

The Wesleyan Star May

West Grove
United Methodist Church
Pastor DJ Choi

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

2025

“Do not call me Naomi (pleasant); call me Mara (bitter), for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me.” Ruth 1:20

When grief hits hard and wounds us deeply, we find ourselves wondering again and again: Why did this happen? Was it to reveal God’s glory? To remind us of the fragility of life? Or perhaps to deepen the faith of those who must carry on?

Do you know why we suffer and grieve? Calamities and troubles are like the flu — uninvited, unwelcome guests who arrive without notice. When they visit us, we cannot avoid them. We must endure them, suffer through them, and wait to be healed.

How do you deal with your calamities?

We may also wonder: Why did God include the story of Ruth, a Moabite woman, in the story of David and ultimately, the story of Jesus? What was the author trying to tell us?

Scholars believe the Book of Ruth was written for the Jewish people after the Babylonian Exile, during Ezra’s time, when there was a strong effort to restore Jewish identity and rebuild the nation of Israel. Yet the story of Ruth seems to stand in bold contrast to Ezra’s policies — a direct confrontation to a spirit of exclusion.

We wonder how God allows His people to suffer and struggle. Yet as we walk through Ruth’s story, we may find answers to our own suffering and pain. We may discover hope for today’s world of polarization and rampant egoism. We may learn how to turn our mourning into dancing. I pray that as we journey through Ruth’s story, we will encounter the love of God and find hope even in the midst of despair and pain.

May 4th “Love That Stays” 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8. Xavier Feliciano preaching.

Ruth: Turn My Mourning into Dancing May

May 11 “The Widows” Ruth 1:1-14

May 18 “For where you go I will go, where you stay I will stay.” Ruth 1:15-22

May 25 “Ruth the Moabite” Ruth 2:1-13

Ruth: Turn My Mourning into Dancing May

June 1 – “The Blessed Redeemer” – Ruth 2:14-23

June 8 – “I am Ruth, your servant.” – Ruth 3:1-10

June 15 – “Don’t go back empty-handed.” – Ruth 3:11-18

June 22 – “The Restorer of Life” – Ruth 4:1-22

PASTOR JIM'S CHRISTIAN LIVING COLUMN

A HEART OF HELP

May 2025

As we approach Mother's Day, the word "help" keeps rising in my spirit. It's a small word with a big heart. We hear it in a toddler's cry, we see it in a mother's hands, and we read it throughout Scripture as a promise from God.

The psalmist says, "My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:2). God is our ultimate helper—He is present, patient, and strong. And isn't that a beautiful description of many of the mothers we know and love?



Mothers help in ways both seen and unseen. They wipe our butts when we are young. They pack lunches, bind scraped knees, whisper prayers over sleeping children, and stand in the gap when times are hard. Their help mirrors the helping heart of God—steadfast and overflowing with grace.

Here are a few Biblical Mothers who helped shape the faith. **Hannah** prayed fervently for a child and dedicated her son Samuel to God (1 Samuel 1). **Mary** said "yes" to God's call to bear the Savior (Luke 1). **Lois & Eunice** – Mother and Grandmother, both passed on their sincere faith to Timothy to help the young church under Paul succeed (2 Tim 1:5).

We can see the helping heart of God in Scripture.

Isaiah 41:10 – God Helps Us Overcome Fear. "So do not fear, for I am with you... I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." This promise speaks directly to those feeling weak, afraid, or overwhelmed.

Psalms 46:1 – God is Our Refuge and Strength. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." This verse anchors us when the world feels unstable—God is always available, always helping.

Matthew 11:28-30 – Jesus Offers Help for the Weary. "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest... For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Jesus, God in the flesh, offers help through rest and renewal for those who are carrying too much.

John 14:16-17 – **The Holy Spirit as Helper.** "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth..." God sends the Holy Spirit as a constant helper, comforter, advocate, and guide.

This Mother's Day, we give thanks for those who have helped shape us with love, lifted us with prayer, and walked beside us with strength. Whether it was your mother, a grandmother, an aunt, a foster parent, or a spiritual mentor—give thanks for the gift of their help.

And to all the mothers in our community, we see you. We honor your helping hands and your helping hearts. May God, our ever-present help, renew your strength and bless you richly.

Pastor Jim.

**WORSHIP SERVICE 9:27 AM.
YOUTH GROUP TUESDAY, 6 TO 7 PM.**

Our giving (offering) is an essential part of our faith journey. Sacrificial giving reminds us of the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. It represents our own sacrifice in following Jesus, helps us grow and mature in our faith, strengthens our spirituality, maintains our spiritual health, and serves as a sign of our commitment to Jesus through West Grove United Methodist Church. It is also a central part of our worship.

However, new people — those who are "unchurched" — may feel uncomfortable during the collection of the offering. Significant number of church members give monthly or quarterly, annually as well.

Therefore, I would like to introduce a change in the way we collect our offerings. On the first Sunday of June, we will no longer collect offerings during worship. Instead, you may place your offering in the designated boxes by the door of the sanctuary.

During worship, we will continue to have an offertory moment (music) to reflect on how our giving reflects our daily lives. We will present our offering by singing the doxology and praying for God's blessing over it.

I pray that our giving will become stronger and healthier through this change.

DJ



Beginning the first Sunday in June . . .
Look for this stand by the entry
doors to the sanctuary.





Luncheon for UNITED WOMEN in FAITH

Hosted by
Downingtown United Women in Faith
751 E. Lancaster Avenue
Downingtown, PA 19335

Date: Sunday, May 18
Time: 1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall

Guest Speaker:
Ann Yeager
Topic: "Forgiveness"

Contact: Shirley Daddario to RSVP by May 9th
610-268-3291 or shirleydad@verizon.net



Spirit Hiking at Big Elk Creek State Park

Pastor DJ would like to invite all WGUMC church people to hike together at Big Elk Creek State Park.

May 10th, Beginning at 10:00 am.

We will meet at the parking lot of the park,
344 Strickersville Rd, Landenberg, PA 19350

Please sign up by email to Pastor DJ.

pastor@westgroveumc.com



Thank you for your continued prayers and loving support for Tim Anderman. He is regaining strength, although another procedure is scheduled for Tuesday 4/29 as part of his treatment. He will remain at Brethren Village Short Term Rehab for his continuing recovery over the next few weeks.

Please add Julie to your prayers, as her mother died on 4/21, a week after a massive stroke. The whole family is very grateful for her liberation from suffering.

We remain hopeful and lean on God's gracious provision in the midst of all tribulations and afflictions. We so appreciate the generous cards and visits from so many.



Calling All Gardeners

Time to get up and GROW!

We are checking if there is interest in restarting our community garden with the goal of supporting our food pantry.

If you have any interest or ideas in supporting this ministry please contact Judy Gambill with an email at jlg456@epix.net.

Or call/text Judy at 610-389-7242



May 6, 2025 @ 7pm
Octorara Area High School
228 Highland Road
Atglen, PA 19310

SOAR TO NEW HEIGHTS WITH
BRANDON GRAHAM



THE POINT is thrilled to have NFL powerhouse, two-time Super Bowl Champion, & friend Brandon Graham, as our keynote speaker. Brandon's presence transcends the realm of football. He embodies the core values that define **THE POINT**: unwavering faith, relentless dedication, steadfast resilience, and unwavering commitment.



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GLOBAL MISSIONARIES Ngoy & Umba Kalangwa

Susannah Wesley Polyclinic

We are excited to share some wonderful news about the progress of our mission project, particularly the construction of the surgery building block, a much-needed facility where essential surgeries will take place.

Church Constructions

The construction of our house of worship is well underway! Over the past few months, we have witnessed significant advancements in the project. The foundation has been laid, and the framework is beginning to take shape.

Wesley Pre and Primary School

Wesley Pre and Primary School has seen a remarkable increase in enrollment this year. Currently, we are serving over 700 students, a significant rise from previous years. We have been blessed with the opportunity to expand our classrooms to accommodate more students. While we celebrate our successes, we also face challenges, particularly concerning funding and resources. We aim to ensure that our school remains affordable for all families, and this often requires additional support for supplies and teacher salaries.

Women's Empowerment

Seminars were held to help women learn about their rights, improve skills and support one another.



Is this little beauty of a clip on earring yours? It was found in the Admin. Wing by the back door. It's in the church office waiting to be claimed.

Our dear friend **Roger Bates** turned **95** this year. Here he is being honored by so many of his family and old dear friends!!!

We love you Roger



Retired Active People (RAP)

Join us on Friday, May 9th, at noon as we gather for a covered dish luncheon. Bring your favorite dish to share with one another. Hot and cold beverages will be provided. We are so delighted to welcome back the Providence Brass Band to entertain us with their musical talents. Cindy Haley is our leader for the day.

Last month we enjoyed an afternoon of fellowship led by Paulette Bryan. Thank you Paulette and thank you to everyone who provided an assortment of delicious desserts. We were extremely delighted to welcome Diane Albertson, a wonderful storyteller, as our guest who entertained us with a delightful account of travel, yet devastating historic cross-Atlantic journey of the Titanic.

As we close on another program year of our monthly gatherings, we look forward to meeting again in September. We are in the process of lining up new and interesting programs for 2025/2026. If you have a program or know of someone that has an interesting program to present, please let us know.

We look forward to seeing you in May. Everyone is welcome! Please extend an invitation to your friends and neighbors, and join us for a wonderful afternoon of fellowship and good food.

Please RSVP to Sara Ann Ramberger at 610-869-3863 or at sar57ver@verizon.net to let us know you plan to attend so we may setup and plan accordingly. See you on May 9!

Your RAP Committee,

Paulette Bryan, Cindy Haley, Joyce Lewis, Sara Ann Ramberger and Caryl Stuhrike



West Grove UMC Food Pantry

Weekly Hours:

Wednesdays: 5:00—6:00 pm.

Thursdays: 1:00—2:00 pm.

Thank you to West Grove Fire Company.

And the Chester County Food Bank



Food Pantry

Food Pantry Update

During the month of May, we will be collecting dog and cat food to have available to our Food Pantry families. Our April collection of cooking oil was very well received by our families, as it is one of the most requested items from our clients.

We were happy to set-up Easter activities in rooms adjacent to our food pantry distribution rooms, during Holy Week. Children who came with their parents, were invited to play games and do crafts while their parents shopped. Many children enjoyed the activities and the interaction with our amazing volunteers.

Volunteers Needed to Water Flower Beds

Last year volunteers signed-up for week long shifts to make sure the church's front flower beds were watered. This kept the flowers looking beautiful all summer and into the fall.

We will do the same this summer. We need volunteers to commit to a week, making sure that Mother Nature or the volunteer waters the flowers throughout that week.

The sign-up sheet will be in the lobby, starting the first Sunday of May.

If you provide your phone number, you will receive a reminder text when it is your week.

Please consider offering a week or two to maintain our flower beds so that the church is a welcoming place for all.

Thanks.

SPRING RUMMAGE / BAKE SALE

Sale Dates— May 2nd & 3rd

Clean out your attic and basement and donate your purge to the WGUMC Spring Rummage Sale. Donations accepted beginning after 9:30 service on April 27th.





Another fun and busy month for our Preschoolers has come and gone! In the month of April our students learned about Easter, Spring, Flowers, and Insects! They enjoyed their Easter Egg hunts with their friends and the warmer weather allowing much needed playground time! The playground also got a mini makeover this month with new mulch. A special thanks to Xavier, Dave Tally, and the youth group for their help!

Our Pre-Kindergarten Classes have been very busy getting their outdoor fairy garden designed! If you have a minute, take a look in the wooded area behind the preschool wing to see how their design has come to life!

We are grateful for a wonderful, safe and exciting year and are busy planning on the fun end of the year celebrations that will be happening in May!

All the best,

Abbie and the Pre-school teachers

Miss Natalie's Frog Class Dino-fairy Garden!



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 MAY

05/01 Jay Miller
05/05 Jeremy Hampton
05/05 Margee Michaels
05/06 Sandy Deckard
05/11 Dr. Bob Hayes
05/12 Dan Elliott
05/14 Emmett Owens
05/15 Olivia Eason
05/15 Margaret Rubincan
05/17 Barb O'Brien
05/22 Cynthia Hoover



05/22 Steve Michaels
05/23 Jeff Laird
05/24 Mark Simonds
05/24 Barry Wolff
05/25 Esther Culbertson
05/26 Cindy Haley
05/26 Joshua Hampton
05/26 Luke Schneider
05/28 Greg McCummings
05/29 Vivian Paisley

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



May 2025



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!

~ Open, Grow, Serve ~

At West Grove UMC, we love God by opening our hearts to Jesus, growing our faith and serving our community and world in His name.

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

Valerie Kapp-Benner—Financial Administrator

Financialadmin@westgroveumc.org

Betsy Smith - Traditional Music Director
Contemporary Music Interim Director
Keyboardist

Betsy.smith@westgroveumc.org

Bill Pardoe—Technical Magician

billpardoe1@gmail.com

Lavenia Civitella—Handbell Choir Director

Misslavenia@verizon.net

Abbie Gruscavage—Children's Morning Out Director

cmo@westgroveumc.org

Maira Tena - Nursery Attendant

Maira Tena—Sexton

sexton@westgroveumc.org

Sunday Worship Service
9:27 am.

Christ Servant Ministers

Karen Hruz, khruz@hotmail.com
Peter Mullen, psmullen@petermullen.com

Board and Committee Leadership

Val Kapp-Benner - Interim Administrative Council Chair and
Financial Administrator

OPEN - Trustee Chair

Vicki Owens - Treasurer

Dan Elliott - SPRC Chair

Children's Ministry Team Contact

Open - Missions Chair

Dick and Caryl Stuhrke - Hospitality Committee Chair

Susan Paisley & Cindy Haley - Delegate to Annual Conference

Open - Committee on Lay Leadership

Karen Hruz and Cindy Haley—Co-Lay Leader

Cindy Haley & Fran Miller - U.M.W. Co-Presidents

Susan Paisley - Prayer Ministry Coordinator

Joan Leaman—Emergency Food Pantry Coordinator

Amy Castaldi - Nursery Coordinator

Cindy Hoover—CMO Advisory Board Chair

Cindy Haley and Sara Ann Ramberger—R.A.P Coordinators