



Pine Echoes



Over 80 Years of Communication
July 3rd, 2025

2025 | Issue 03 | Asbury Grove Newsletter

South Hamilton, Massachusetts

Celebrate the Fourth at Asbury Grove

Parade at 1:00p.m. | Games at 2:00p.m.

Break out the red, white, and blue: Independence Day at Asbury Grove is here, and you're invited to join one of the Grove's most beloved summer traditions.

The parade begins at 1:00p.m. sharp at the center pump. All are welcome to participate: walkers in costume, decorated bikes, golf carts, strollers, wagons, and flag-wavers of every age. Whether you're marching, pushing a stroller, or cheering from the sidelines, there's a place for you in the parade.

Children and youth are invited to gather at the Johnson House at 12:45p.m. to join the Youth Chapel's annual float. This Grove tradition brings generations together in celebration.

Once the parade wraps up at the ballfield, games will begin at 2:00p.m.. Please note the later start time—our volunteers need time to get everything ready after the parade finishes. Come ready for:

- The classic three-legged race
- The crowd-favorite sack race
- And, of course, the legendary egg toss: *last year's was the best we've ever seen. Will 2025 be just as memorable? There's only one way to find out.*

What to bring: food for a picnic or BBQ, water, a good sense of humor, and maybe a towel (depending on how far your egg flies). This is a day for all ages and all levels of silliness—just the way we like it. *Join in. Cheer loud. Get messy. Let's celebrate together.*

A Gift Wrapped in Uncertainty

Paula Ricci's Story of Faith, Resilience, and Purpose

"You have a brain tumor the size of a silver dollar. It needs to come out. How's next Tuesday?" These are the words Paula heard from the Chief of Neurosurgery at Massachusetts General Hospital in July 2012. In that moment, everything changed. Over the past 13 years, Paula has undergone brain surgery, faced regrowth, endured radiation, and has had more than 25 brain MRIs. She lives with the persistent uncertainty that, at any time, the tumor could grow, spread, or become malignant. *(continued on page 4)*

Don't miss Saturday's Magic Show with Fred—details on page 5!



This Week's Sunday Worship

This week's Vesper Speaker is our own Bruce Arbour at 4:00 pm.

Children's Church will begin July 5 during the 4:00 pm Vespers service. The activities will be appropriate for ages 5–7, including crafts, music, and Bible stories. Parents are asked to check their children in at the Johnson Youth Center, located at the back of the Vesper Circle, at the beginning of each service.

Contemporary Worship continues this Sunday, July 6 at 7:00 pm, with Grove residents Matt and Katrina Holland leading the evening service in the Chapel. All are welcome to join for music, prayer, and shared reflection as we enter the first full week of July together.

Camp Meeting Week August 3–8

Camp Meeting Week is one of the most sacred times of summer at Asbury Grove. For over 160 years, people have gathered here to be renewed in Spirit, reconnected in fellowship, and reawakened in faith. That rhythm continues this August.

This year's theme, *Rooted and Established*, draws from Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:17: *"That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love."*

The words echo a deep truth. We are not called to faith that floats or drifts. We are called to plant. To hold fast. To grow. And in a world that often feels unstable, this week invites us to stand firm in the love of Christ.

Each morning we will gather for prayer and study. Each evening, the Tabernacle will open to the community for worship, praise, and proclamation. Whether you've been coming for decades or you've never stepped foot inside, there is space for you.

Preacher Len Ballenger brings a prophetic voice. Nancy Lane leads Bible Study with clarity and care. Mark 209 opens the week with joyful gospel music. And throughout, Dan and Gina Blaze will guide us in quiet prayer and grounding presence.

As we prepare for this holy time, let us remember the invitation from Jeremiah 17:8: *"They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream."*

Come. Root yourself. Let your soul be watered.

Camp Meeting begins August 3. The Grove is ready.

Worship at the Grove

Sunday

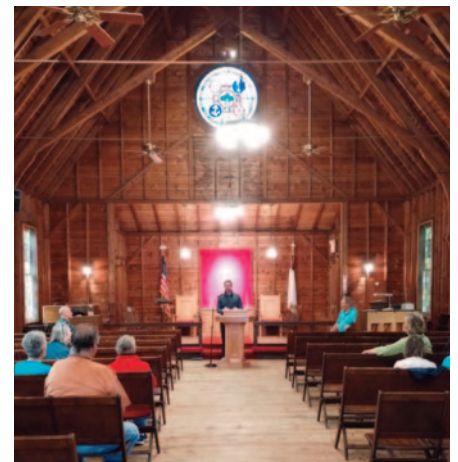
- 8:00 am – Men's Bible Study (Coffee Shop)
- 4:00 pm – Vesper Service (Vesper Circle or Chapel)
- 7:00 pm – Contemporary Worship or Hymn Sing

Tuesday - 7:00 pm – Bible Study (Jesse Lee House)

Wednesday

- 6:30 am – Prayer & Share (Coffee Shop)
- 7:30 pm – Teen Bible Study (Johnson House)

Thursday - 10:00 am – Ladies Prayer & Bible Study (All is Well)



July & August Vesper Speakers

July 6 – Chaplain Bruce Arbour

July 13 – Teen Challenge Adult Ministries

July 20 – Rev. Kevin Adams, East Baptist Church

July 27 – Rev. Kevin Baird, Hamilton Congregational

August 3 – Camp Meeting Week (10:00 am Vesper Circle Worship)

August 10 – Pastor Clark Jervois, Calvary Christian Church

August 17 – Rev. David Enos, Higher Ground, Gloucester

August 24 – Scott Brennan, Asbury Grove

August 31 – Rev. Mat Nadworny, Great Rock Church



Schedule for Camp Meeting Week

August 3–8, 2025 – Theme: Rooted & Established

Camp Meeting Week is held every August and stands at the core of Asbury Grove's spiritual season. For over 150 years, it has been a time of renewal, worship, and fellowship.

Saturday, August 2 - Illumination Night

Sunday, August 3 - Worship Leader: Dan Blaze

10:00 am – Vesper Circle Worship with UMC Pastor Cindie Chae

7:00 pm – Camp Meeting Kickoff featuring Mark 209

Monday–Friday, August 4–8

9:00 am – Morning Prayer in the Chapel with Dan & Gina Blaze

10:00 am – Bible Study in the Chapel with Bible Teacher Nancy Lane

Individual Afternoon Prayer available with Dan & Gina Blaze

6:00 pm – Community Supper in the Dining Hall (modest price)

7:00 pm – Camp Meeting Worship Service in the Tabernacle

Worship Leaders: Dan Blaze & Len Ballenger

Guest Speaker: Len Ballenger

About the Leaders

- Mark 209 is a high-energy country gospel quartet from Nashville blending humor, harmony, and deep faith.
- Len Ballenger is a seasoned pastor with a prophetic voice and passion for revival.
- Dan & Gina Blaze are longtime Asbury Grove guests, with over 30 years of ministry experience across generations.
- Nancy Lane, M.A. (Theological Studies, GCTS), brings a pastoral heart and gifts for biblical teaching.



The Red Prayer Box

Tucked just outside the Chaplain's Cottage on Central Place, near the back side of Jesse Lee, there is a small red box. It is easy to pass by if you are not looking for it. But for those carrying something heavy or hoping for something good, it is a quiet place to lay down a prayer.

The red prayer box is always open. Anyone is welcome to drop in a written prayer, whether it is for healing, gratitude, discernment, or someone you love. These requests are held in confidence and prayed over by Chaplain Bruce Arbour, who serves the Asbury Grove community with warmth, attentiveness, and care. He is also a trauma-informed specialist and a chaplain with the Massachusetts Corps of Fire Chaplains.

You do not need the perfect words. Just a note. A name. A sentence. Let your hope or burden be seen.

You are not alone. Let us pray with you.

Youth Outreach

Youth Chapel for children ages 8–12 (Junior Chapel) and 13–15 (Senior Chapel) began on July 1 and will run through August 22. *There will be no Chapel on July 4, but children are invited to gather at the Johnson House at 12:45 pm to march in the Fourth of July Parade.*

Youth Chapel is a drop-in program held Monday through Friday from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Johnson House. All participants must have a registration form completed by a parent or guardian. Forms can be filled out on your child's first day.

Teen Night and Bible Study for teens ages 13 and up takes place Wednesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 pm at the Johnson House and runs through August 20. The group is reading *Experiencing God for Teens* by Mike and Daniel Blackaby.

Note: Teen Night on Wednesday, July 23 will be moved to Thursday, July 24.

- Family Fun Nights (held in the Dining Hall) are also part of this summer's youth programming:
- Thursday, July 17 at 7:00 pm – Paint Night with Courtney Reid (ages 12 and up)
- Saturday, July 26 at 6:00 pm, Chapel Youth Dinner
- Saturday, August 9 at 7:30 pm – Bingo (after the Lobster Bake)
- Saturday, August 16 at 7:30 pm – Trivia (after the Pie Social)

Donations Needed: The youth program is in need of prepackaged snack donations such as chips, crackers, or cookies. Items can be left in the bin outside the Johnson House.

For questions, contact Beth Cook at 978-468-6006.

A Gift Wrapped in Uncertainty

(Continued from page 1) It's the kind of news that can stop your world cold. It's the kind of diagnosis that can shake your faith to its core.

Where many might have asked, "Why me, God?," Paula chose a different path. From the very beginning, she saw her tumor as a gift—an unexpected opportunity to live more intentionally, to focus on what truly matters, and to grow as a Christian. Because what defines Paula's story is not fear. It is faith.

About a year after her surgery, Paula completed her first sprint triathlon, raising thousands of dollars for Mass General's Neurosurgery Department. And for the past nine years, she's been a dedicated participant in the Pan Mass Challenge (PMC)—a powerful bike-a-thon that raises funds for cancer research and patient care at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. She's biked thousands of miles and raised nearly \$75,000. On August 2nd and 3rd, Paula will once again hop on her bike and ride 164 miles from Wellesley to Provincetown—not for glory, but for grace. For the fighters. For the survivors. For the ones we've lost. And for the hope that one day, no one will hear the words she once did.

Paula isn't asking for sympathy. She's asking for solidarity. Will you join her in her mission?

You can read more about her journey or make a donation here:

🔗 <https://profile.pmc.org/PR0148>

Or better yet—drop by and see her at 6 Mt. Zion. If the sun's shining, you might just find her fixing up her cottage or relaxing on the porch with her best friend, Coca, by her side.

Because even when life gives you a brain tumor, Paula will remind you that God can turn it into a blessing.

Dumpster Music Group – July 12 at 7:30 pm

Join us on Saturday, July 12 for a high-energy evening of Christian music with Dumpster Music Group. This will be a concert-style performance with an upbeat spirit and message.

More information will be available soon.



Paula Ricci



The Library

Library News

The Asbury Grove Library is open for the season starting Tuesday, July 8. Come browse the shelves, borrow a book, or cool off with a quiet read. All are welcome.

Summer Hours:

- Tuesday – 6:00 to 7:30 pm
- Thursday – 6:30 to 8:30 pm
- Saturday – 10:00 am to 12:00 pm

Hours may adjust slightly as the season settles in, so check for updates posted at the Library door.



Historic Cottage



Magic Fred Returns to the Grove

Saturday, July 5 at 7:00 pm –
Tabernacle

Get ready for a full evening of laughter, surprises, and a little bit of wonder. Magic Fred is returning to the Grove this Saturday for a high-energy, family-friendly show that's guaranteed to leave kids wide-eyed and adults genuinely impressed.

The 50-minute performance is packed with visual magic designed for a big audience, including one of Fred's signature illusions—a child levitation act that always brings gasps and applause. With a full theatrical backdrop and professional sound system, the Tabernacle will transform into a stage fit for real magic.

The show blends humor, music, and interactive moments where kids (and sometimes adults) become part of the performance. It's fast-paced, accessible for all ages, and built to entertain a large crowd from the front row to the very back. Come early to find a seat. The show begins at 7:00 pm sharp. You won't want to miss it.

Ask a Local

by Katie Krathwohl, 15 McClintock

While the fun never stops at Asbury Grove, the local area is full of summer happenings!

For instance, Ipswich Downtown Tuesday 2025 runs July and August at 4 Union Street (aka the Riverwalk by EBSCO Publishing). Free music by the river with a café atmosphere from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Beautiful setting, family-friendly!

Also within walking distance, you can enjoy amazing jazz every Tuesday night at The May Flower restaurant—enjoy a meal or just a beverage.

All this... and you can still grab an ice cream cone in the Grove first!

Ipswich Downtown Tuesday

July & August, Tuesdays · 6–8 pm

Location: 4 Union Street, Ipswich (Riverwalk by EBSCO Publishing)

Free and Public – Music, Poetry, & Dance

July Lineup:

July 1 – Orville Giddings

July 8 – Surnames

July 15 – Gigi & The Noize

July 22 – Chuck & The Players

July 29 – Jacobi & Friends

August Lineup:

August 5 – Treehouse Charlatans

August 12 – Deep Blue

August 19 – Labor in Vain

August 26 – What Time Is It Mr. Fox?

Snapshot: Things to Do at the Grove

- July 4 (Fri.)
 - 1:00 pm – Fourth of July Parade
 - 2:00 pm – Cookout & Games (Ballfield)
- July 5 (Sat.) 7:00 pm – Magic Fred the Magician
- July 12 (Sat.) 7:30 pm – Dumpster Music Group
- July 17 (Thurs.) 7:00 pm – Paint Night (ages 12+)
- July 19 (Sat.) 6:30 pm – Historical Society Ice Cream Social
- July 26 (Sat.)
 - 8:00 am – Duathlon Road Race
 - 6:00 pm – Chapel Youth Dinner
- August 2 (Sat.) 6:00 pm – International Supper
- August 3 (Sun.) 7:00 pm – Mark 209 Music
- August 9 (Sat.)
 - 6:00 pm – Lobster Bake
 - 7:30 pm – Bingo!
- August 16 (Sat.)
 - 6:30 pm – Pie Social
 - 7:30 pm – Trivia Night
- August 23 (Sat.)
 - 10:00 am – Rainforest Reptiles
 - 7:00 pm – Coffee House
- September 1 (Monday)
 - 12:00 pm – Labor Day Cookout
 - 7:00 pm – Campfire and Sing-Along
- September 6 (Sat.) 6:00 pm – Annual Slide Show & Supper

What Is the Cottage Owners' Association? And What Is the Pine Echoes?

The Asbury Grove Cottage Owners' Association (COA) was established in 1926 to give cottage owners a voice in the life of the Grove. According to its bylaws, the COA exists “to promote the general welfare of Asbury Grove... to support religious and recreational programming, and to cooperate with the Asbury Camp Meeting Corporation (ACMC).”

All cottage owners are automatically members of the COA upon payment of annual dues (\$5 per cottage). The Association typically meets twice per summer—on the Saturday closest to July 4 and on Labor Day weekend, when the COA meets jointly with the ACMC. These meetings are a great way to get involved, share input, and stay connected.

The COA also funds the printing and support of this publication: the Pine Echoes Newsletter. First launched as the Asbury Grove News in 1941, the paper was renamed Pine Tree Echoes in 1942 and later shortened to Pine Echoes in the 1950s. The current version is a digital newsletter that goes out weekly during the summer season (when content allows), and occasionally by email in the off-season. The Pine Echoes exists to share community events, highlights, worship opportunities, social news, and updates from our committees and neighbors. It's written by and for the people who love this place—and it's only as strong as what you send in.

Extra Extra

Celebrating the people, passions, and purpose of Asbury Grove

Back by popular demand, Extra Extra is hitting the Grove once more! Paula Ricci is on the lookout for hidden gems, untold stories, and the extraordinary people that make Asbury Grove so special.

Her mission? To shine a spotlight on the passion, creativity, and uniqueness that often flies under the radar. *Do you have a fascinating hobby? Know someone with a surprising talent?*

Are you part of something inspiring, uplifting, or just plain wonderful?

Whether it's quirky, spiritual, artistic, athletic, heartwarming, or just a little out-of-the-box—we want to know about it! If it makes you light up when you talk about it, chances are it'll inspire someone else too.

Extra Extra is ready to share your story. Reach out and let us shine a little light on the extraordinary among us.

Contact Paula by text or email. 978-818-0636 or pineechoesnewsletter@gmail.com



Thrift Barn News

Having a great start down at the Thrift Barn. Thank you for your donations and purchases. So many people from outside of the community walk through the door for the first time and feel a little overwhelmed, but they love it and come back.

The Barn will be closed July 4 and will reopen Saturday.

Regular Hours: Fridays & Saturdays, 9:30 am–1:00 pm

Come by and check out our vintage glassware – just \$1 each.

We're hosting a final sale with markdowns like:

- Dishes & Glassware – 50% off
 - Linens – 50%
 - Quilts – 25%
 - Puzzles & Games – 50%
 - Kitchenware – 50%
 - Lamps – 50%
 - Art – 25%
 - Furniture – 25%
- (Some items excluded)



Thank you to all for your continued support of the Thrift Barn!

A Note on Fires, Fireworks, and Grills

Although the Town of Hamilton allows limited open burning from January 15 through May 1, it is important to remember that open burning is never permitted within the grounds of Asbury Grove—at any time, for any reason. Even with a valid town permit, backyard burning is strictly prohibited here under the Grove's Rules and Regulations.

In addition, the Town of Hamilton prohibits all recreational fire pits, chimineas, and outdoor fireplaces. This means that even small, decorative, or “contained” fires are not allowed. These restrictions exist to protect both the forested environment around us and the densely spaced historic cottages within our community.

Fireworks of any kind are also not allowed on Grove property. Please do not bring or use them at any time.

Gas and charcoal grills may be used responsibly but must be positioned safely away from buildings, vegetation, and walkways. Never leave a grill unattended, and do not allow children to operate or play near any open flame or hot surface.

We appreciate your help in keeping the Grove safe and fire-free. These rules are not just about compliance—they are about community care.

A Berry Sweet Success

This year's Strawberry Festival packed the Dining Hall wall to wall, with a line stretching out the door before the first biscuit was even plated. The Ladies Aid once again delivered a perfect summer treat—fluffy homemade biscuits, piled high with fresh strawberries, a scoop of vanilla ice cream, and a generous dollop of whipped cream.

People were coming back for seconds... *and yes, the editor's daughter went back for thirds.*

Thank you to everyone from Ladies Aid who baked, served, and smiled their way through another sweet Grove tradition.



Senior Chapel Builds Benches

Members of Senior Chapel are giving back by helping to build benches for the Jesse Lee House. It's a hands-on project that combines teamwork, purpose, and a little sawdust—and it's becoming a highlight of their summer mornings.

Thank you to our youth and volunteers for putting faith into action, one board at a time.



Welcome to Summer 2025 from the ACMC President

Dear Asbury Grove Community,

As we begin our 166th camp meeting season, I would like to welcome all, new and old, to partake in our many activities and worship opportunities that are available to us. I am excited for each of us to form new relationships this year and continue to work on ones that God has so graciously allowed us to get to know over the years. I believe that God has so richly blessed us with an amazing community of believers to live life together in community. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all who make life in the Grove a better place to live. From all the volunteers behind the scenes to each of the committees who give tirelessly of their time and efforts. I would also like to thank the Office and Facilities Managers, Amy and Bruce, for their excellent work.

As you walk around the Grove, you will be able to see many changes, from cottage owners working on their cottages to Corporation buildings and grounds being worked on. The Chapel underpinnings have been completely redone, and the new stairs, ramp and finish work are well underway.

The Next Major project will be the complete renovation of the Basketball/Pickleball court area, removing the old and replacing it with a new surface with appropriate painting for the Basketball and Pickle ball courts.

As the season starts and programs and activities get underway, I hope to see each of you out and about enjoying time together. If you have any questions, concerns, or ideas, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely In Christ,
Stephen Farley, ACMC President

ASBURY GROVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



A Friendly Reminder from the Corporation

As we settle into the season, please remember that quiet hours are in effect throughout the Grove:

- Sunday through Thursday: 9:00 pm
- Friday and Saturday: 10:00 pm
- Sunday All Day

Out of respect for the Grove's faith-based roots and ongoing worship life, Sundays are a quiet day. Please avoid any activities that create disruptive noise, especially during worship times. Whether you're hosting guests, doing yard work, or just out enjoying the day, your mindfulness helps preserve the peace that makes this place special.

Let's all do our part to care for the community we love.

Asbury Grove Historical Society

The Annual Meeting of the Asbury Grove Historical Society will be held on Sunday, July 6 at 2:00 pm in the Wesley House. All are welcome to attend. The agenda includes updates on current projects, board elections, and ways you can get involved in preserving the Grove's rich history.

Looking ahead, join us for the return of a summer favorite: Ice Cream Social & Historical Presentation –

Saturday, July 19 at 6:30 pm

This year's theme is

“Transportation to the Grove Through the Years.” Come enjoy a sweet treat and learn something new about the journey that brings so many to this sacred space.

For more information or to get involved, speak to a Historical Society board member or stop by the Wesley House.



Coffee, Community, and Connection

The Asbury Grove Coffee Shop is officially open for the season, and this year's theme—Rooted and Established (Ephesians 3:17)—sets the tone for mornings filled with good food and even better company.

Friday mornings offer a relaxed, counter-service vibe. Stop in between 8:00 and 10:30 am for a lighter menu of muffins, bagels, fruit, yogurt, and your favorite morning drinks. It's a grab-and-go setup, but you're just as welcome to grab a seat and linger. And yes—iced coffee has finally arrived.

On Saturdays, the kitchen heats up for a full breakfast menu. From flapjacks to eggs and everything in between, it's a Grove tradition that brings neighbors together around full plates and full hearts. Doors open at 8:00 am and stay open through 10:30.

Whether you come for the conversation, the coffee, or the community, the Coffee Shop is ready to welcome you back. Come hungry. Come curious. Come often.



Letter from the Editor

Welcome back to another summer in the Grove.

Zetta and I arrived a little later than usual this year, but we're thrilled to be here. She's heading into 4th grade this fall, and I'm entering my second year of seminary. As many of you know, I serve as a Special Education teacher during the school year and spend my summers not just as a resident, but also as the publisher of the Pine Echoes and a pastoral intern at West Gloucester Trinitarian Congregational Church. I'll also be preaching at First Church in Ipswich this summer. *If you'd like to come out and support, my full schedule is available. You can worship with me this week at West Gloucester Trinitarian Congregational Church (488 Essex Ave, Gloucester) (July 6 - Preaching & Communion, 10:00 am,)*

The Grove continues to be a place of joy and grounding for our family, and I'm grateful to return to this work—curating your news, events, stories, and celebrations. This issue marks the first of what we hope will be a weekly paper throughout the season. If you'd like to submit something, make sure you read the submission guidelines.

See you around the circle (or probably at the pool).
— Katherine DeSilva Publisher,
Pine Echoes Newsletter



Watchful Eye

Please drive 7 MPH in the Grove—our children and elders depend on it. There are no sidewalks, and kids are often biking or running across the road unexpectedly. Whether you're in a car or a golf cart, please stay alert and slow down. Behind every rolling ball comes a child. Look twice. Save a life.



Submitting to the Pine Echoes

The Pine Echoes will go out each week that we receive enough content to fill an issue. If you have something to submit, please plan ahead. The deadline is Monday evenings—before you hit the hay.

All submissions must be complete and free of typos. Each entry must include:

- The full address of the event location (not just a building name)
- The date and time, including setup and start/end times
- The name of the person or group running the event or benefiting from donations
- A brief description of the event
- What participants should bring or expect
- Entries missing key information may not be included.

Submit to:
pineechnewsletter@gmail.com
Have a question? 978-312-2324 (text preferred)