



The Wesleyan Star

**West Grove
United Methodist Church**

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

Email: office@westgroveumc.org
Website: www.westgroveumc.org



August 2023



“O that today you would listen to his voice! ⁸Do not harden your hearts(!) (Psalm 95:7b-8a, NRSV) Drop everything and listen, listen as he speaks Today if you hear His voice, ⁸ do not harden your hearts.” (Psalm 95:7b-8a, The Message)

One of the great blessings that shines through my life is that I always have opportunities to spend time with God; **we all do!** God is always ready to listen and be present. It is one of life’s greatest assurances, an incredible source of strength, hope, peace, and wholeness. We often take it for granted. God is with us when we are stuck in a hospital bed trying to recover, and God is with us when we are celebrating life’s great gifts of love and friendship. Summer often presents unique times to settle in and make time to read more deeply, and hear God’s Word, and

the blessings others are willing to share that have come from listening. Don’t look now, but summer is almost over; yet there is still time to make time to be with God. We want recreation to be woven in among the re-creation of our hearts, minds and bodies that God provides.

I see and hear what many people say and do, from business leaders through politicians and the average person, in various forms of media, and fear for them. Sadly, I lament from my perspective a sense that they don’t have much personal time with God. Many people rush about, trying to fulfill needs, ambitions, and responsibilities, and my concern is their efforts are never really centered in healthy priorities, or seek God’s perspective. I have these concerns from my own personal experience in my life. When I do meet or observe someone who is faithfully seeking God, it is a huge blessing.

The last time I had my hair cut, the hair stylist shared with me that she takes time to be alone, in quiet time with God, at 5 AM. She said with three children, it is the only time that works for her. To be candid, first impressions were for me that she was not likely to be someone who had such a focus in her life. She seemed very young and contemporary. What a joy as she shared the insights she was experiencing in her devotions. She opened up my heart and mind to be more aware of how God is at work in *all* people, and I can have hope in how God can reach us all.

We are blessed to witness experiences of grace, healing, empowerment, and freedom. It is so important that we share our journeys. I was blessed by her sharing, and I felt God’s presence more clearly in our lives. When God leads, we are provided assurance and clarity through His Word. God reorients our approaches, and responses to life’s challenges and opportunities. Personal devotion time helps everyone engage more fully in worship, and fellowship. Active listening and empathy in real friendship comes from a vital devotion life. As our VBS memory verse encouraged us, may we bring it to life:

“So let us strive for the things that bring peace and the things that build each other up.” Romans 14:19

I pray we are all ready to share our faith in gracious, caring ways that share and build community together. – Tim



Worship in August at West Grove UMC

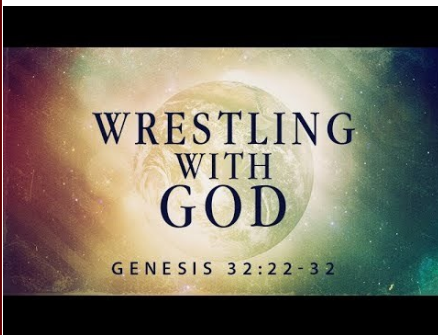
Join us as we worship together by opening our hearts to Jesus, growing in God's way, and serving God's world.



8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship. Live Streaming on You Tube.

We have several ministries coming to fruition in the next month or two; one is offering a fellowship group for people who have experienced the loss of a loved one in recent years. It is called Grief Share. We will also offer a study on how the Christians churches in America related and responded to slavery, in both bad and good ways; the study will be facilitated by Mel Leaman and Peter Mullen. These two ministries will influence our worship in August. We continue with Sunday school fellowship, including one for adults with children, and a traditional group, meeting in the library. We expect the group in the conference room and the men's group to start again in September.

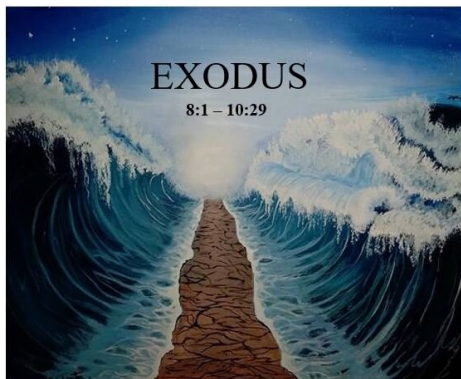
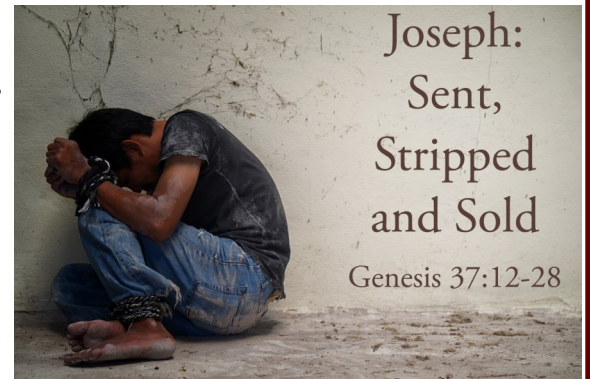
Sunday, August 6, 2023 **Tenth Sunday After Pentecost** **Communion Sunday and All Worship Sunday**



We are likely to examine two scriptures, one from Genesis 32:22-31 when Jacob wrestles with someone who represents God (was it God, or an angel), and Jacob is transformed to be known as Israel. We are also likely to share words of Paul from Romans 9:1-5, as he examines the heritage of the Israelites and how many failed to seize the opportunities to draw closer to God. It broke his heart, and leads to his own confession of sin, and continued transformation in his life.

Sunday, August 13, 2023 **Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost**

An important scripture to consider is Genesis 37:1-4, & 12-28, when Joseph is sold into slavery by his brothers. What would cause someone to sell another person, even think they have a right to do so, especially a brother? Human behavior is so often animal-like, competitive, greedy, self-centered and focused. We will also look at Romans 10:5-15, perhaps use it in the liturgy, when Paul lifts up that salvation is for all, not just a select few; we are all called to proclaim Christ, and the world is so much poorer in heart when we do not. So let us enrich the lives of people by sharing Christ!



Sunday, August 20, 2023 **Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost**

We will share Exodus 1:8-20, when Pharaoh began to fear and have anxiety over how well the Israelites were prospering in 'his' country. Most of us know the rest of the story of how he enslaved the people, and how God heard their cries; how do we related to the scripture and what does it have to say to us today? Whose cries do we ignore today? Paul reminds us in Romans 12:1-8 of what new life in Christ is like, and in Matthew 16:13-21, Peter declares who Jesus is.



Worship in August at West Grove UMC

Join us as we worship together by opening our hearts to Jesus, growing in God's way, and serving God's world.



8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Worship. Live Streaming on You Tube.



Sunday, August 27, 2023 Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

In Exodus 3:1-15, Moses is confronted by a burning bush that is not consumed, and called to work with God to set the Israelites free from Egypt. To be set free, we need to heed the writing of Paul in scripture in Romans 12:9-21 of what a true Christian looks like and how we are to live life. We continue to grow in heart, mind, and spirit when we share faith with others. These three weeks in August talk about slavery, so what does

that say to us today? There are dangers for us to be aware of and take steps to insure our faithfulness to Christ.

Worship is always subject to creative influence by the Holy Spirit, and we look forward to your full participation. We continue to pray of the ways we can introduce new, contemporary music that is faithful, energetic, and inspiring as it leads us.

Gearing Up for the Season Ahead

We look forward to the season ahead and pray you will enjoy and be blessed by participating

Men's Group every 4th Saturday

Grief Share (day & time to be determined)

The Color of Compromise Saturdays at 10 AM

Children & Two Adult Sunday School fellowship groups now, two more starting in September

Including Parents with Children Fellowship Group

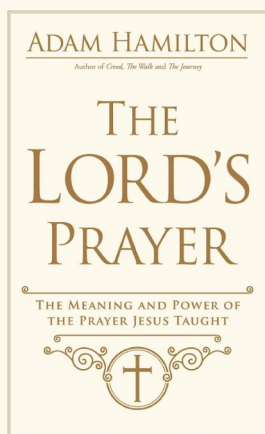
CMO Preschool Classes

Bell Choir & Chancel Choir



**Donna Fackler will be
on vacation
August 21 -25.**

**April Spencer, our new
church secretary be-
ginning in September,
will be in office each
day. If you need any-
thing, please feel free
to stop in and see her
or to call the office!**



The Faith Links class will begin a new study on Sunday, September 10th, at 9:45am. We will be studying "The Lord's Prayer" (part of Adam Hamilton's Bible study curriculum). In this study he reflects on the deeper meaning and power behind the prayer Jesus taught, how it shapes our lives as we follow Him, and in turn, change the world." This is a walk-in class and we will begin with a short video followed by discussion. Hope you will join us for this exciting new study! (Any questions please contact Caryl Stuhrke at (302) 239-1743).

Staff Parish Relations Committee Announces Changes to Our Church Office

As many of you may know, Donna Fackler will be “retiring” as our Church Administrator effective this coming 15th of September. Church Administrator has been a full-time position which Donna has served diligently, expertly and faithfully for the past 17 years plus 2 years part time prior to taking over full time. A thorough professional from day one, Donna has served the church a total of 19 years dating back to September of 2004, the year Alice Cook took over as our pastor. She has been a real asset to the church in so many ways, often unseen, unnoticed and irreplaceably. Although her stepping down leaves a huge gap to fill, thankfully we are not losing Donna’s expertise and vast experience altogether. Donna has agreed to remain part time to fulfill the financial responsibilities of her current position. The remaining secretarial duties of the church administrator position have been written up into a new and separate job description entitled “Church Secretary”, which will be part time and performed in the church office, 5 hours per day 5 days per week. The Staff Parish Relations Committee has worked long and hard; conceptualizing a new workflow for the church office, developing two new job descriptions, posting for the job of church secretary, going through the hiring process, and following up to ensure as seamless a transition as possible.

We are pleased to announce that April Spencer has agreed to become our new church secretary. She will start on a “part time/part time” basis effective on or about August 15th. This will give her the opportunity to work with Donna to get familiar with her position, learn the necessary software, and get reacquainted with the church and its weekly and monthly routines well before she takes over in September. I say re-acquainted as April is no stranger to WGUMC. April served as our church secretary from February of 1998 until February 2006 back when Mel Leaman was our pastor. April and her husband Gary reside on Avondale Road in West Grove. If, over the next few weeks, you happen to be at the church and April is in the office working with Donna, please feel free to drop in introduce yourself and meet April. And while you are there, please make it a point to thank Donna for a job well done! Dick Stuhrke – SPRC Chair



A Note from April Spencer, Our New? Church Secretary



I am very excited about joining the West Grove UMC staff. I was a member of that staff many years ago and it was a wonderful experience. My entire family attended for many, many years and my three kids were all married by WGUMC pastors. But life changes (doesn't it?) and I was pulled away. So it is with a happy heart I accepted the position.

A Note from Donna Fackler

Just a little note from me, Donna. I am still going to be around, so I don't really feel like I need to say goodbye! I will continue to work on the financials and all related responsibilities. I will come into the office frequently. My heart is still with the food pantry and funeral preparations, so I will be volunteering for those activities. Now that I won't be full time and so darn busy (and tired) every weekend, I look forward to joining everyone for worship more regularly! April is wonderful and we have remained friends since we first met back in 2004 when I was first hired to work part-time. She will be a great asset to the church and to the office with her abundance of experience and, more importantly, her kind heart!



PASTOR JIM'S
CHRISTIAN LIVING COLUMN
Our Need for Spiritual Help
August 2023

Let me share a parable with you. Once there were two prominent families. Both were well known and were in the news on a daily basis. They opposed each other, yet they claimed to be the ones that would be the leaders that the people wanted.



see that they are unrepentant also and their burdens of life need spiritual help.

However, problems appeared within their families and the supporters of each claimed the others were wrong and should be put on trial for the things each side had claimed they did to break the law. Each claimed their innocence as they waited for the judges to decide their fate.

When people go through trials and hardships, no matter how mentally strong they may be, such stress can overwhelm them and they need to have ways to reduce the stress that affects their whole being, body, soul and spirit.

In Matthew 11:20-23, Jesus is addressing a crowd of people speaking about the miracles He performed and how they were not accepted by the people in these cities because they were unrepentant. Perhaps if these two families took heart and evaluated themselves, maybe they may

Jesus tells us later in the chapter, (vss. 28-29), what we all need to do. He says, ²⁸ **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”**

He understands our needs and asks those who are weary and burdened to “come to Him”, to seek Jesus, that they may find rest. Jesus also promises us peace, for the peace of the Lord is beyond the peace that the world can give (John 14:27).

The moral of this parable is that all people, whether they are prominent or common folk, will experience trials and tribulations. When our relationship with the Lord is broken, we need to “come to Him” and restore our oneness with Him, who can give us peace, peace that is beyond what the world means by peace. I pray that we all may keep this in mind when we need help.

Pastor Jim

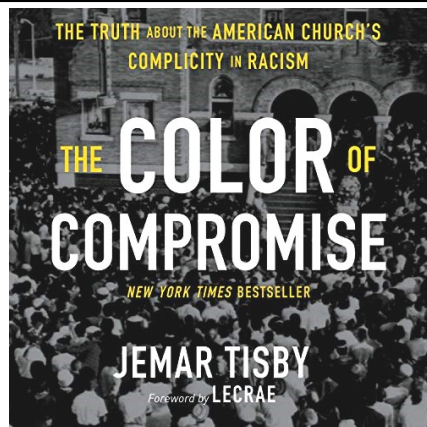


Pastor Jim's Bible Study

The fall Bible study will begin on September 11, 2023, at 6:30 PM in the sanctuary. The subject of the study will be available in the coming weeks and will be announced in the September newsletter and in the church bulletin. Pastor Jim



Jenner's Pond Residents: Join us for worship on **August 13 at 11 a.m. On your closed circuit TV and in-person in Alison Theater, Led by Pastor Jim**



Reckoning with the Cotton Gin and Sin: Keeping September 9 in Mind

by Rev. Dr Mel Leaman

My initial post-college employment was as a Junior High history teacher. I taught what I had learned. So, in 1972 **I was able to tell my students** how the invention of the cotton gin in 1793 expanded the demand for cotton in North America and globally. Cotton comprised just 7% of our exports in 1800, but by 1860 that increased to 58%. Our country experienced a huge economic boom as Southern states provided the world with 75% of its cotton! **But, what I couldn't tell my students** at that time because my history

books skimmed over this truth was that despite the 1808 ban on foreign slave trade the number of slaves imported as a means of supplying the demand for cotton increased from 900,000 to 4 million in 60 years. What I couldn't tell my students were the horrors that happened to black women, men, and children who now had to pick more cotton to keep up with the pace of production. What I couldn't tell my students was that many slave masters were Christian church goers as were those who built slave ships in the North or filled their pockets with cotton related incomes. I JUST WISH I WOULD HAVE READ BLACK HISTORY WRITTEN BY BLACK PEOPLE!

Well, I've been doing just that and I am hoping you will join me. **Our Scriptures in II Corinthians 5:17-25 call us to be ambassadors of reconciliation.** How can we be ambassadors for reconciliation if we have not reckoned with the realities of our history that have separated us? This is not revisionist history. It is so real our hearts still resist the cleansing power of the cross to remove the stains in our souls (being) that demean our relationships with one another. It will be a bit confronting, I know, but I would like to invite you to join me and my co-facilitator, Peter Mullen as we read and discuss *The Color of Compromise: The Truth about the Church's Complicity in Racism* by Jemar Tisby. We will begin our sojourn on Saturday, September 9th from 10:00-11:00 and do so for eleven consecutive Saturdays. Come as you can. We will view each chapter's summary by the author via zoom on a given day of the week, but if you miss that video viewing simply come 20 minutes early to the Saturday session to view it. Thanks for thinking about this offering and letting me (melleaman50@gmail.com) or Peter Mullen (psmullen@petermullen.com) know if you plan to participate.



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

More information will be shared as plans are made. All men and boys are invited to attend.

Contact Pastor Jim or Michael Duvall with your questions.

Retired Active People



RAP

Fall Kick-Off

RAP (Retired Active People) will resume our monthly gatherings in September, as we kick-off an exciting year of new programs and end in May 2024 with a potluck luncheon and entertaining music by the Providence Brass Band. We are so grateful for all of our volunteers that help make our monthly meetings interesting and delicious.

We look forward to seeing everyone on Friday, September 8, 2023 at noon in the church sanctuary. Please join us for fellowship and lots of fun. Bring your bagged lunch; desserts and beverages will be provided. Sara Ann Ramberger will be our program leader for the afternoon. Ray McKay, one of our faithful members will present a program entitled, "Civil War Trivia and Interesting Facts."

The following is a brief outline of our first few programs:

October 13, 2023 – Adam P. Solty, Neff Therapy, will present a few Physical Therapy tips.

November 10, 2023 – Dick Stuhrke will present a Submarine Show and Tell.

December 8, 2023 – Matt Furches, Utah-based Boulder Outdoor Survival School, will present highlights of staying safe in the outdoors. We will also celebrate the holidays with a potluck lunch in December.

Again, thank you to everyone who helps make our gatherings possible. We welcome help with Setup and Cleanup, if you are able to lend a hand. We hope to see everyone back as we resume our regular monthly schedule, September through May, the second Friday of each month at noon.

Please invite your friends to join us. Everyone is welcome!

FALL RUMMAGE SALE

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, October 6, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Saturday, October 7, 9 a.m.– 12 p.m.



Start saving all the household goods, furniture, clothing and other treasures to donate.

Donations accepted at the church beginning Sunday, October 1ST.

YOUTH MINISTRIES



YOUTH GROUP SUMMER GAME NIGHTS!

All middle and high school youth are invited to Game Night, **6:00-8:00** p.m. throughout the summer. Put the dates on your calendar so you don't miss out on the fun! Melanie will update you on the events as the summer moves along! **August: Thursday, August 10 and Thursday, August 24.**

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Summer Worship with children



Children are always welcome in worship! No need to worry about if they are making too much noise- noise means there is life present! In worship, we

have a "Moment for All Ages" which is a time for children to hear the message for the day and ask questions about Jesus.

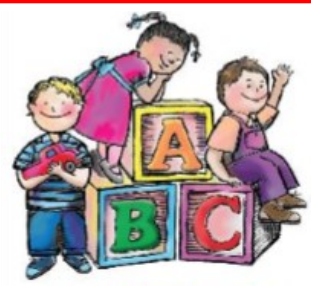
There are worship bags for children, filled with fun things to keep them engaged during worship, and books for children.

Look for the cart in the lobby!



Hello all!

Summer is just flying by and at CMO we are getting ready for our preschool kiddos to come back and join us in September! Some may wonder what happens at CMO during the summer months when we are without the children. The hallways and classrooms may not be as busy and loud but some very important work is done during this time. Classrooms are cleaned, toys are sanitized, schedules are made, lessons are planned, and the office/storage room has been "remodeled" and looks better than ever!



There are still a few open spots in all levels (2yo, 3yo and PreK) waiting for a child to fill it! If you know anyone looking for a preschool for their child please send them our way. Our email address is cmo@westgroveumc.org.

We are also looking for an assistant teacher to

join our preschool team. This is a great job for a stay at home parent who is ready to dip their feet back in the working world.

As you may know, We are blessed to be able to offer "scholarships" to students who may need a little extra financial assistance in order to attend Preschool. It's only because of the generosity of certain groups within the congregation at WGUMC that we are able to continue offering these scholarships. We dearly appreciate all donations to our preschool program and we can't thank you enough. If you would like more information about how to give to our scholarship fund please reach out!

As always, thank you for all of the support you show to the CMO program throughout the year.

Blessings,
Abbie Gruscavage, Director

Africa Mission Update

Michael W. Duvall

David Kitheka Mbuvi is a young man who a year ago was an orphan. This year he is finishing his first year of medical school at United Methodist University in Meru, Kenya.

He has three sponsors from WGUMC who are sponsoring him. According to reports, he is doing quite well. He is a young man of strong Christian faith who gives the glory to God!



This is a photo of the Usueni Vocational Education Center building team made up of instructors and students. The 2023 Project is to construct a new administration building. The students are learning skills that will help them gain employment when they graduate from the 2-year program.

Thanks to generous donations, the school was able to purchase 12 additional acres of land.

The school has launched a new agriculture curriculum and currently uses eight acres to teach modern agriculture and also provide food for the school.

They now have a well that provides water for irrigation when conditions are too dry!



The Usueni School has a new sound system that will be installed in the new Administration Building. It is portable so it can also be used for large gatherings and Sunday Worship. This may seem like a small thing to us, but it is a major event for them. They dedicate everything to God and use it for His glory.

Part of last year's mission project was to drill a well, build a solar station to power the pump, and install a 1-mile underground water line and connect to the water storage tanks. Phase 2 added a roof over the storage tanks to prevent the hot African sun from causing the water to expand and burst the tanks!

This water project has improved the lives of everyone at the school and the surrounding community. This project was both expensive and time consuming, but worth every minute and every dollar!



← This was their water supply before the well project.

This is their water supply → after the project was completed!



This was a time of great celebration and giving thanks to God!



West Grove UMC Food Pantry

Weekly Hours:

Wednesdays: 5:00—6:30 p.m.

Thursdays: 1:00—2:00 p.m.

Our Church Food Bank

Depends on You!

WGUMC's Food Pantry serves **over 100 families every week**. This translates to about 450-500 individuals. We are blessed to be able support our neighbor's facing food and security. It is your generous donations that help us to do that. We appreciate food donations which can be left in the shopping cart outside the lobby doors, as well as monetary donations. Surplus from your vegetable gardens are also appreciated. For donated items that need to be refrigerated, please bring them to the church weekdays during the hours of 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. when the church office is open.

The most needed items currently are:

Corn tortillas,
Canned corn,
Cooking oil
Bags of dried beans,
Pasta,
Ramen noodles
Canned diced tomatoes,
Crackers,
Granola bars

Any donation is a blessing to those in need.

Thank You!

If you are interested in learning about volunteer opportunities, please contact Joan Leaman (jmleaman@comcast.net)



West Grove UMC Calendar of Events

Be sure to check out the church calendar on our website. There are many activities, groups, events, studies and more going on every week.

Sunday School has classes for adults and children of all ages. Your church calendar is reviewed daily and updated with the latest events and meetings. Please refer to our website to get information, updates, calendar events, etc. **www.westgroveumc.org**



UNITED METHODISTS OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Dear Friends
of EPA,

The second
week of July
2023, Bishop
John Schol
held three

zoom meetings with clergy and laity regarding three challenges EPA is facing: 1) staffing, 2) data, and 3) reports. Bishop Schol also reported on a number of ministries that are going well, and continued to emphasize that the mission of the church is primarily through our congregations and the importance of our lay and clergy leadership. What follows is a synopsis of what Bishop Schol shared about the challenges and the questions and responses that arose during the zoom calls.


Thank you for those who participated in the zoom conversations. For those who were not able to join us, please see the accompanying FAQs: [FAQ Conversation on EPA Challenges | Eastern PA Conference of the UMC \(epaumc.org\)](#). There is also a form available to ask additional questions: [EPA Challenges FAQ Form | Eastern PA Conference of the UMC \(epaumc.org\)](#).

Thank you for your faithful ministry.

Keep the faith!

Superintendents
Rev. Evelyn Kent-Clark
Rev. Andrew Foster III
Rev. Jenny Freymoyer
Rev. Hun Ju Lee

BIRTHDAYS IN AUGUST

Jeannie Sullivan	06	 <p>HAPPY BIRTHDAY!</p> <p>Your church family wishes all of you a very happy birthday and a year filled with happiness and blessings!!</p>	Reed Smith	16
Lexi Weingarten	06		Josh Stevenson	16
Casey Bruno	08		Charlotte Adams	17
Parker Featherston	08		Justin Bratton	17
Laura Minnick	08		Jessica Wiwel	20
David Frame	09		Carter Capuano	22
Pam Fulton	09		Paulette Bryan	23
Sharon Nesbitt	11		Les Lafferty	24
Larry Smith	11		Bob Castaldi	27
Doyle Stuhrke	12		Jennifer Smith	28
Alex Dilworth	14	Peggy Watkins	28	
Maggie Black	15	Tim Owens	29	
Lianne Covington	15	Sara Ann Ramberger	30	
Tyler Farr	15	Liam Smith	31	
Mason Hendrickson	15			



West Grove United Methodist Church
OPEN • GROW • SERVE

300 North Guernsey Road, West Grove, Pa. 19390

610-869-9334 office@westgroveumc.org

www.westgroveumc.org



2023

~ 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.

The Reverend Timothy Carl Anderman, Lead Pastor

pastor@westgroveumc.org

Office Hours: Monday—Friday

9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Staff

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

Jim.mundell@westgroveumc.org

Melanie Jones—Youth & Children's Ministry Director

Childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org

Donna Fackler - Church Administrator

Office@westgroveumc.org

Betsy Smith - Traditional Music Director

Contemporary Music Interim Director

Keyboardist

Betsy.smith@westgroveumc.org

OPEN—Handbell Choir Director

Abbie Gruscavage—Children's Morning Out Director

cmo@westgroveumc.org

Maira Tena - Nursery Attendant

Maira Tena—Sexton

sexton@westgroveumc.org

Christ Servant Ministers

Karen Hruz, khruz@hotmail.com

Peter Mullen, psmullen@petermullen.com

Board and Committee Leadership

Val Kapp-Benner - Interim Administrative Council Chair

Kim O'Neil - Trustee Chair

OPEN - Finance Chair

Valerie Kapp-Benner - Treasurer

Janice Bowers - Interim Financial Secretary

Dick Stuhrke - SPRC Chair

Michael Duvall—Tech Team Leader

Melanie Jones - Christian Education

Melanie Jones - Children's Ministry Team Contact

Valerie Kapp-Benner - Missions Chair

Dick and Caryl Stuhrke - Hospitality Committee Chair

Susan Paisley - Delegate to Annual Conference

Pastor Tim - 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

Betty Mundell—Ad Council Member at Large

Cindy Hoover—CMO Advisory Board Chair

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