



The Wesleyan Star

September

2025

**West Grove
United Methodist Church
Pastor DJ Choi**

**300 North Guernsey Road
West Grove, Pa. 19390
Phone: 610-869-9334**

The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming

September 7 - "The Father Welcomes Home" Luke 15:20b

September 14 - "The Calls For a Celebration" Luke 15:15:22-24

September 21 - Pastor Jim Mundell preaching

Clean Rich Christians: How Can I Go Through the Eye of a Needle?

September 28 - "The Money for Christians"

"Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself that they might declare my praise."

Isaiah 43:19-21

West Grove Church Family,

We now stand at a crossroads. We must decide whether to continue on the path we have walked until now, or to take a new one. We have set forth a new vision, Encounter, Empower, and Engage Our Community to be followers of Christ. And now we must act to make that vision a reality. That is our mission. We must consider how our community can encounter God through worship, how we can grow stronger through discipleship, and how we can become a gift to our neighbors through fellowship. No one should remain hidden in the crowd as a mere spectator. We pray that everyone will participate in God's reign and rejoice in His joy at West Grove UMC.

Keep the Lord's Day holy and be faithful in worship—that is the duty of every believer. Do not neglect learning in our small group bible study. There are many Community Groups (small groups of West Grove UMC), join one and be strengthened through the Word. And serve in at least one ministry for fellowship. To avoid serving is to invite stagnation and rigidity in faith. Pray and read Scripture daily. Meditation and journaling are also good ways to reflect on your life. A life without self-reflection becomes filled with complaints and resentment—signs of a lack of faith.

Now is the time for us to be reborn as a new church. We must bring our vision into reality through action. This is the Mission of Church and Calling the Lord has entrusted to us.

In Christ,

Lead Pastor DJ Choi

MEDITATING ON SCRIPTURE

September 2025



I love God's Word and delight in its truth. Yet too often I find that After reading my Bible or hearing a sermon, the truth, so necessary to the well-being of my soul and spirit, can too easily slip away. The truth that had, for a moment, captured my attention and affection can quietly fade amid the clutter and noise of the day.

One of the most effective ways to address this is to practice the spiritual discipline of meditating on God's Word. It is a discipline that takes time and intention, but one that brings great benefit to the soul. We need to carve out time to grasp the truth of God's Word.

Meditation is pondering the Word in our hearts, preaching it to our own souls, and personally applying it to our own lives and circumstances. Paul tells us in Romans 12:2, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Beginning in September, you will have the opportunity to take a passage of scripture weekly and add it to your memory to help understand God's Word. I trust you will take the challenge and see what you can do to learn more of God's Word. Look for the 52-Week Bible Verse Memory Challenge in this September newsletter to see what is coming.

This is a great challenge for all of us. I hope you will consider taking steps to learn more about God's Word.

Pastor Jim



Coming This September:

52-WEEK BIBLE VERSE MEMORY CHALLENGE!

Are you ready to grow deeper in your faith and experience the peace, grace, and love of God more fully? Starting September 7, 2025, we are excited to launch a 52-Week Bible Verse Memory Challenge designed to help each of us meditate on the character of God and Jesus throughout the year.

Every week, you'll receive a carefully selected Bible verse from both the Old and New Testaments, focusing on the character of God and Jesus, salvation, grace, mercy, love, and peace. These powerful promises and truths will encourage your spirit, strengthen your walk with Christ, and enrich your daily life.

Whether you're a longtime believer or just beginning your spiritual journey, memorizing or meditating on Scripture is a wonderful way to anchor your heart and mind in God's Word.

How to Participate:

- *Look for the weekly verse shared during our worship services, in the bulletin, and in our Constant Contact communications.
- *Take time during the week to meditate or memorize the verse.
- *Write out the verse each day during the week to help with your understanding of how the verse applies to your daily walk.
- *Use the verse at our weekly meetings and at the Bible study groups.
- *Share your favorite verses and how God is working in your life!

Let's grow together as a community rooted in God's Word—one verse at a time. Get ready for a year filled with hope, encouragement, and spiritual growth!

Blessings, Pastor Jim.



Monday Night Bible Study Returns This Fall with Pastor Jim

Discover God's Wisdom for a Messy World as we Study 1 Corinthians

Join us as we study 1 Corinthians—a powerful and practical letter from the Apostle Paul to a young church in a growing, immoral city. Though written nearly 2,000 years ago, its message speaks directly about the challenges we, as individuals, and the church, face today.

In a world marked by moral confusion, division, and cultural pressure, 1 Corinthians calls the church to return to holiness, humility, and unity in Christ. It provides timeless instruction for how the church should live as God's holy people, distinct from the world, anchored in the truth of the gospel, and empowered by the Spirit. In our study, we will look at real-life issues—covering topics such as unity in the church, immorality, spiritual maturity, relationships, worship, and the power of the resurrection.

Whether you're a long-time student of Scripture or exploring it for the first time, this is a great opportunity to deepen your understanding of Scripture, strengthen your faith, and build fellowship with others.

□ **When: Mondays at 6:30 PM, starting September 8th**

□ **Where:** Sanctuary of West Grove United Methodist Church

□ **What to bring:** Your Bible and an open heart.

□ **Study notes** will be provided

TUESDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY

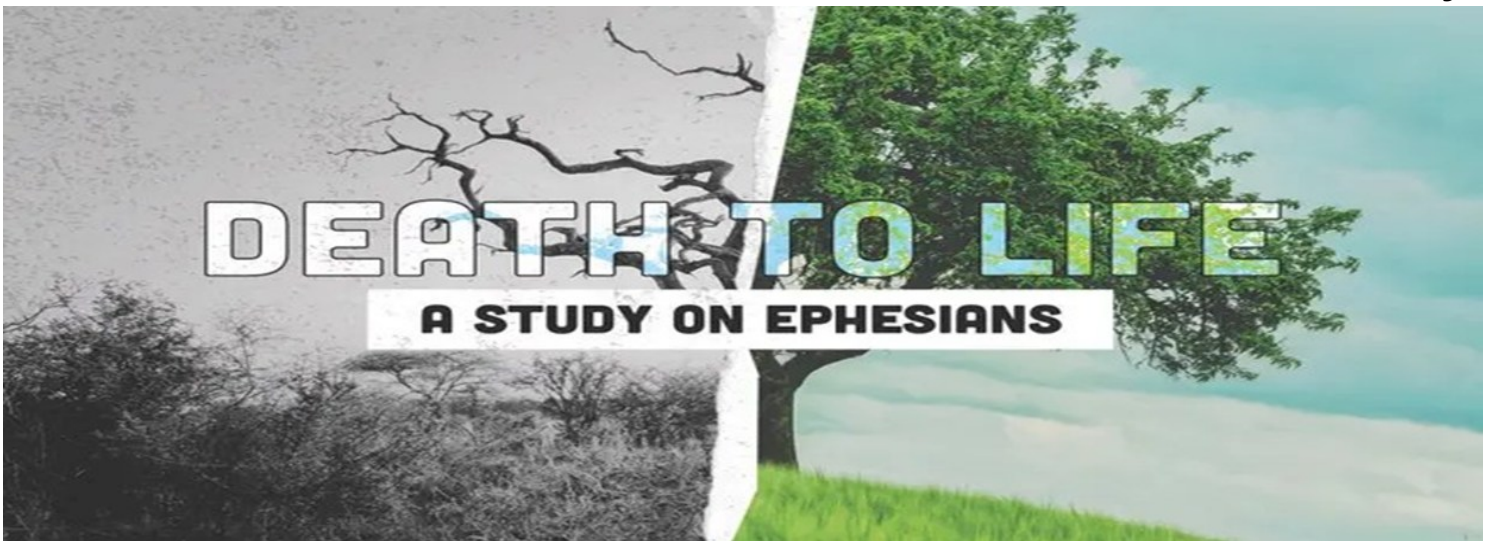
Our Tuesday afternoon bible study will resume on
Tuesday, September 16th at 1:00 pm. in the library.

The topic for this session will be "Forgiveness".

Leading the study will be Carol McGinley, Jake and
Debbie Schneider.

Please contact the church office at office@westgroveumc.org





When?

On October 2nd, TBS (Thursday Bible Study) at 6:30 pm. will begin an 8-week study on the Book of Ephesians, Part I.

Part II will follow on January 15 and continue for 9 weeks. The study will be offered both on Zoom and in person.

What?

In the Book of Ephesians, the Apostle Paul addresses God's purpose in establishing the Church and describes the organic nature of the Church centered on Christ. He explains how we, the Church, has been transformed from death to life, and how believers are called to live out the Christian life.

If you are interested or have any questions, please contact

DJ Choi at pastor@westgroveumc.org



Child & Youth Ministry Recap – Summer 2025

✦ What's Coming Up for Our Youth!

As summer comes to a close, we're excited to share what's ahead for the fall at West Grove UMC. Our youth ministry has been blessed with an amazing summer of connection, and we're ready to keep building momentum as we head into the new school year.

Youth Group – Starting August 19

Youth Group meets every other Tuesday from 6pm-7pm. This fall we're following a 7-week series designed to help youth grow in their faith, build lasting friendships, and of course, have fun! Each week will include a short lesson, a time for discussion, food, and a fun game or activity. We'll cover themes like Who God made us to be, living out our faith, trusting God's plans, and forgiveness.

Upcoming Dates: August 19th, September 2nd, September 16th, September 30th, October 14th, October 28th and November 11th.

Victory Sundays



Our new sports + faith ministry continues every other Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. This fall we'll keep blending sports like football, dodgeball, and soccer with short Bible lessons. Kids ages 7-14 are invited to come, play, and grow together in Christ.

Midweek Ministry – Starting September 4



On Thursdays from 4:30–6:00 p.m., kids gather for Bible Explorers, a 7-week series full of stories, crafts, music, and activities. This is a great way for children to connect midweek and stay rooted in God's Word.

Looking Ahead



We are excited to announce that Confirmation Classes will begin on Sunday, September 14th. This is a wonderful opportunity for our youth to deepen their understanding of faith and take the next step in their spiritual journey. Sign-ups will be available in the Narthex.

✦ We're excited for all that God is going to do through our youth this season. Please continue to pray for our students, invite friends, and encourage families to get involved. Together, we can help our young people grow in faith, love, and community.

Xavier Feliciano

VICTORY SUNDAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

KICKBALL & TEAMWORK



9:30–10:30 AM

BRING A FRIEND FOR A PRIZE!



MIDWEEK MINISTRY IS BACK!

Thursdays | 4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

September 4 – October 16, 2025

Ages 4–12 | West Grove United Methodist Church

Join us for 7 weeks of faith-filled fun, friendship, and growth!



Sing-Along Worship



Engaging Bible Lesson



Snack Time



Fun, Active Faith Activities

Weekly Dates:

- September 4
- September 11
- September 18
- September 25
- October 2
- October 9
- October 16

It's FREE – all are welcome!

Let your child explore God's love midweek in a joyful and active environment.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ, (News from Umba & Ngoy in Tanzania)

We pray this newsletter finds you blessed and encouraged. As we continue to serve and share God's love in Tanzania, we are grateful for your prayers, partnership, and encouragement.

Together, we are making a difference in the lives of many, and we want to share with you the latest updates and blessings from our mission field.



Missionary Umba with first year student pastors

We are overjoyed to share a wonderful milestone in our ministry! Seven dedicated student pastors have recently graduated from Morogoro Pastors' Training School and were ordained as deacons at the 2025 Tanzania Annual Conference.

Suzannah Welsey Polyclinic

Part of the surgery block has now been completed, and we are excited to announce that the glass windows have been installed.



Jackie teaching students at Suzannah Wesley Primary School



Thank you for your continued prayer, support, and partnership in this vital mission. Together, we are making a lasting impact and sharing hope and love with those in need.



UNITED METHODISTS OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA & GREATER NEW JERSEY

'Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.'

-Galatians 6:2 NRSV

YOUR GENEROSITY IS CHANGING LIVES IN TANZANIA

Dear Beloved,

I write today with deep gratitude and joy: thanks to your overwhelming generosity and faithful partnership, we have exceeded our goal for the Tanzania Pastor Salary Campaign! Together, we have raised \$77,842 for the Pastors of Tanzania Annual Conference. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

What a powerful testimony to the power of our connection that defines United Methodism. Your compassion and commitment have once again shown that when we join together, by God's grace, we can move mountains. As many of you know, pastors in the Tanzania Annual Conference often earn as little as \$67 per year—an amount that makes it nearly impossible to care for their families, maintain their health, or lead their congregations with the strength and focus their ministry deserves.

Now, because of your gifts, that story is changing. Every pastor in the Tanzania Annual Conference will now receive a living wage. Thanks to you, these faithful leaders will be able to serve their congregations and communities with renewed energy, peace of mind, and hope for the future. In return, the Pastors of Tanzania are teaching us about faithful evangelism, lived discipleship and missional mindset. As we build our partnership, we grow and learn together and strengthen our worldwide connection.

Again, thank you for your missional giving locally and globally. May we continue to love boldly, serve joyfully and lead courageously in local communities and worldwide connections.

With Gratitude, Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi

The United Methodists of Eastern Pennsylvania & Greater New Jersey

BishopMoore-Koikoi@epagnj.org / EPA: 484-474-0939 | GNJ: 732-359-1010



Please note that your donations from WGUMC and also United Women of Faith have helped support this ministry and are part of the grand total sent to the Pastors of the Tanzania Annual Conference.




If you can help Mel with this project, please contact him at 610-806-3805.



A huge thank you goes out to the many people who have committed to watering the flower beds outside the church to keep them looking good throughout the heat of the summer.

We are asking for people to sign up for the month of September. We ask that you take a week, providing water, if necessary, to keep the gardens beautiful. At that point, the flowers should be fine until the first frost settles in upon them.

We are excited to announce at our upcoming UNITED WOMEN in FAITH gathering we will feature a special guest, Julissa Sanchez who is a certified yoga instructor!

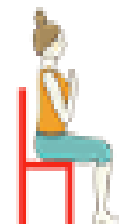


Julissa brings years of experience and a passion for helping people achieve balance, flexibility, and mindfulness. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to immerse yourselves in a relaxing and revitalizing time. Whether you are a seasoned yogi, a beginner, in a wheelchair, or using a walker or cane, this session will offer something for everyone.

Julissa will be focusing on a 30-40 minute chair yoga session.

Join us, Sunday, September 28th, at 12:45 (sharp) in the sanctuary.
All you need to do is to bring a bottle of water and wear comfortable clothes.

I look forward to seeing you and sharing this special yoga experience with you!





COMING IN SEPTEMBER



Upcoming Dates to Remember

September 1st - **Labor Day-Office Closed**
 September 2nd - **CMO begins**
 September 4th - **Mid-Week Ministry begins, Memory Bells & Choir Rehearsals begin**
 September 7th - **Victory Sunday, Youth Program**
 September 8th - **Pastor Jim's Monday Night Bible Study**
 September 9th - **Fall Youth Group begins**
 September 12th - **RAP's first fall meeting.**
 September 14th - **Xtra Mile Giving-Orphan Grain Train**
 September 16th - **Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study**
 September 27th - **United Methodist Men's Breakfast**
 September 28th - **United Women of Faith/Wellness Experience**
 September 28th - **Begin collection for Rummage Sale**

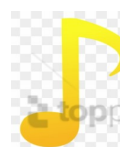
DO YOU ENJOY SINGING AND GREAT FELLOWSHIP?



Join the Chancel Choir!

Rehearsals for the new fall season
 begin Thursday evening,
 September 4th at 6:45 pm.
 in the Choir Room

Come make a joyful noise with us!



Reach out to Betsy Smith with any questions - (musicmomva@aol.com)

ATTENTION ALL LADIES!

DID YOU KNOW that Yoga

is an excellent way to improve flexibility, strength,
mindfulness, and overall health?

WGUMC United Women in Faith (formerly UMW) has established a weekly yoga routine which ensures that you can experience these benefits.

Starting Tuesday, October 7th, 1:30 to 2:00pm, and every Tuesday UWF is offering chair yoga, with Julissa Sanchez, our yoga instructor.



Stop in, bring a bottle of water and wear comfortable clothes.

Bring a friend and be ready to grab a chair!

See you in the sanctuary!

Feel free to call Shirley Daddario, President of UWF, if you have any questions,

484-268-0497 or email at shirleydad@verizon.net.

Donations are welcomed.



MEMORY BELLS

Whether you are an experienced ringer or someone who thinks maybe you'd like to try your **hand** at it,

Miss Lavenia would **LOVE** to have you join

her and the other ringers to make a beautiful noise unto the Lord.

Practices are on Thursday's, 4:30 to 6:00 pm. in the WGUMC Sanctuary.

Contact Miss Lavenia with questions at:

misslavenia@verizon.net or 610-869-9088



Food Pantry

West Grove UMC Food Pantry

Weekly Hours:

Wednesday: 5:00 - 6:00 pm.

Thursdays: 1:00 - 2:00 pm.

Food Pantry Update

The church food pantry continued to be busy throughout the month of August, serving between 110 and 120 families each week. If you have any interest in volunteering, please contact Joan Leaman (484-643-2181).

Our church garden has been a ready source of delicious vegetables that the neighbors who come to the food pantry have enjoyed. Produce from the garden has included tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, peppers and green beans.

During the month of September we will be collecting flour and corn tortillas. Any size package of tortillas is fine as they can be re-bagged, if necessary. They can be placed in the labeled bin in the church lobby.



September's Food Pantry Item of the Month

Flour and Corn Tortillas

Any size package of tortillas is fine as they can be re-bagged, if necessary. They can be placed in the labeled bin in the church lobby.

CARE PACKAGES for COLLEGE STUDENTS 2025-2026

Be on the lookout! We will be requesting items in early October thru Sign up Genius.

If anyone else would like a snack box sent to a college student please send an email, to Priscilla Barkman at Chrishell5@verizon.net with address and favorite snack food that fits nicely in a shoe box.





WGUMC's Fall Rummage Sale.

Friday, October 3rd Doors open from 9:00 am. to 2:00 pm.

Saturday, October 4th, Doors open from 9:00 am. till Noon.

By the end of this month, the Rummage Sale will begin to fill the Sanctuary. Starting Sunday Sept. 28th donations will be accepted for the sale which takes place Friday Oct. 3rd from 9 - 2 and Saturday Oct. 4th from 9 - 12. Some strong volunteers to remove most of the chairs from the Sanctuary and setting up or bringing tables from the closet, gets it all started.

We hope everyone will take part in this biannual event. The ways to help are numerous. First, there could be no sale without donations. If you have gently used home goods, clothing, patio/gardening items or small pieces of furniture you no longer need, consider donating them to the Sale. Bring them to the church beginning Sunday and during office hours Monday through Thursday.

The second way to help is by greeting the folks bringing donations and helping to put them on tables in the Sanctuary and in the Narthex. We usually begin around 10 (so preschool has time to greet the children) and stay until 3 or 4 in the afternoon. Any time helping is appreciated. Even an hour helps. You might get caught up in the fellowship and stay longer! A good thing for everyone!

Third is contributing to the Bake Table, our newest addition to the sale. Coffee and bake sale items are offered for sale on Friday and Saturday. Bring those items in by Thursday so we have time to price them for Friday. Anyone interested in hosting this part of the sale? Contact Fran Miller.

We usually have a rush of shoppers Friday morning, so if you could come during that time to assist the folks at the check-out tables or answering questions for the shoppers, it would be greatly appreciated.

And when the sale ends Saturday, we need help collecting leftovers and boxing/bagging them to be removed. We donate the leftover items to various places, and it helps to have some stronger people, maybe with trucks, to make quick work of emptying the sanctuary, putting tables back and setting up the chairs for Worship on Sunday.

This fundraiser allows the UWF to contribute to many missions near and far. So the final way you can contribute is to come and shop! Encourage your friends and neighbors to shop! There are treasures for everyone. Come one, come all to the Rummage Sale this fall.

Retired Active People

R. A. P. LUNCHEON

(RETIRED ACTIVE PEOPLE)

RAP BEGINS 2025 / 2026 SEASON!



Our first RAP luncheon is rapidly approaching, and we couldn't be more excited! **Friday, September 12th**, Linda Daniels will share with us, her talent in both watercolor, and acrylic art skills.



On October 10th, Mel Leaman will perform crooner songs from the 1940's - early 1970's. He will be taking requests for his performance at our September lunch.



So pack your lunch and join us for an afternoon of fun, food, and fellowship! Desserts and beverages will be provided by: Joyce Lewis, Paulette Bryan, Sandy Pardoe, and Sara Ann Ramberger. RSVP to Sara Ann at sar57ver@verizon.net or Sandy at sandytrul@yahoo.com so we can provide adequate seating arrangements.

Thank you and we will see you on September 12th at noon!!



**Children's Morning Out
(CMO) - News**

Happy Back to School!!

The Preschool is so excited to welcome our new and returning students to the 2025-2026 school year! The teachers and I have been very busy making sure the Preschool Wing is ready and in tip top shape for our little friends to return to school on Tuesday, September 2nd. This year we will house two PreK classes, one 3-day class for our 3 year olds, one 2-day class for our 3 year olds, one 3-day class for our 2 year olds, and one 2-day class for our 2 year olds! We will have a total of 8 teachers, and we are very fortunate that our teachers are all so highly qualified, super talented, and perfect for their jobs!

While many of the students returning are "old pros", we will have plenty of students who are brand new to school and who will be leaving their parents and family for the first time ever. We expect some tears from our little friends (and their parents ☐) for the first week or so, but soon enough, we know that our friends will be running through those front doors ready to see what fun and exciting things are awaiting them in their classrooms. We are ready for them and can't wait for all of the fun to begin!

Please pray for a safe and successful year for all of the students, their families, and our staff.
Love, Abbie.

The United Methodist Men hold a monthly breakfast at the church. There is time for scripture, sharing, some speakers and lots of fellowship.

We meet on the

Fourth Saturday of each Month, 8:00 -9:30 am.

More information will be shared as plans are made.

All men and boys are invited to attend. Contact Michael Duvall with your questions. (mwduvall@aol.com)



Have a question about the UMC, it's worship (what is Pentecost?), beliefs (what is repentance?), the sacraments (what do I need to know about baptism?), or the UMC in general (are all Methodist churches part of UMC)? <https://www.umc.org/en/who-we-are/ask-the-umc-faqs>



BIRTHDAYS IN SEPTEMBER

Hannah McCumming	9/1	A vibrant graphic for a birthday celebration. It features a large, multi-layered cake with blue frosting and white icing, topped with colorful balloons in shades of red, yellow, green, and blue. The word "BIRTHDAY" is written in large, colorful, block letters across the top of the cake. Confetti is scattered around the base of the cake.	Matt Simonds	9/19
Tim Anderman	9/8		Bob Phillips	9/19
Fran Miller	9/9		Gary Spencer	9/24
Victoria Owens	9/10		John Carmichael	9/24
Keith Schneider	9/11		Heather Ditzel	9/26
Ruth Kuch	9/14		Joyce Smith	9/28
Kim Smith	9/18		Steve May	9/28

Your church family wishes all of you a very happy birthday and a year filled with happiness and blessings!!



**DO YOU RECEIVE OUR WEEKLY (WGUMC)
CONSTANT CONTACT EMAILS?**

We publish a Weekly West Grove Wednesday edition which features upcoming events or events that have popped up unexpectedly. Also a Saturday Sneak-a-Peek about the sermon on Sunday and other information, including our newsletter, and a link to the current week's bulletin.

If you are not receiving these two emails, perhaps you elected to unsubscribe or they are being treated as spam and are going directly to trash.

If you are missing out and would like to be on the list, email April Spencer, our Church Administrator, at office@westgroveumc.org or call the office at 610-869-9334. She will be happy to add you to the list!

~ Encounter ~ Empower ~ Engage ~

At West Grove UMC, we love God by encouraging Our community to be followers of Christ.

**Office Hours: Monday—Friday
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.**

Staff

Rev. DJ Choi, Lead Pastor,
pastor@westgroveumc.org

The Reverend Jim Mundell - Associate Pastor,
Chaplain at Jenner's Pond

Jim.mundell@westgroveumc.org

Xavier Feliciano - Youth & Children's Ministry
Director

Childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org

April Spencer - Church Administrator

Office@westgroveumc.org

Janice L. Bowers—Financial Administrator

Financialadmin@westgroveumc.org

Betsy Smith - Traditional Music Director
Contemporary Music Director
Keyboardist

Betsy.smith@westgroveumc.org

Bill Pardoe—IT Director
billpardoe1@gmail.com

Lavenia Civitella—Handbell Choir Director

Misslavenia@verizon.net

Abbie Gruscavage—Children's Morning Out Director
cmo@westgroveumc.org

Maira Tena—Sexton
sexton@westgroveumc.org

**Sunday Worship Service
9:27 am.**

Christ Servant Ministers

Peter Mullen, psmullen@petermullen.com

Board and Committee Leadership

Val Kapp-Benner - Interim Administrative Council Chair and

Janice L. Bowers Financial Administrator

Kim O'Neill - Trustee Chair

Vicki Owens - Treasurer

Dan Elliott - SPRC Chair

Open - Missions Chair

Dick and Caryl Stuhrke - Hospitality Committee Chair

Open - Delegate to Annual Conference

Open - Committee on Lay Leadership

Shirley Daddario - U.W.F. President

Susan Paisley - Prayer Ministry Coordinator

Joan Leaman—Emergency Food Pantry Coordinator

Amy Castaldi - Nursery Coordinator

Cindy Hoover—CMO Advisory Board Chair

Sara Ann Ramberger—R.A.P Coordinator