

May  
2024

# THE MONUMENTAL MESSENGER

Volume 73 Issue 5  
May 5, 2024

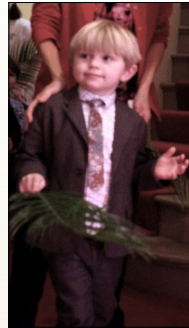
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## Life at Wesley



The 4th & 5th graders made Resurrection Gardens at the Easter Egg Hunt. Pictured left is one Olivia Wanager made.



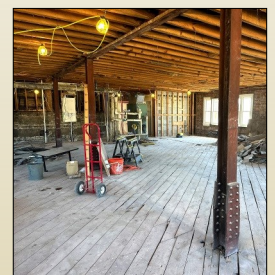
Wesley children and choirs participating in Wesley's Palm Sunday Service.



Jennifer Baker was the guest speaker for the Merry Makers May program and gave a presentation on woodworking.



Wesley Youth picked up pine cones, weeded, and pruned bushes at the Living Vine Christian Maternity Home.



Education Building Renovation





## From Ben's Desk

Ben Martin, Senior Pastor

912-232-0191, Ext. 216, [ben@wesleymonumental.org](mailto:ben@wesleymonumental.org)

### GENERAL CONFERENCE

When you receive this May monthly Messenger, I will be away in Charlotte, N.C., serving as a South Georgia Conference delegate to the 2024 General Conference of the United Methodist Church. This is actually the delayed 2020 General Conference that could not meet because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The General Conference is the policy-making arm of the United Methodist Church. It meets every four years and is made up of lay and clergy delegates from every Annual Conference in the world. This year, nearly 900 delegates worldwide will gather in Charlotte for ten days of worship, prayer, and holy conferencing as we define our life together as United Methodists. Being United Methodist means being connectional. It means we are better together than alone and share a common call to serve Christ in the world. We will study and vote on more than 1000 pieces of legislation. While exhausting and challenging, the Conference remains a beautiful expression of the Kingdom of God in all its diversity. Coming out of an unprecedented time of division in our denomination's history, we are focused on uniting our church and centering our attention on Christ, whose reach is wide and grace immeasurable. There is always a lot of information that comes out from news agencies, caucus groups, and individuals on social media. Sometimes, it is accurate, but just as often, it comes with an agenda that can be very misleading, intentionally divisive, and destructive. If you want to get good information about the General Conference, visit the two links below. Please pray for the General Conference and those of us who have answered a call to give leadership to our denomination as delegates. I remain very hopeful for the United Methodist Church. Our Christ-centered theology of grace and "open hearts, open minds, open hands" spirit positions us well to reach a world that is increasingly diverse and secular with the good news of Christ. When I return from the Conference, I will have a time to share with you what happened and how it affects us.

<https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/general-conference-2020>

<https://www.umnews.org/en/>



## Youth Ministry

Hello all. Your friendly neighborhood Youth Committee Chair Sheila Watts here. April was a great month filled with lots of activities. Our 6th grade confirmation class was confirmed. It is always a joyous occasion to see our students make a profession of faith and take this next step in their faith journey. The youth also



volunteered at The Living Vine, pruning, weeding, and collecting pine cones. Students participated in a photo scavenger hunt around downtown Savannah. On Wednesday nights, we continue to study the Gospel of Matthew. The youth were also able to go to Leopold's on one Wednesday night, an event so special they do it once a semester.

This is also the time of year when we are preparing to wrap up the school year and recognizing our graduating seniors. We are also preparing for the onset of summer which will include Sunday night youth at Wesley Gardens

Retreat, the out-of-town mission trip, the local mission week, more Fun with Skip and Sheila, and a few more exciting opportunities for fellowship and study are in the works.

If your student is not yet plugged into the Wesley Monumental Youth Ministry, now is a great time to start! Please follow the youth on Instagram at [@wesley\\_monumental\\_youth](https://www.instagram.com/wesley_monumental_youth) for more photos and updates!





## Children's Ministry

Charli Weeks, Director of Children's Ministry  
912-232-0191 Ext. 225, [charli@wesleymonumental.org](mailto:charli@wesleymonumental.org)

**Infant Recognition is  
Sunday, May 12!**



### Infant Recognition Sunday

Each year, on Mother's Day, we look forward to recognizing the babies born into our congregation, and this year is no exception! On Sunday, May 12 we will be honoring more than 20 families who welcomed babies into the world this past year. If you are a member of Wesley Monumental or attend regularly, please contact [charli@wesleymonumental.org](mailto:charli@wesleymonumental.org) to confirm we have your child on our list.



### Summer Fun Daze at Wesley Gardens Retreat

Wesley children, who have completed kindergarten through third grade, can attend our Summer Fun Daze camp at Wesley Gardens the week of July 15-19. It will be a fun week full of games, crafts, science, and water fun, along with some time spent studying God's Word. Monday-Wednesday, we'll start at 9:00 a.m. and end at 3:00 p.m. On Thursday, we'll start at 9:00 a.m., and we will be spending the night at Wesley Gardens! Our tired campers will be ready to be picked up at noon on Friday. The cost for the week is \$85. Space is limited. At this time, registration is open for members of Wesley Monumental. Register for VBS and/or Summer Fun Daze at [www.myvbs.org/wesleymonumental](http://www.myvbs.org/wesleymonumental)



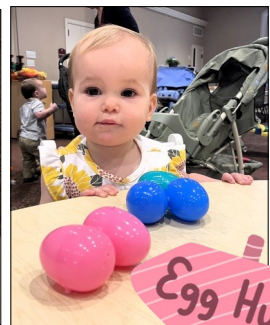
### Vacation Bible School

This year our Vacation Bible School will be held at Wesley Gardens Retreat June 3-7 from 9:00 a.m. to noon. At this time registration is open for all Wesley Monumental families. Register at [www.myvbs.org/wesleymonumental](http://www.myvbs.org/wesleymonumental)



### Summer Camp at Eli's Place

Summer Camp at Eli's Place is for children as young as 12 weeks through those who have completed Pre-K and will be starting kindergarten in the fall. It is a great opportunity for children to build friendships with other children who are members of Wesley Monumental. Registration is now open.



Hunting eggs with our friends at Eli's Place.







## Evangelism

Nelle Bordeaux, Outreach & New Members  
912-234-9245, tbordeaux@prodigy.net

## Welcome, New Members!

We are thankful the following joined during March. Our next New Member Course will be on Sundays, May 12 and 19, at 10:00 a.m. both Sundays, with the class joining as a group on May 19. Nursery provided. Please call the church office to sign up at 912-232-0191.



### **Cindi & Robert Bittel**

The Bittels met in college at Bloomsburg University in Pennsylvania and have been married for 42 years. They owned a business in the HVAC industry in New Jersey, and she is a speech pathologist. Their

shepherds are their neighbors.

*Shepherds: Joellen Cooper-Pyles and Victor Deen*



### **Hayley Black & Nathan DeMott**

Hayley grew up in Starr, South Carolina, and Nathan grew up in Savannah. She enjoys antiques and vintage fashion and works for Tesla, and he is a locomotive engineer for Colonial Oil. He also plays the piano. Already her shepherd, Meredith, has had Hayley to

her home for coffee.

*Shepherds: Meredith and Taavo Roos*



### **Hannah & Christian Swails & daughter, Savy Joy Swails**

Hannah and Christian were high-school sweethearts in their hometown of Rockingham, North Carolina. He has served as an Army Ranger, and they have been missionaries in Spain, where their daughter was born. Their daughter, age 3, has tenderly repeated the entire communion liturgy at home for her parents--it is very moving. She attends Eli's Place. Christian is on the church staff to oversee Spiritual Direction/Reservations for Wesley Gardens Retreat. Together, he and Hannah have founded CoCreation to help others to deepen their Christian faith.

*Shepherds: Hannah's shepherd, Jennifer Baker;*

*Christian's shepherd, Scott Cleaveland; Savy Joy's shepherd, Michael Cooler*

### **Bible Studies**

- Young Mothers' Bible Study-"Women in the Bible," Tuesdays, 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.; nursery provided by fabulous Carmine Cowart, while Nelle teaches the mothers.
- Thursday Noon Bible Study-"Minor Prophets," Thursdays, noon-12:30 p.m. via Zoom. Please sign up for either with Nelle, tbordeaux@prodigy.net



## Memorials & Honors

### Youth Ministry Fund

In memory of

**Anne Chaddock Donegan**

From

Dan & Judy Bradley

Monica Mastrianni

### The Endowment Fund

In memory of

**Freda Hale**

**Marilyn Holleman**

From

Jim & Karen Pannell

### Monumental Music

In memory of

**Anne Chaddock Donegan**

**Freda Hale**

From

Madge & Joe Edwards

In memory of

**Marilyn Holleman**

From

Dot & Penny Harper

### The Capstone Project/

#### Building Fund

In honor of

**Hannah & Eliza Macgregor**

From

Paul & Beverly Macgregor

In memory of

**Walter Sumner**

From

Rosanne Montjoy

#### The Music

#### Endowment Fund

In honor of

**The Donegan Family**

From

Kevin Beckwith

### Local Missions

In memory of

**Freda Hale**

**Stanley Butler**

From

Dot & Penny Harper

#### Eli's Place

In memory of

**Anne Chaddock Donegan**

From

Harrison Perry

In memory of

**Freda Hale**

From

Jake & Suzanne Marbach





## Missions

Nelle Bordeaux, Outreach & New Members  
912-234-9245, [tbordeaux@prodigy.net](mailto:tbordeaux@prodigy.net)

### Thank You to Michael Donovan

The church is thankful for the tireless mission service of lifelong Wesley member Michael Donovan. He will be greatly missed following his move to Atlanta in April. Thankfully, he will always be back at Wesley to teach Vacation Bible School and help as an usher when he comes home. We are grateful for his selfless example to us all.



### Calling All Adults--Youth Local Mission Week, July 22-26, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

You are needed to help alongside youth with local missions. Please choose a day/time that fits your schedule, and let Nelle know, [tbordeaux@prodigy.net](mailto:tbordeaux@prodigy.net). You may choose an activity you prefer, such as construction, organizing school uniforms, distributing canned goods, and yard work.



### Youth Local Mission Night

The youth have enjoyed "Youth Local Mission Nights" with the Memorial NICU, Union Mission (led by Neilie Dunn), Old Savannah City Mission, and most recently, the Living Vine Christian Maternity Home. The youth picked up at least a zillion pine cones, weeded, and pruned bushes. The youth also learned about the Vine's care for mothers-to-be and mothers and babies, and the youth even saw the Vine's boutique where expectant mothers can "shop" at no cost for new donated baby items. Don Riddle Jr. leads the Grassy Guys and Gals lawn care ministry that faithfully takes care of the massive lawn; if you want to donate a lawn mower, please speak with Don or Nelle, [tbordeaux@prodigy.net](mailto:tbordeaux@prodigy.net).



## Announcements

### The 73rd Annual National Day of Prayer

Thursday, May 2, 2024

7:30 a.m.—Noon Sanctuary Open for Prayer



*For you are my lamp, O Lord, and my God lightens my darkness. For by You I can run against a troop, and by my God I can leap over a wall. This God—his way is perfect; the word of the Lord proves true; He is a shield for all those who take refuge in Him. ~ 2 Samuel 22:29-31*

Wesley Monumental will participate in the National Day of Prayer on Thursday, May 2 by observing periods of prayer throughout the day. Members are encouraged to join in prayer for our country and its leaders by lifting your united voices on its behalf. A suggested prayer schedule may be found in the April 28 Sunday bulletin, online, and Wesley Weekly email blasts. While we ask you to join your respective groups in prayer, your prayers are welcomed at any time. The sanctuary will also be open on Thursday, May 2 from 7:30 a.m. to noon, so members and visitors can stop by and pray. (Due to the construction, please use the main entrance facing Taylor Square and the Gordon Street door for elevator access. Restrooms not available.)

**Jane Shirah Circle** - The Jane Shirah Circle will meet May 22.





## Wesley Gardens Retreat

Micah Sprunger, Retreat Director  
912-441-7578, [micah@wesleygardensretreat.com](mailto:micah@wesleygardensretreat.com)  
[wesleygardensretreat.com](http://wesleygardensretreat.com)



### Spring Commemorative Live Oaks Available

Spring is for planting! For those seeking to honor a loved one or make a lasting contribution to Wesley Gardens Retreat, commemorative Live Oaks with metal plaques are available for April. All gifts are tax deductible. For further info, please email [micah@wesleygardensretreat.com](mailto:micah@wesleygardensretreat.com).

### Grounds Upkeep Volunteers Needed

Part of the "Soul Care" we offer is providing retreatants with beautiful thoughtfully kept outdoor spaces to sit, stroll and pray. Would you enjoy being part of this behind-the-scenes ministry? Individual or group volunteers are invited to join in! Tasks may include removing Spanish moss, weeding, trimming azaleas, and keeping the marsh edge clean. Email [micah@wesleygardensretreat.com](mailto:micah@wesleygardensretreat.com) for details.



## Spiritual Direction

Christian Swails, Wesley Gardens Spiritual Director  
912-217-8646, [hello@cocreationlife.com](mailto:hello@cocreationlife.com)  
[cocreationlife.com](http://cocreationlife.com), [christianswails.com](http://christianswails.com)

### Spiritual Direction

What is a Spiritual Direction Session Like?



It can be tough to try something new when you're not quite sure what it is or what to expect. Spiritual Direction has been historically difficult to describe because it is incredibly experiential and unique to each individual. When you book a Spiritual Direction session you will receive a text from me (Christian) to set up an initial phone call. The call is for us to "meet" one another and make sure this is a good fit for you in this season. During the call I will help you understand more about Spiritual Direction and answer any questions you may have. If we determine it's a good fit, we will meet in person at Wesley Gardens on the date you booked through the link above. We will meet in one of the cottages or a quiet space in the main house. I will bring us into some silence together and help us settle into the space. I'll then read a piece of Scripture or wisdom literature as a blessing over us. We will enter back into the silence. If you have never had the opportunity to hold sacred silence with another, it is hard to describe how transformative and revealing that space is.

During those moments, the noise of life begins to fade, and what's really going on below the surface begins to emerge. So it's ok if you don't know right now what it is you want to get to in Spiritual Direction. This is what I will help you with. As the things that want to be said begin to emerge, I will invite you to share those things. I will listen, without judgement or agenda, to the places within you that have been silenced, or too busy, or too scared, or too hurt, or too confused to process. I will work with the Holy Spirit to help you discover Christ within you in those places. This is a safe, confidential, and brave space for you to notice and name the things that you can't get to on your own. I would be honored to hold this space with you.

Join  
-US-

### Weekly Spiritual Practices Gathering

For anyone interested in engaging their heart in deeper transformation and those looking for tools to walk out their faith, join Christian Swails from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday afternoons at Wesley Gardens Retreat. Everyone is welcome, and feel free to bring a friend!





## Music

Monica Dekle, Director of Music & Organist  
912-232-0191 Ext. 213, [monica@wesleymonumental.org](mailto:monica@wesleymonumental.org)

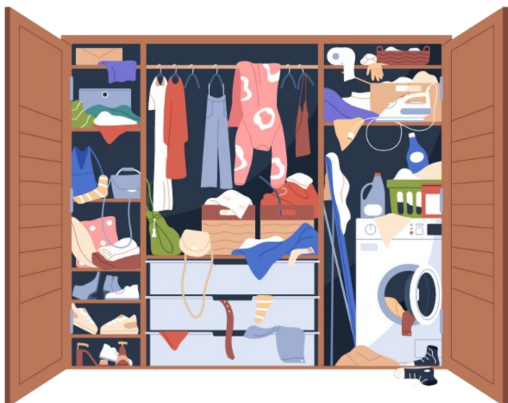


*"Hosanna, loud hosanna the little children sang;  
through pillared court and temple the lovely anthem rang."*



## Senior Adults & Pastoral Care

Carolyn Hale Cubbedge, Senior Adults & Pastoral Care  
912-232-0191, [carolynhalecubbedge@gmail.com](mailto:carolynhalecubbedge@gmail.com)



### ***Downsizing: Declutter, Destash and Dump***

Mark your calendar for May 20 at 11:00 a.m. at Wesley Gardens Retreat for the last Merry Makers meeting for this spring. The program will be "Downsizing: Declutter, Destash and Dump."

Come prepared to share your own tips and experience if you have already gone through this process. Note that this meeting will be on the third (not the second) Monday in May.

Lunch will be served. Cost is \$7.00. Call the church office to make your reservation or email [bakerj@wesleymonumental.org](mailto:bakerj@wesleymonumental.org).





## Messenger Monthly

## Easter Egg-stravaganza



Over 250 children and their families enjoyed being together at Wesley's annual Easter Egg-stravaganza held March 24 at Wesley Gardens Retreat.