



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



Letter from the Pastor

Greetings West Grove UMC! It is hard to believe it has only been two weeks that I have been with you as interim pastor. It truly has been like coming home. Thank you for all your warm greetings and assistance in getting me on board with the flow of activities throughout the church.

Our Easter service was awesome and we had many children in attendance. It is wonderful having Xavier Feliciano bring the Moment for All Ages to the children and then take them out to Children's Worship where they hear more of God's Word in language better suited to their ages. Thanks be to God for a children and Youth Director that can attract our younger generation into the church.

I am excited for April services as we will be digging into the book of 1 John. 1 John is an epistle, or letter, written to the early church to deal with problems and conflicts that the community was facing. This letter was written in order to provide guidance as to how the people were to live and love as followers of Jesus Christ. The guidance written two thousand years ago is just as relevant to us today in our current context.

One thing to keep an eye on this month is General Conference which will be taking place in Charlotte, NC April 23 – May 3, 2024. United Methodists will be coming in from all around the world to vote on proposed legislation. Daniel Dalton, a nationally recognized attorney in Religious Disputes, posted the following summary in LinkedIn on what key issues will be addressed at General Conference.

There are two main questions to be decided in the 2024 General Conference of the United Methodist Church. The answer to both questions will have a significant impact on the future of the UMC and will require local congregations' thoughtful consideration regarding their own affiliation with the denomination.

The first issue will be the adoption of revised social principles. Briefly, the social principles have been revised to reflect the progressive nature of the denomination after nearly one third of all churches have left the UMC since 2019. The second issue will be the adoption of a proposed regionalization plan. The concept of regionalization provides that the denomination will remain as one, but each region of the world will have their version of the United Methodist Church. This allows the United States to become more progressive, and the African churches to remain conservative – but both be able to call themselves United Methodist.

I ask that you remain in prayer for the clergy and lay delegates who will be attending and voting on the future of the United Methodist Church. In the May Newsletter, I will address the key legislation that will be voted on at the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference taking place May 21-23. Susan Paisley and Cindy Haley are our Lay Delegates. It will be important for you to share your opinions with them on the legislation you will be hearing more about next month.

Peace and grace, Pastor Janice



Worship in April 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.



11 am. Worship. 9:45 am. Sunday School for all ages.

Join us for worship this month as we journey through how we should live during this Eastertide

April 7th, 11:00 am. Second Sunday of Easter-Rev. Janice L. Bowers

NEW SERIES: "How Shall We Live" In this series that will run for three weeks, we will focus on scripture passages in 1 John. We will search for the answer to "How does God wants us living amongst Creation?"

SERMON TITLE: "We Walk in the Light". Focus scripture: 1 John 1:1-2:2

"THE WORD OF LIFE": We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life—² this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us—³ we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.⁴ We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete.

"GOD IS LIGHT":⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true;⁷ but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.⁹ If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

"CHRIST OUR ADVOCATE":² My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;² and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

GOAL: For people to let Jesus shine a light on the sin they are hiding within their own lives.

April 14th, 11:00 am. Third Sunday of Easter

SERMON TITLE: "We Purify in Hope". Focus Scripture 1 John 3:1-7

³ ¹ See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.² Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.³ And all who have this hope in him purify themselves, just as he is pure.⁴ Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness; sin is lawlessness.⁵ You know that he was revealed to take away sins, and in him there is no sin.⁶ No one who abides in him sins; no one who sins has either seen him or known him.⁷ Little children, let no one deceive you. Everyone who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous.

GOAL: To learn what is meant by purity, working towards Wesleyan perfection.

April 21st, 11:00 am. Fourth Sunday of Easter

FINAL WEEK OF SERIES: “How Shall We Live”

SERMON TITLE: “We Abide in Christ” Focus Scripture: 1 John 3:16-24

¹⁶ We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷ How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister-in need and yet refuses help? ¹⁸ Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹ And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰ whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²² and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴ All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

GOAL: Having people focus on how they will live out the love and joy found in a life with Christ.

April 28th, 11:00 am. Fifth Sunday of Easter

NEW SERIES: “How Shall We Love”

SERMON TITLE: “God Is Love” Focus Scripture: John 4:7-21

⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹ God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. ¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. ¹⁴ And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. ¹⁶ So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. ¹⁷ Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. ¹⁸ here is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. ¹⁹ We love because he first loved us. ²⁰ Those who say, “I love God,” and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. ²¹ The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

GOAL: For everyone to understand that God IS love, loves us, and commands our love for others.

PASTOR JIM'S CHRISTIAN LIVING COLUMN

"PRAYING SCRIPTURE"

Deepening Your Relationship with God

April 2024

Reading the Bible and praying are the primary methods for developing a deepening relationship with God. While many tend to think of prayer and Bible reading as separate spiritual practices, they can be even more powerful when combined into one practice of "Praying Scripture."

What does it mean to Pray Scripture? It's a deeply personal practice that allows you to use the words and emotions of the Bible to enhance your own prayers. This can involve praying the prayers of the Bible word-for-word as your own or finding passages that speak as a guide for your prayers. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is filled with prayers that can strengthen your spiritual life.

By engaging in this practice, you invite God's Spirit to shape you into the person He wants you to be. Not only can the prayers of the Bible be prayed, but any part of the Bible can also be used to speak with God.

As you read the Bible in prayer (stories, history, poems, parables, etc.)

in the presence of God you will identify with passages that relate to your life. As you continue this practice, it will become natural and effortless to turn your thoughts into prayer, bringing you closer to God and deepening your spiritual life. When you add Scripture into your prayer time, you're saying to God, "This is something I want and need." For Scripture is full of promises from God. It is God-inspired and powerful. Scripture is truth and it gives us the words to pray when we do not have them.



So, here is how you can get started praying Scripture:

- 1.** Select a passage that is meaningful to you and that you feel speaks truth into your life. Google "Prayers of the Bible" to locate possible prayers. Also, a psalm is a good place to start; try Psalm 23, 30, 63, or 100.
- 2.** As you start, ask God to bless your time in Scripture to keep you focused and to help you pray his word.
- 3.** Start reading through your passage slowly, meditating on each word and verse.
- 4.** As you finish a sentence or a verse, stop, and using your own words, turn your thoughts into prayer, bringing out the ideas or truths of the passage as you speak to God. Joshua 1:8 summarizes it for us. "Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." May God bless you as you use Scripture and prayer to draw you nearer to God.

Pastor Jim Mundell



Jenner's Pond Residents!

Join us for worship on April 14, at 11 a.m.



WHAT:

Trustees will be hosting an ALL CHURCH CLEAN UP.

WHEN:

APRIL 20th beginning at 8 am.

Please consider spending an hour or two helping trustees with our annual spring clean up.

We will have jobs both inside and out for all age and abilities.

Questions? Reach out to any of the trustees or Kim O'Neill directly,

Tim-KimOneill@verizon.net



United Methodist Women's Spring Rummage Sale

Friday, May 3rd and Saturday, May 4th

Please take some time to "rummage" through those closets, cubbies, attics and basements over the coming weeks. Get ready for a fresh start this spring by bringing all those "treasures" to the church for our annual spring rummage sale!

Your donations are appreciated and the UMW uses the proceeds to support missions in our own community as well as worldwide.

Due to lack of storage space, we cannot accept donations before Monday, April 29th.

If this is a problem, contact April in the church office to see if we can make alternative arrangements.

Thank you!



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S SPRING TEA

You are invited to join us for an afternoon tea and light desserts on Sunday, May 19th, 2024 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm in the Church Lobby and Sanctuary. We look forward to gathering for a delightful afternoon to celebrate with all the lovely ladies (younger and older) in our congregation and lives.



Following a time of refreshments and fellowship, we are excited to

welcome an amazing storyteller, Diane Albertson. Diane will entertain us with a whimsical story that incorporates various Mother Goose characters, along with the stories of Eve, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachael, Rahab and Mary.

Be prepared to enjoy a time of laughter and fun!

All women of the church, your family, friends and loved ones are invited for an enjoyable afternoon.

Retired Active People



RAP

(Retired Active People)

Join us for our next gathering on
Friday, April 12th, 2024 at noon in the sanctuary
 of West Grove UMC.

* * * * *

We are excited to welcome Charles Shattock of
Wild Birds Unlimited in Hockessen.

Charles usually talks about birds and their habitats.

However, as we all know, squirrels can be rather aggressive about getting to our bird feeders. So we will hear about different squirrels and ways to deter their hungry behaviors with baffles, squirrel proof feeders, hot pepper bird feed, etc.

Come for a fun afternoon of fellowship with good friends. Bring your bagged lunch; desserts and beverages are provided. Look for the signup sheet for our covered dish luncheon that will be held in May.

We thank our RAP member, Raymond McKay for the program on “humor” last month. Thank you, Karen, Linda, Sharon, Cindy and Kathryn, for the delicious desserts, and Sara Ann Ramberger for leading the afternoon.

We are also very grateful to everyone who helps make our monthly gatherings possible. Once again, thank you Colton McCummings for setting up our tables and chairs; and thank you to everyone who stays and helps us cleanup and reset the sanctuary.

The RAP committee is in the process of meeting to plan our programs for 2024/2025. If you have a program of interest or know of something interesting, please let us know.

Everyone is welcome! Invite your friends and enjoy an afternoon of good fellowship, fun and food.

Please RSVP to Sara Ann Ramberger at sar57var@verizon.net or 610-869-3863 to let us know if you plan to attend so we may setup and plan accordingly.



Your RAP Committee:

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

KID'S CORNER



Just a reminder:

In addition to the nursery for the youngest children and children's worship for those a bit older, we also have a kid's corner set-up in the back of our sanctuary for any children in the sanctuary during worship services.

Children are welcome at any time during the service to go to the kid's corner where there are kid's worship bulletins, coloring pages and other quiet activities for them to enjoy.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Round up your kids and grand kids and get ready to Dive into the fun on July 15th—19th.

Volunteers are needed and donations are always welcomed and now being accepted.

Call or email Xavier for all the details.

Childyouthdiretor@westgroveumc.org,
610-612-7377 or call the
church office at 610-869-9334.





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!

We want to thank the congregation for the continued generous support for our feminine hygiene products collection. We can ALWAYS use these supplies. The donations will be available to the women who come to the food pantry.

Our distributions, the week before Easter, were extra special, because we had an egg hunt and Easter activities for the children who came with their parents to shop for food.

Over 20 children enjoyed the activities.

We thank Xavier, our Children and Youth Director, for his participation. It is always nice to have Spanish speakers volunteer at our distributions, since the first language for 95% of our families is Spanish.

We continue to purchase tortillas each month for our food pantry families. The monthly cost is \$450. Please prayerfully consider donating to our food bank.

Donations can be placed in the offering plate or mailed in. (Please indicate "Food Bank" in the memo".



Acolytes



We are pleased to again have children in our congregation, serving as acolytes during our worship services.

If your child(ren) or grandchild(ren) are in the third grade or above, they are welcome to participate.

Please contact Joan Leaman (jmleaman@comcast.net) if you have interested children.

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





March has been a busy month for our Preschool Friends!

We started the month out celebrating Dr. Seuss
and our Read Across America Week.

Friends (and the teachers!) came to school dressed in their wackiest clothes, silliest
socks, and hilarious headbands and hats!

Lots of Dr. Seuss books were read and crafts were created.

It was a good time for everyone!

A visit from some very silly and mischievous leprechauns happened
for St. Patrick's Day here at preschool!

Toilet water turned green, toilet paper was strewn across classrooms,
messes were made, and chairs were flipped upside down.

We were unable to catch those sneaky little guys despite setting some of the
most amazing leprechaun traps ever!

Maybe next year we will have better luck.

Our pizza kit sales are ongoing and are available every other
Wednesday for the next month or so.

Our next order will be April 8th, for delivery on April 11th.

We also have our annual Art Show coming up on April 17th.

We will be holding a bake sale during the art show, so if you have a goody you will be
willing to bake and donate please let us know!

All the best,
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 general Methodist part of



UMC in (are all churches UMC)?

BIRTHDAYS IN APRIL

- 04/01 Joyce Bischoff
- 04/02 Alan Bratton
- 04/04 Sue Curtis
- 04/08 Payton Ingiosi
- 04/10 Patrick Wiwel
- 04/14 Janet Phillips
- 04/15 Virgil Brown
- 04/16 Maggie Stuhrke



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

- 04/17 Charlie Bechtel
- 04/17 Kathy Wiwel
- 04/18 Thomas Hoover
- 04/18 Sue Hutton
- 04/19 Roxanne Shane
- 04/22 April Stoltzfus
- 04/26 Roger Bates
- 04/30 John McGinley
- 04/30 April Spencer



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

April 2024

~ 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

Janice L Bowers, Interim Pastor
pastorjaniceb@gmail.com

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

Lavenia Civitella—Handbell Choir Director
Misslavenia@verizon.net

Maira Tena - Nursery Attendant

Maira Tena—Sexton
sexton@westgroveumc.org

Abbie Gruscavage—Children's Morning Out Director
cmo@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—Christian Education

Children's Ministry Team Contact

Valerie Kapp-Benner - Missions Chair

Dick and Caryl Stuhrke - Hospitality Committee Chair

Susan Paisley -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

Betty Mundell—Ad Council Member at Large

Cindy Hoover—CMO Advisory Board Chair

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

Susan Paisley—Prayer Ministry Coordinator