, our Sunday School class is filled with excited, enthusiastic, and interested kids! We currently have about 15 to 18 students ranging in age from 3 to 12. Since we began our lessons this fall, we have read and studied the Old Testament stories of Creation, Adam and Eve, the beginning of sin, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Deborah, Esther, and David: all leading up to the birth of one very special baby.

Throughout this Advent season, we will focus on the days and events leading up to the birth of Jesus, including Joseph's lineage from David, the choice of Mary as his mother, the Jewish census, their journey to Bethlehem, and his actual birth in a lowly manger in a very small, unknown town. Each Sunday, we will light an Advent candle to recognize the feelings we have as we prepare for our Messiah's arrival: hope, peace, joy, and love.

On December 24, our Sunday School students will present the earlier worship service at 7:30 p.m. in our sanctuary. Please make plans to attend this family-friendly service of carols, readings, drama, and music. We also promise you the laughter, smiles, and fun spirit of children on Christmas Eve. All of our kids are excited and eager to perform for you the magical story of our Savior's birth!

Minutes, continued from p. 7

the difference. My tour is over here, but Bob Burke and all of you will continue to carry the light out into the world for WGUMC. It has been a joy and pleasure serving with all of you, and no one could ever ask for more than you gave. I salute you all.

Devotions for next meeting will be Rick Monarch. Next meeting will be Monday, January 12, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. Meeting adjourned with a prayer from Pastor Linda at 9:01 p.m.

We're Growing – Let's Stay Focused on Our Youth!



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The pavilion, ballfield, and playground are used by the youth in the community. Please support these businesses! All of their donations go to support the maintenance of these facilities.



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**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.




*Join us for our
Christmas Eve Services*

*Family Service
7:30 pm*

*Candlelight Service
11:00 pm*

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

Wesley Grove United Methodist Church
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