

The Wesleyan Star

August

2025

West Grove
United Methodist Church
Pastor DJ Choi

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

"The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.' And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living." Luke 15:12-13

We are thrown into this universe without a clue. We must journey all the way to the death that awaits us someday. We come from nothing and return to nothing—from eternity and return to eternity—

And yet, we Christians claim to know: why we came, who sent us, where we came from, and where we are going. **Do you know?**

Jesus answered the deep questions of our hearts through many parables. One of the most powerful is the story of the prodigal son's return—a profound image of grace, repentance, and homecoming.

Henri Nouwen wrote a deeply moving book after meditating on Rembrandt's painting The Return of the Prodigal Son. As he reflected on both the story and the painting, he found parallels between Rembrandt's own life and the journey of the prodigal son. Through this, Nouwen offered a compelling vision of what salvation truly means. We must leave in order to return.

This book has become a foundational guidepost in my own life, and I would like to share it with you through a new sermon series.

Over the next few weeks, we will explore the parable of the prodigal son by looking through the eyes of its three central figures: the Father, the Elder Son, and the Younger Son. Each represents a different spiritual posture, and each offers us a distinct invitation from God.

May this series be a time of deep reflection for all of us: **Which of these three am I? Where am I on my journey? And how is God calling me home?** I pray this series will offer you fresh insight, healing, and a renewed vision for your life.

With grace, DJ Choi

The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming

August 3rd - "In the Blink of an Eye" James 4:14

Xavier Feliciano preaching

August 10 - "The Younger Son Leaves" Luke 15:11-13

August 17 - "The Younger Son Returns" Luke 15:14-20a

August 24 - "The Elder Son Leaves" Luke 15:25-30

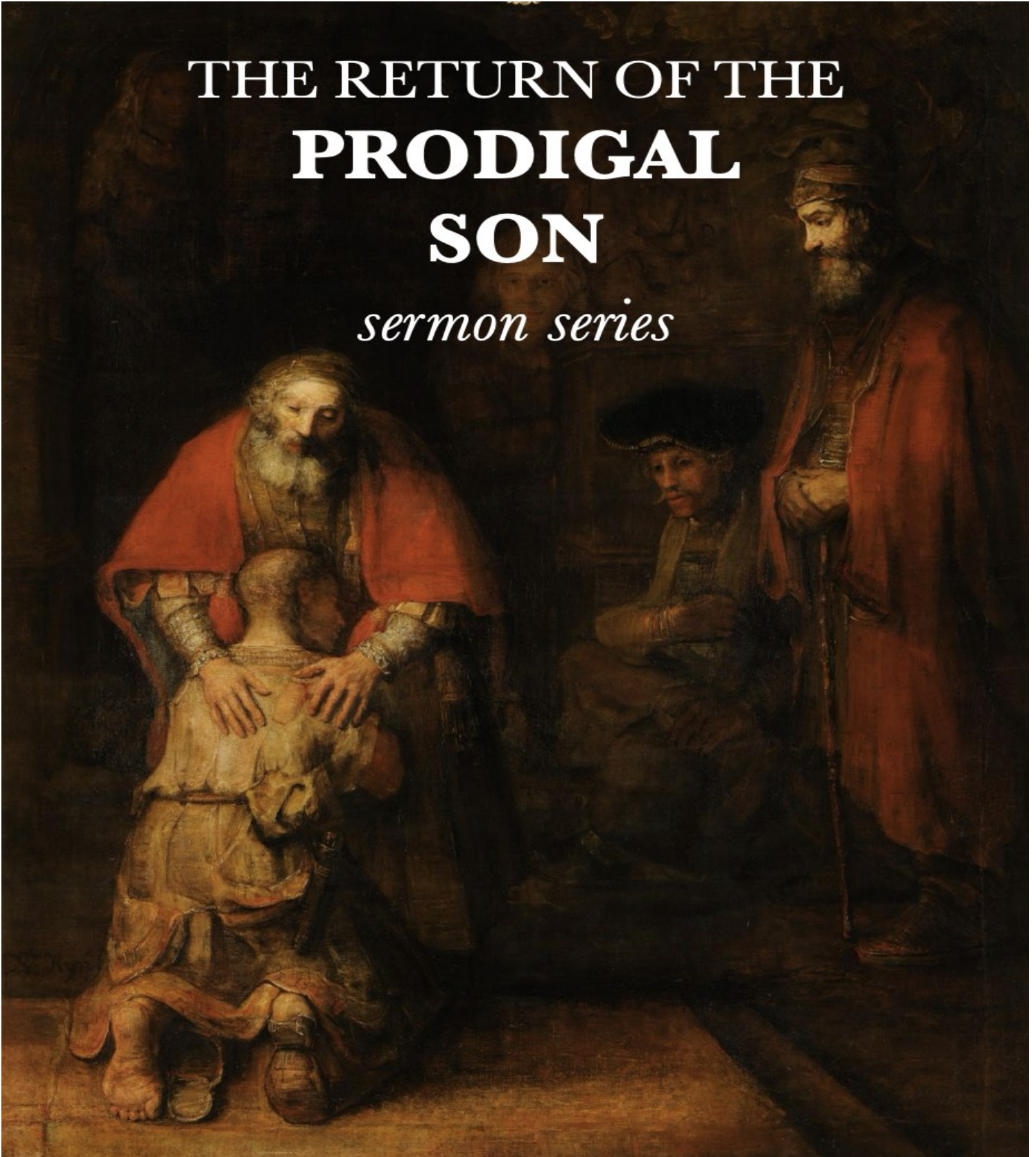
August 31 - "The Elder Son Returns" Luke 15: 28 31-32

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

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

THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON

sermon series



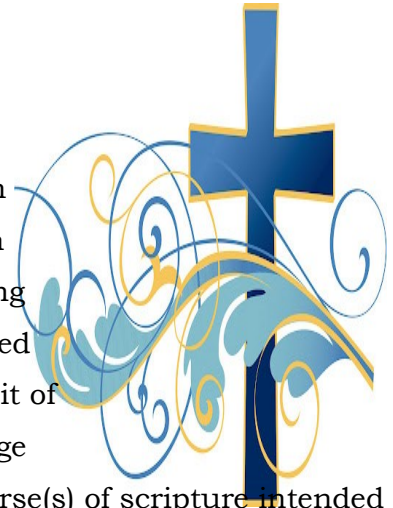
Follow along with Pastor DJ

as he preaches on “The Return of the Prodigal Son” by Henri J.M. Nouwen.
The series begins on August 10th. Books are available in the narthex
for a \$10.00 donation. (Covers the price of the book.)

Applying Scripture to Your Daily Life

August 2025

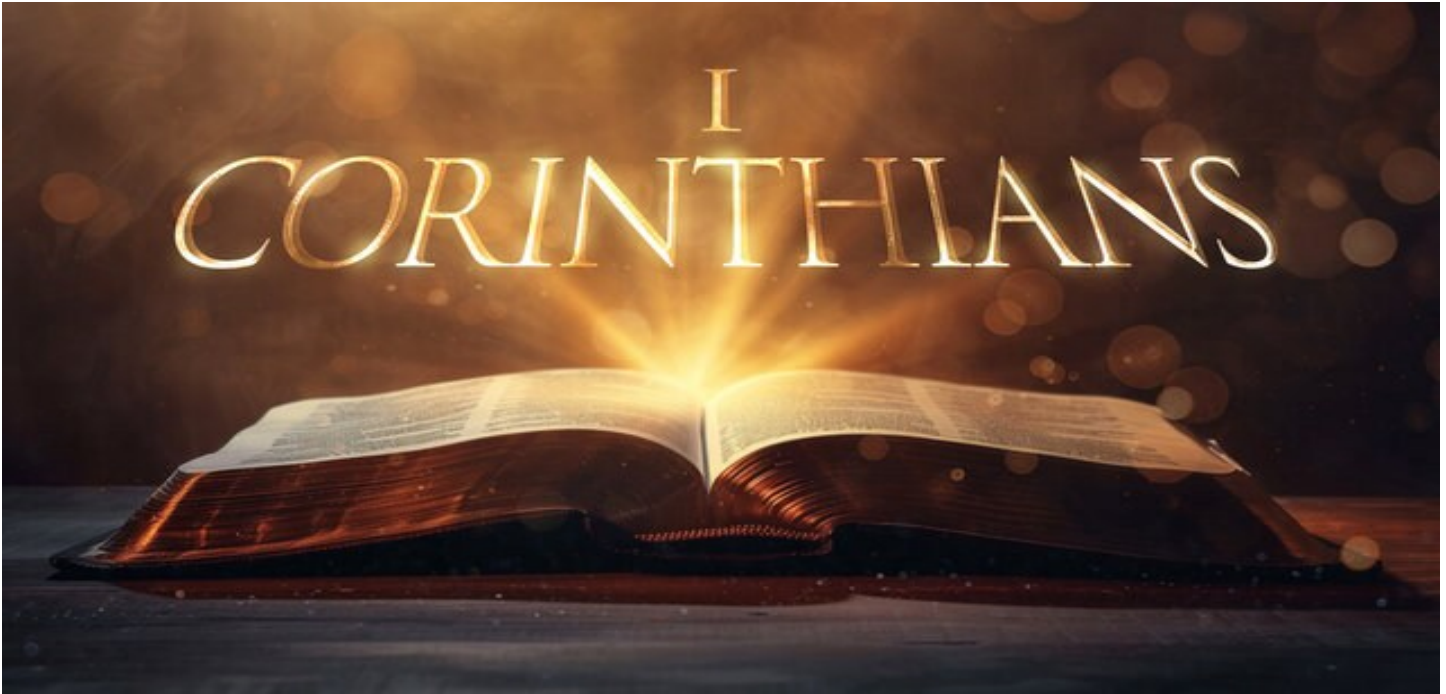
What part of your day does scripture play in your life? Is daily Bible reading a part of your day? Or does your Bible collect dust as it sits on your end table? As Christians, God has given us His Holy Word, which we are to live by and bring glory to God. As I was growing up as a young boy, the church I attended had a wonderful Sunday School. They helped build a foundation of scripture in my life. They instilled in me the habit of memorizing scripture, for which I am so thankful. So, I have a challenge that will be coming your way beginning in September. It is a weekly verse(s) of scripture intended for you to memorize, meditate on, and study during the week as it reveals God's nature and love for you.



Why Memorize Scripture? When it comes to memorizing Scripture, you're not only changing your brain, but dwelling on truth that will change your life. Here are four reasons that will benefit you.

- 1. Be Rooted in Faith.** Memorizing Scripture, especially verses that reveal God's character, will deepen your relationship with Him and strengthen your faith. As you transition from reading the Bible to committing God's Word to memory and understanding, these truths will reinforce your faith.
- 2. Resist Temptation.** In Matthew 4:1-11, Jesus faced various temptations by Satan.. He tried to get Him to listen to His appetites rather than God. Jesus faced these temptations with scripture. Scripture memory enables these truths to remain at the forefront of your mind and heart, allowing you to grasp them when you need them most.
- 3. Renew Your Mind.** Scripture memory is a key component of renewing your mind. By rehearsing God's truth consistently and intentionally, you are more aware of thoughts that don't align with God's Word.
- 4. Make Wise Decisions.** The Bible is intended to provide insight into who God is, who you are, and the sacredness of life. Scripture memory makes this wisdom accessible to your mind and heart as you seek to follow Christ.

If memorizing is hard, you can reflect on these verses instead. Starting in September, a weekly scripture verse will appear in the bulletin and on Constant Contact, allowing you to memorize or study, and consider its message.



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 8
- ☐ Where: Sanctuary of West Grove United Methodist Church
- ☐ What to bring: Your Bible and an open heart
- ☐ Study notes will be provided



Child & Youth Ministry Recap – Summer 2025

by Xavier Feliciano, Child & Youth Director – West Grove UMC

As summer winds down, I want to take a moment to celebrate all that God has done through our Children and Youth Ministries at West Grove UMC.

This July, we hosted an incredible Vacation Bible School (VBS) from July 7–11, welcoming 45 kids for a week full of fun, learning, and faith. Through storytelling, crafts, music, and games, we followed the journey of Joseph in Egypt and shared the powerful message that God is always with us. A huge thank you to all the volunteers and helpers who made the week so meaningful—your support truly made a difference!

Youth Group also continued throughout the summer with monthly Tuesday gatherings. As we enter the new school year, we're excited to start meeting every other Tuesday from 6–7 PM, beginning August 5. We hope to see returning students and new friends alike as we grow together in faith and fellowship.

This August also marks the launch of Victory Sundays—a new, active ministry for kids ages 7–14 who love sports and want to learn more about Jesus. Starting Sunday, August 10, Victory Sundays will take place every other Sunday from 9:30–10:30 AM during worship, blending 80% games with 20% scripture to help kids engage in a fun and faith-filled way.

Looking Ahead to September Mark your calendars—Midweek Ministries returns Thursday, September 4 from 4:30–6:00 PM! Designed for children ages 4–12, this midweek program includes engaging Bible lessons, music, snack time, and fun activities that help build faith and friendships. It's a great midweek pick-me-up and a place where kids can connect with God and each other.

If you're interested in volunteering, helping behind the scenes, or just getting more involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to me—Xavier, Child and Youth Director—at childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org.

Thank you again, West Grove UMC, for your continued encouragement and support. It's a joy and honor to serve as your Child and Youth Director as we plant seeds of faith in the next generation.

Xavier Feliciano

Director of Children & Youth Ministries, West Grove United Methodist Church

300 N. Guernsey Rd., West Grove, PA 19390

610-612-7377




VICTORY SUNDAY

A Christian Sports Ministry for Kids

80% GAMES. 20% BIBLE.
100% FUN.

Join us **every other Sunday** for a high-energy hour of games, teamwork, and faith-building! Each session is packed with exciting sports activities and a short Bible message to inspire and encourage young hearts.

 **Starts Sunday. August 10**

 **9:30-10:30 a.m.**

 **West Grove United Methodist Church**
(Ages 7-14 | Outdoor field)

Come ready to run, play, learn, and grow in Christ!

Contact:

Childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org



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.

SIGN UP SHEET IN THE NARTHEX

WGUMC Hike at Goddard Park

Tuesday, August 5th from 6:30 to 8 PM

Goddard Park located at 568 Wickerton Road, West Grove, PA 19390.

There are paved pathways which will enable more of us to attend the hike.
After the hike we can all treat ourselves to ice cream at the Station in West Grove.

Contact Andrew Herman with questions at hermanandrew@yahoo.com.

Church Hike

GODDARD PARK

568 WICKERTON RD.
WEST GROVE PA
19390

Come out for an evening of exercise,
fellowship and fun.

After we are done we will go over to The
Station in West Grove for those who want a
treat.

QUESTIONS?

☎ 610-470-9378

🌐 hermanandrew@yahoo.com





Food Pantry

West Grove UMC Food Pantry

Weekly Hours:

Wednesday: 5:00 - 6:00 pm.

Thursdays: 1:00 - 2:00 pm.

Food Pantry Update

July was another busy month with the food pantry as all our families must register annually and July begins the new year. We had over 200 families register in the first four weeks. The need in our community remains high, so any monetary support is always appreciated. Donations can be directed to our church food pantry. Additionally, food donations are always accepted. They may be placed in the food pantry room or in the shopping cart outside the front doors. Tortillas, cooking oil, rice, canned corn and corn flour are the food items most often requested. The church garden has been doing quite well, with all the rain we have had, and the pantry has been reaping the benefits. We have invited our food pantry families to pick their own produce, which they are very pleased to do.

The food item for the month of August is cans of corn. Those donations may be placed in the labeled black bin in the church lobby. Thanks!



Canned Corn

August's Food Pantry Item of the Month

Place in the designated bin in the Narthex



Aren't the flowers beautiful?

Have you noticed the array of colorful flowers as you pull up to WGUMC? We could use your help in helping them thrive for the remaining summer months.

Sign up sheet to water the flowers is located in the narthex.

Any questions, please contact Joan Leaman (jmleaman@comcast.net).

Thanks!





The community garden is growing!

There are tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini, herbs and more ripening now. You are all invited to pick what you like for yourselves or pick and give to our food pantry.

Other ways that you can participate are by:

watering, weeding or donating Garden tools you no longer need.

Monetary donations are always appreciated and would be used toward Garden improvements such as permanent fencing, new seeds/plants, trellises for growing plants vertically, soil improvements etc.

Please contact the church office (or Judy Gambill at jlg456@epix.net?) with questions.

Meals from Angels

This ministry began in February, 2025. Approximately 40 meals have been prepared and delivered since then.

New Angel volunteers are always needed and welcomed.

The way it works is this: when meals are needed an email is sent to the group. Then the volunteers sign up if and when it is convenient for them to provide a meal. Please consider joining this very rewarding ministry by contacting either April in the church office at 610-869-9334 or Judy Gambill at jl456@epix.net

CARE PACKAGES FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS 2025-2026

If you went away to college, you may remember how receiving a box of goodies that smelled like home could immediately take you back to your mom's kitchen. Just the idea that someone was thinking of you enough to pack a box of all kind of goodies made you feel like you were special, indeed! And, when they remembered you with such a gift during finals week!– WOW!

Do you have a college person in your extended family? United Women of Faith would like to keep in contact through care packages. We will need their updated information, address and contact information. If your person was on the United Women in Faith's list already, please send their information again. Send to Priscilla Barkman, at chrishell5@verizon.net.

Thank You. Shirley Daddario, President of UWFaith



* * * **UPCOMING** * * *

RUMMAGE SALE

It's fast approaching....that time of year for
WGUMC's Fall Rummage Sale.

October 3rd and 4th.

Sooooo.....start putting aside those articles that no longer have a place in your homes and donate them to the sale.

Thursday Bible Study (TBS) – All Are Welcome!

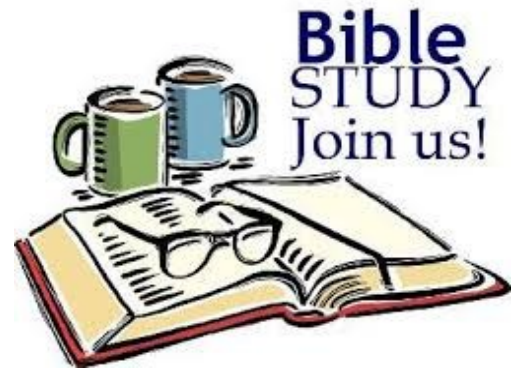
Join us every **Thursday from 6:30–7:30 PM** for our weekly **Bible Study**.

Topic: *The Gospel of John Reflected in the World*

When: Thursdays | 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Who: Everyone is welcome—come as you are!

Together, we'll explore how the Gospel of John speaks to our world today—shining light in the midst of darkness.



POTLUCK IN THE PAVILION



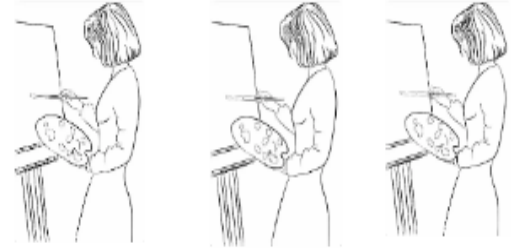
TUESDAY, AUGUST 26TH, 6:00 PM.

Questions? Contact Andrew

Herman at: hermanandrew@yahoo.com

(RETIRED ACTIVE PEOPLE)

Greetings from the RAP committee! The 2025/2026 season is about to begin! Our first RAP luncheon will take place on Friday, September 12th at Noon! Our September program will feature Linda Daniels, a local artist. She is looking forward to sharing with us, some of her skills in both watercolor and acrylic art.



Our October gathering, will feature special music sung by Mel Leaman, singing crooner songs from 1940's to early 1970's. You may recall special memories associated with some of the songs. Does a particular song spark a memory, or a moment of sweet romance? If you have a favorite crooner song that you would like Mel to include in his performance, he will be taking requests at our September luncheon.

We are so looking forward to our upcoming season. Please bring your bag lunch. September desserts and beverages will be provided by the RAP committee: Paulette Bryan, Joyce Lewis, Sandy Pardoe, and Sara Ann Ramberger.

Please RSVP to:

Sandy at sandytrul@yahoo.com if you are able to attend, so we can provide adequate seating. Thank you and we will see you on September 12th!



Children's Morning Out (CMO) - News

Hello from CMO!

Wow, August already! In a Teacher's world, the month of August is both exciting and a tad bit disappointing; knowing that summer is coming to an end. However, here at Preschool, we are embracing the EXCITEMENT

Over the summer the teachers and I have been busy sprucing up the preschool hallway and classrooms with deep cleaning, organization and a brand new coat of paint in several of the classrooms. We have been very busy making class lists, working on curriculum and all sorts of fun and exciting ideas to share with our new batch of students.

We will start the year off with a "Meet the Teacher" and "Sneak a Peek" on August 28th. School officially begins on September 2nd. Until then, we will be busy enjoying the slower pace of summer with our families and friends. Happy summer!

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 AUGUST

Jeannie Sullivan	06
Casey Bruno	08
David Frame	09
Sharon Nesbitt	11
Doyle Stuhrke	12
Lianne Covington	15
Mason Hendrickson	15
Reed Smith	16
Charlotte Adams	17



Justin Bratton	17
Carter Capuano	22
Paulette Bryan	23
Bob Castaldi	27
Jennifer Smith	28
Peggy Watkins	28
Tim Owens	29
Sara Ann Ramberger	30
Liam Smith	31

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

OPEN - 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