

# The Wesleyan Star



## March



## 2025

West Grove  
United Methodist Church  
Pastor DJ Choi

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



**“Every man dies, but not every man really lives”**

**William Wallace**

If you can live 80 years of life, it will be equal to 700,800 hours. Do you know how many hours you have left? We have lived so many hours but we know they are not all the same. Some hours are far more precious than others. The hour you were born, the hour you went to a class for the first time, the hour you married. We are living in the hours of Kronos. We can't go back to the past nor fast forward to the future. We are stuck in the here and now.

Jesus volunteered to live in Kronos, the finite, a mortal life just like us but he really lived and died to change the World. And we decided to follow Him, his Way, Truth and Life. How can we live like Jesus and die to change the world here and now?

This Lent, 2025, I would like to invite you on a special journey with me. “24 Hours That Changed the World” by Adam Hamilton. Pastor Hamilton will be our guide for the last 24 hours of Jesus’ life that changed the whole world and its history. Jesus changed the fate of our eternity by his death and resurrection. How can 24 hours of one man’s life, change everything? It begins with a dinner with his friends who deserted him when he was arrested. Jesus prayed at the Garden of Gethsemane to refuse to drink the cup, the Cross. He was falsely accused, tortured and died on the Cross for us. But he was risen. The pinnacle of the Gospel is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Greatest Victory.

I hope and pray you Encounter Jesus’ 24 hours, Empowered by Jesus’ love and faith, and Engage in ministries to follow in our own 24 hours.

In Christ,  
DJ



## Worship in March 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.



**WORSHIP SERVICE 9:30 AM.**  
**YOUTH GROUP TUESDAY, 6 TO 7 PM.**

March 2<sup>nd</sup>

"The Anointing of Jesus "

Matthew 26:1-16

Pastor DJ Choi

March 9<sup>th</sup>

"The Last Supper"

Mark 14: 12, 22-25

Pastor DJ Choi

March 16<sup>th</sup>

"The Garden of Gethsemane"

Mark 14:32-42-50

Pastor DJ Choi

March 23<sup>rd</sup>

"Condemned by the Righteous"

Mark 14:53, 55, 61-68, 70-72

Pastor DJ Choi

March 30<sup>th</sup>

"Jesus, Barabbas and Pilate"

Mark 15: 1-15

Pastor DJ



# **PASTOR JIM'S CHRISTIAN LIVING COLUMN**

## **LIFE IS ABOUT OUR JOURNEY OF GRACE - MARCH 2025**

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, spoke about three main types of grace in his teachings. These graces describe different stages in a person's spiritual journey and relationship with God. Together, these three types of grace illustrate Wesley's belief in God's continuous work in a person's life, from awakening them to their need for salvation to forgiving them and helping them grow in holiness.

He saw grace as God's active presence in human life, not merely a one-time gift but a continual process drawing people closer to God. Wesley's three graces:

### **1. PREVENIENT GRACE: THE GRACE THAT GOES BEFORE**

Prevenient Grace is the first movement of God in our lives—His divine love and work before we are even aware of it. Wesley believed that prevenient grace is given to all people, not just Christians. It stirs within us a desire for God, even before we know Him personally. Though prevenient grace does not save a person, it enables them to respond to God and seek salvation

- Romans 5:8 – “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
- Philippians 2:13 – “For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.”

### **2. JUSTIFYING GRACE: THE GRACE THAT SAVES**

Justifying grace is God's grace that brings about our salvation. It is when a person, recognizing their sin, repents and trusts in Christ. This grace is received when we turn away from sin and trust in Jesus. Through Christ, we are no longer guilty before God. Wesley emphasized that believers could have assurance of their salvation, knowing they are truly forgiven.

- Ephesians 2:8-9 – “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”
- Romans 5:1 – “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Titus 3:5 – “He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.”

### **3. SANCTIFYING GRACE: THE GRACE THAT TRANSFORMS**

Sanctifying grace is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life, helping them grow in love, holiness, and Christlikeness. Wesley believed that salvation is not just about forgiveness but transformation. Wesley called this process “going on to perfection” (Christian perfection), meaning a deepening love for God and others. The Holy Spirit empowers believers to overcome sin and live in obedience. Sanctification is not instant but an ongoing process, it is a Lifelong Journey

- Philippians 1:6 – “Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
- 1 Thessalonians 4:3 – “It is God's will that you should be sanctified.”
- 2 Corinthians 3:18 – “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory.”

### **THE JOURNEY OF GRACE**

Wesley's view of grace paints a beautiful picture of God's ongoing work in our lives, which underscores the Methodist belief in personal transformation and holiness, calling believers to personal piety and acts of love, justice, and mercy in the world.



## **MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY WITH PASTOR JIM**

**ACTS 13-28 The Life of Paul in the New Testament**

Join us for the Monday Night Bible Study for the second half of our study In the “Book of the Acts of the Apostles” (ACTS), as we study the life work of Paul. This study is about the growth of the church beyond Jerusalem and the problems Paul faces. God has said to Paul, “I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth” (Acts 13:47).

This new study will begin on Monday, March 17, at 6:30 PM, in the sanctuary, but please join us as we finish the first part of Acts 1-12, the formation and growth of the church in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria.

Pastor Jim.

## **AN INVITATION FROM OUR BISHOP**



**Dear United Methodists of Eastern Pennsylvania and Greater New Jersey,**

Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koikoi has invited us on a spiritual venture of **A Journey of Healing: From Lamentation to Praise** — a conference-wide campaign designed to walk with one another, through God’s grace, toward healing and ultimately, **PRAISE!** This journey will unfold over the coming months, culminating in opportunities to praise and celebrate the work of God in our lives during District Conferences and our Annual Conference in May.

**Here is our timeline for this journey:**

1. March: Cleansing the Wounds (Lenten Gatherings with Communion & Healing Services)
2. April: Protecting the Wound (Prayer Litanies & Reconciliation Resources)
3. May: Praise! (District Conference & Annual Conference Praise Opportunities)

**Visit the link below for more information and timelines.**

**Visit [EPAGNJHealing.com](http://EPAGNJHealing.com) HERE**

# Volunteers



Needed - Hospitality - Volunteers – Volunteers - Volunteers!!

It's never too late to sign up to help provide refreshments and serve during our Fellowship time after the service.

Join us for a cup of coffee, a treat and some old fashioned fellowship time together.

Contact Dick or Caryl Sturhrke for more information.

[rstuhrke@verizon.net](mailto:rstuhrke@verizon.net) or [spikoe@aol.com](mailto:spikoe@aol.com)

## \* \* RING INTO SPRING \* \*

Hand Bell and Chime Class

No experience necessary - just bring your hands and heart!

Beginning March 20<sup>th</sup> in the sanctuary at 6:30 pm.

Led by our Memory Bell Director, Lavenia Civitella.

Sign up sheet in the narthex.

For more information contact Lavenia at:

[misslavenia@verizon.net](mailto:misslavenia@verizon.net) - or - 610-869-9088



## MEALS FROM ANGELS



Would you like to volunteer to provide a meal to someone who needs a little extra help for some reason? Be it a recent surgery, sickness or trauma, everyone could use a meal delivered to them every now and again.

### OR PERHAPS

You are in need of such a blessing!

Whether recipient or volunteer contact Judy Gambill at [jlg456@epix.net](mailto:jlg456@epix.net) Pg. 5





## Upcoming Events at West Grove UMC!

We have some exciting events coming up for all ages, and we want you to be a part of them!  
Here's what's happening:



### Easter Egg Hunt - Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 AM

Join us for a fun-filled Easter Egg Hunt at West Grove UMC! It's going to be a joyful time of celebration and community. To help us prepare, please **RSVP** so we know how many eggs to hide!



### Vacation Bible School (VBS) - July 7<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM

This year, we're traveling back in time to ancient **Egypt** to follow **Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace!** Through exciting games, interactive storytelling, hands-on activities, and meaningful friendships, children will learn how God was with Joseph through every challenge and how He's always with us, too!



### Youth-Run Sunday Service - Sunday, May 4<sup>th</sup>

Our youth will be leading a special Sunday service on May 4<sup>th</sup>! It's a wonderful opportunity to see our young people shine in worship. If you would like a role in the service, please reach out to us, and we'll help make it happen.



### Follow the Youth Instagram Page!

To stay connected with the youth group and keep up with upcoming events and announcements, **follow our new Instagram page!** It's a great way to stay engaged and informed.

We look forward to seeing you at these events!

Don't forget to RSVP for the Easter Egg Hunt.

We hope you're as excited as we are for VBS and the Youth Sunday Service.

Let's make these events a memorable time of fellowship and fun!



## WGUMC MEETING SCHEDULE FOR MARCH



March 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm. Vision Team Meeting.

March 18<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 SPRC Meeting

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 pm. Trustee Meeting.

March 19<sup>th</sup>, Ad Council Meeting

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 am. Full Staff Meeting

March 22<sup>nd</sup>, United Methodist Men

March 14<sup>th</sup>, RAP

## Retired Active People



**RAPs next gathering is Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at noon in the sanctuary.**

**Join us as we celebrate a new year and upcoming new programs.**

## **THE FOLLOWING IS A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF OUR PROGRAMS FOR 2025:**

**March 14, 2025, Hands on CPR, Jake Barnes, NRP, EMS Sergeant, SCC Medic 94.**

**April 11, 2025, Storyteller, Diane Albertson** will talk about the Titanic with whimsical tales

**May 9, 2025, the Providence Brass Band** will once again entertain us with their wonderful music



RAP met on February 14<sup>th</sup>. We enjoyed a wonderful informative program provided by Jim Sutton, Associate Director of Display Designs at Longwood Gardens.

Thank you Paulette Bryan for being our leader and thank you Paulette Bryan, Sara Ann Ramberger, Gloria Anderson, Karen Underwood and Ray McKay for the delicious desserts.  
We appreciate all those who helped with our cleanup.

Join us on Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup>, at noon in the sanctuary for our next gathering.  
If you were here in October, you may recall that Robert Hotchkiss, Chief Executive Officer/EMS Chief, SCCEMS, Medic 94, updated us on their services. He offered that they also provide CPR classes.  
In March Jake Barnes, NRP, EMS Sergeant, SCCEMS, Medic 94, will present a condensed version CPR class.

Caryl Stuhrke will be our leader for the day. Please join us for an enjoyable afternoon of fellowship.  
Bring your bagged lunch and enjoy provided desserts and hot and cold beverages.

We look forward to seeing you on March 14<sup>th</sup>.

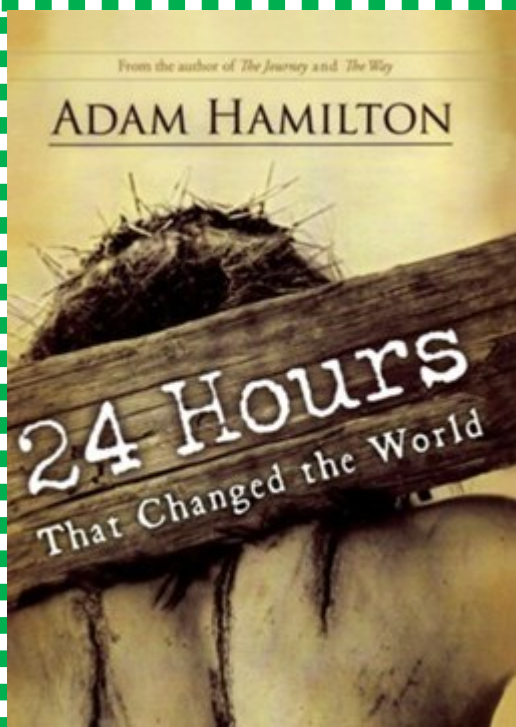
Invite a friend or two and share this information with others. Everyone is welcome!

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

The RAP Committee,

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





## New Bible Study/Sermon Series:

**Sun., March 9<sup>th</sup>**, (8:30 - 9:15 am) begins a 7 week Lenten book & video Bible Study by Adam Hamilton in conjunction with Pastor D.J.'s Sermon series on:

### "24 Hours that Changed the World"

Join us and follow along even if you can't join in the bible study. Books are available in the narthex.

Place your \$10.00 book donation in the donation box.



## Updates from Trustees:

The memorial sign has been installed on the pavilion, honoring six WGUMC church families. Once the weather warms up, trustees will be installing a ceiling to minimize birds and bees from building nests underneath the roof. We can't wait to see this lovely space used as a new gathering spot for church groups in the coming years.

Just like items in your home that only last so long, the same applies to things at our church. Over the next few months, you may notice a few updates to our systems.

The AED machine is being replaced. (Automated external defibrillator, used to treat sudden cardiac arrest. It analyzes the heart's rhythm and delivers an electric shock to help restore a normal heartbeat.) In case you are not aware, the AED is in the narthex coat closet.

Once the weather warms up, we will be replacing the HVAC unit in the admin wing. And finally, trustees are in the process of obtaining estimates to replace the Fire Alarm System, which has served us well for the past 26 years, but is in need of updating.



## 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

**Item of the Month “Shampoo” – Thank you for your generous donations of dish detergent in the month of February. We collected over 40 bottles of detergent.**

For the month of March, we are collecting bottles of shampoo. Please put your donations in the labeled back bin in the church lobby. Let's see if we can collect at least 50 bottles of shampoo! Our families really appreciate the household items like dish detergent and shampoo, as they are not items we are able to get from the Chester County Food Bank to distribute to the families who visit our pantry.

Speaking of the **Food Bank**, we want to highlight some of the amazing support we receive from them in order to be able to help meet the needs of our neighbors.

Over 95% of the food we distribute is provided free to us from the **Chester County Food Bank**. The **Food Bank** is loaning us a double glass door refrigerator and a double glass door freezer to use as long as we continue to partner with them.

**The Food Bank** has helped us secure metal shelving units to store and display our food.

**The Food Bank** gave the church 4 tables to use in our produce distribution room.

Every Wednesday, the **Food Bank** delivers the food we have ordered. They bring a refrigerated truck, from their location in Exton, filled with four pallets of fresh produce, eggs, cheese, frozen meat and shelf stable food products.

The **Food Bank** employs a Spanish speaking woman to be at our distributions each week, to help with registering the families who speak Spanish, as well as providing additional help during and after the distributions, as we clean-up.

**The Chester County Food Bank** has about 40 other partner agencies, like our pantry, throughout Chester County. They provide the same resources and help to these agencies as they do with us.

The **Food Bank** hosts quarterly meetings that a representative from each partner agency attends, to learn more about all the resources available to both our pantries and the families we serve.

## A BIG SHOUT OUT TO THE CHESTER COUNTY FOOD BANK!

### SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

**Sale Dates— May 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**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.**





## Hello from CMO!

This month we packed a lot of learning and fun into not a lot of days! On top of being a short month, Mother Nature blessed us with quite a bit of wintry weather, requiring some late starts and closures. While snow can be lots of fun, we are ready for warmer, sunny days so we can play outside!

Spring-WE NEED YOU!

We kicked off the month of February talking about Groundhog's Day and how Phil forecasted 6 more weeks of winter (NO!) Our classes all celebrated Valentine's Day and learned about friendship, kindness and L-O-V-E. Some other themes visited this month were; outer space, the solar system, healthy hearts, sign language, yummy treats, and we even had a visit from a special guest.....a bearded dragon named Spike! We keep busy here at Preschool, we learn a lot and have a ton of fun while doing it!

Registration for next year has begun and while we have had a great turnout, with many people registering, we still have open spots in our Two and Three year old, two day per week (Tuesday/Thursday) classes, as well as very limited spots in our Pre-Kindergarten class. If you know anyone looking for a preschool for their child for next year, please send them our way.

I am always happy to chat and to give tours.

Until next time,

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 MARCH



3/01 Edel Mullen  
3/02 Kay Warfel  
3/07 Donna Shaub  
3/10 Linda Shiplet  
3/10 Mike Wiwel  
3/11 Colton McCummings  
3/13 Duane Bruno  
3/13 Dick Stuhrke  
3/14 Kristin Boyd



3/14 Erik Hendrickson  
3/15 Nathan Robinson  
3/21 Michael Duvall  
3/21 Maira Tena  
3/23 Pam Howard  
3/23 Caryl Sturke  
3/26 Betsy Smith  
3/27 Carolyn Bratton  
3/27 Shannon Murphy

**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](mailto: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](mailto:pastor@westgroveumc.org)

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

[Jim.mundell@westgroveumc.org](mailto:Jim.mundell@westgroveumc.org)

Xavier Feliciano - Youth & Children's Ministry  
Director

[Childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org](mailto:Childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org)

April Spencer - Church Administrator  
[Office@westgroveumc.org](mailto:Office@westgroveumc.org)

Valerie Kapp-Benner—Financial Administrator  
[Financialadmin@westgroveumc.org](mailto:Financialadmin@westgroveumc.org)

Betsy Smith - Traditional Music Director  
Contemporary Music Interim Director  
Keyboardist

[Betsy.smith@westgroveumc.org](mailto:Betsy.smith@westgroveumc.org)

Bill Pardoe—Technical Magician  
[billpardoe1@gmail.com](mailto:billpardoe1@gmail.com)

Lavenia Civitella—Handbell Choir Director  
[Misslavenia@verizon.net](mailto:Misslavenia@verizon.net)

Abbie Gruscavage—Children's Morning Out Director  
[cmo@westgroveumc.org](mailto:cmo@westgroveumc.org)

Maira Tena - Nursery Attendant  
Maira Tena—Sexton  
[sexton@westgroveumc.org](mailto:sexton@westgroveumc.org)

**Sunday Worship Service**  
**9:30 am.**

### **Christ Servant Ministers**

Karen Hruz, [khruz@hotmail.com](mailto:khruz@hotmail.com)  
Peter Mullen, [psmullen@petermullen.com](mailto:psmullen@petermullen.com)

### **Board and Committee Leadership**

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

Donna Fackler - Finance 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