



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

July 2023



Knowing the Stars Behind the Blue Sky

*"Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the clouds." (Psalm 36:5)*

At a recent memorial service, I shared an aspect of our faith and my personal perspective the same way I have shared it with children. On a beautiful sunny, summer day, with the bright sunlight and blue sky, it is impossible to see the stars 'behind' the daylight. The light is too bright, yet I know for sure the stars, the heavens, and all rest of the miracle of creation is still there. In my limited perspective and sight, I might not be able to see them in the moment, but they are there.

In the same sense, many people are reluctant to trust that there is a heaven, or to trust in God's presence and promise, and blessings. When we don't trust God, our perceptions are distorted and a disaster often results. In the midst of life, God is with us and God's promises of presence are there for us. We might not be able to see them, blinded as we are by the immediate conditions of our lives in the moment. We don't control God, and through devotions, prayer,

and worship, we regularly make time to remember that while we are not God, God is God, we are loved by God, and seek His heart. *"And He (God) brought him (Abraham) outside and said, 'Look toward heaven and count the stars, if you are able to count them.'"* (Genesis 15:5a) God made a promise, a Covenant with Abraham, to always be with him and his descendants in faith.

Overcoming the Challenge

Today, the artificial light of humanity often blocks out the light of those stars. We can trust that there truly is a heaven and that God's promises of presence with us can guide and strengthen our lives and the love we share. God wants to bless our friendships and loved ones and teaches us how. We might not always be able to fully see or perceive God and heaven, given our limited abilities, yet we see the results of his creativity all around us. Summer is a great time to take in God's creativity in the ways we are living. I find it a blessing to make the time to take in the 'heaven' and the image of God in other people. I can experience God and the people around me more fully by intentionally connecting with people in listening and understanding together. Our sacred nature is made clear.

Today there are many people and dynamics that can distract us from our most sacred priorities. Demands and situations that overstep into our boundaries impose themselves on us, and often incite us to overstep the healthy boundaries that other people need. Lord, forgive us our trespasses. In the midst of our challenges, we need to set God first to hear God's Word often, over the other voices and noise around us, and weave God's Word into all parts of life. *"Thus says the Lord: Do not learn the way of the nations or be dismayed at the signs of the heavens, for the nations are dismayed at them."* (Jeremiah 10:2) Jeremiah must have felt like many of us do, overwhelmed by circumstances he could not control. In the mist of it, God led him to trust and respond faithfully in the ways he received, shared, and encouraged faith in God.

We Only See Through a Mirror, Dimly

Like trusting in the heavens and stars that we cannot yet see on a bright, sunny day, we trust that God is helping us grow and mature in His love. Even though it may be out of our control, God is with us, will lead us to the promised fulfillment. With the insights of the transformation God was working in his life, the Apostle Paul wrote, ¹¹ *"When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways."* ¹² *"For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known."* ¹³ *"And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love."* (I Corinthians 13:11-13) May we continue to seek face to face, heart to heart relationships with God and each other. And may we perceive and live fully in the transformation that God promises, seeing the creative possibilities open to us in the power of the Spirit and God's grace and love. And may we embrace how fully we are known and loved by God, and embrace the grace before us in all we do. – Tim



Worship in July 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 will continue to offer two services at 8:30 and 11AM, except on July 16 when we celebrate VBS with the children. It gives everyone options for their Sundays and we are offering a time of fellowship in an adult Sunday school class each week (except 7/16) at 9:45 to 10:45 too. We continue our search for music leaders for both the Bell Choir and the PraiseWorks Band. In July, I anticipate offering the scripture readings from Romans in both the NRSV translation and the Message paraphrase interpretation, for I have found it extremely helpful to hear Peterson's interpretation of Romans, one of the most theologically complex books. Adult Sunday School in the library will focus on the worship theme and scripture for the day.

Sunday, July 2, 2023

Communion and All Worship Sunday

Fifth Sunday After Pentecost



We celebrate our independence and freedom, especially intent on the deeper freedom God offers us all that is far better than the impulsive freedom so many people seek. It took God's guidance and law to take the Israelites out of slavery, and it took his heart in the law to take the slavery out of their hearts. Continuing to understand how our healthy boundaries can show respect and fulfill the promise of freedom is vital for our lives today. As Americans, many of us trust in God's vision for us to live in freedom and not tyranny. In Christ we can understand how we can bring together the various aspects of living faithfully as friends in Christ to share real empathetic caring as a Christians, supporting each other. We will share passages from Romans 6:12-23; and if we have time, listen to Matthew 10:40-42.

Sunday, July 9, 2023

Sixth Sunday After Pentecost

Process verses Results – God Empowers Our Freedom and Ability to Choose, (even our emotions). Paul says, being faithful to God, and 'not full of ourselves' as one interpretation says it, is key. Remembering that God's law comes out of God's heart, empowers us to reach for and live fulfilled lives. God provides the freedom for us to make decisions, and now we seek to choose wisely, move towards choosing Christ over our small ambitions and desires as we open hearts to him. The scripture is from Romans 7:15-25a and we may also share Matthew 11:16-19.



Sunday, July 16, 2023

Seventh Sunday After Pentecost



Theme for Vacation Bible School – "So let us strive for the things that bring peace and build each other up." (Romans 14:19). Each of us is called in large and small ways to be a hero by living faithfully in Christ. We are called to serve Christ together. We will combine into one service at 9:30, celebrating VBS. We will invite the children from VBS to come and sing the songs they learned; we then look forward to hosting a time of picnic afterwards, welcoming their families to share fellowship with us.



Worship in July 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.

In Jesus, God took on our situation and human conditions personally, bearing the brunt of the pain and need. Now we want to respond with our lives. Along with Romans 14:19, our scripture is Romans 8:1-11. We hope everyone will make it a point to join us to welcome and get to know the children and families of Vacation Bible School. We need your help with serving the children, a gift of friendship that can make a huge difference. Please contact Melanie if you can help as a volunteer for any time during the week, and we'll keep everyone informed about the Sunday celebration following Bible School.

Sunday, July 23, 2023

Eighth Sunday After Pentecost

*Encountering God's Word:
What It Really
Means to
Be A Child of God
Romans 8:13-25*

Assertiveness as Faithfulness – Everyday Heroes of Faith –

Following up from Bible School's theme and our ability to choose, we'll look at how we provide and make room for others, while staying engaged in deepening relationships. We often either withdraw and become non-involved observers, or we overidentify with people and take charge of their lives in situations that don't honor healthy boundaries. We want to empower people and not always solve other's problems for them. Paul says as Christians, we are not living a grave

tending life; our faith leads us to live life fully at whatever age or stage we are in, with things to do and places to go, ways to grow and mature. The scripture is Romans 8:12-25.

Sunday, July 30, 2023

Ninth Sunday After Pentecost

Building Trust Together in Confidentiality—God is right with us helping us have patience, building trust, knowing it is God who needs to be at work, in peoples' lives first. We are not 'fixing' others, as much as we are in partnership with God in sharing God's love. Violating confidentiality often happens with good intentions, while it steals away the empower of a person to share their journey and story with others themselves. Paul opens up his life of faith to us all, being very vulnerable in the process. He went through great transformation. He models for us a willingness to express faith. A key component of trustworthiness is confidentiality. So ,we'll seek to understand more and share Romans 8:26-39.



The Month of August

**JOURNEY
OF
Faith**

Grief is All Around Us – Everything from the changes of all kinds happening in our lives and world, to the loss of a loved one can ignite grief in us, and faithfully being aware of our emotions, sharing them with God and one another is vital. Paul in Romans 9 shares his grief and his trust in Christ, believing that as tough as things may seem, God is at work, and he (Paul) has been blessed to be part of it all. He trusts in God's promise, God's Covenant, knowing how others have taken it, and God for granted. In August, we may also look at some of the women in the Bible and how they were faithful in leading and modelling faithfulness to God; they are heroes of faith.

Pastor's Desk



MISSION TRIP

Post Script – Boundaries

This time of year, for me it often seems like there is not enough time in the day, and yet summer is a vital time for relaxation and getting closer to the people we love. Setting healthy boundaries was our theme in sending our youth out on their mission trip, and it is essential for us as we are being recreated by God in personal time with Him and taking time to relax, share faith and fellowship with friends & loved ones. Setting healthy boundaries for ourselves helps lead us to honoring the sacred, healthy boundaries other people need, and see them as one of God's children. They help us connect with each other more deeply and completely.

For our youth heading to their mission trip, we challenged them in setting a personal boundary of prioritizing at the top, devotions in prayer, God's Word, and worship, over other activities. The work accomplished on a house or building is great, it's a joy to do for others, the real gift and priority is in our relationships and the transformation possible with Jesus. We are so grateful our youth committed the time and talent to serve and share in this special journey, and we are grateful to help support their growth. Thank you for your offerings of prayers, friendship, and finances in our ministry. It is no small feat to leave family and home behind, the comforts of life, to go out and sacrifice the time and freedom. Thank you to Melanie and Tony Jones, and Andrew Herman as the adult leaders, who facilitated and took on the responsibility.



God Want to be Close with Us

What is true for our youth is true for us as adults. We face great dangers in not staying close with God and setting God first in our efforts. When we don't,

we feel alienated in all the aspects of life; ministry faces the threat of being just another job, where we are just employees, and not serving out of our hearts, or living, receiving, and sharing the fullness of God's heart. Please know that when I set healthy boundaries for myself and encourage it in the church, we are not trying to disconnect or shut out anyone; in fact, it opens us up for greater participation in relationships and fellowship with each other. Sadly, in our world, even many in our nation, are only out for themselves, and are not open to the complete inclusion of God's will, perspective, perception that leads to the real blessings of life.

As I quoted Jeremiah earlier, *"Thus says the Lord: Do not learn the way of the nations or be dismayed at the signs of the heavens, for the nations are dismayed at them."* (Jeremiah 10:2)

Join us in worship and fellowship on Sundays and additional ministry activities throughout the summer. Andrew Herman and I are working on some dates to host a cookout and games. We'll send out info by e-mail. May we stay close in Christ.



Jenner's Pond

Residents: Join us

for worship on

June 11th at

11 a.m. On your

closed circuit TV

and in-person in

Alison Theater, Led

by Pastor Jim

Pastor's Desk

Grief Share Fellowship

A fellowship group focused on sharing life's journey through times of loss and grief, is being planned to begin this summer. Have you experienced a loss these past several years? It takes time to heal wounds, above all it takes God's love together to heal our wounds, whatever they may be. We've been through many changes in the past few years, and many have lost loved ones. It is a blessing to be together, share fellowship, and strengthen friendships.

If you are interested in taking part, or have questions, please call pastor Tim (484.720.8626) or the church office. We learn and help each other by sharing the journey together.



On July 16, we will celebrate VBS Sunday with a blended service at 9:30 a.m. only. August worship service plans to be announced.

During the month of June and July, we will continue to have 8:30 & 11:00 a.m. services. A Sunday school class led by Pastor Tim will be offered at 9:45 am each week.

Church Office will be closed on Monday, July 3 -4 in observance of Independence Day.

The Church Office will re-open on Wednesday, July 5th

**PASTOR JIM'S
CHRISTIAN LIVING COLUMN
Remembrances from Childhood
July 2023**



As I look back over my life as a young boy, at this time of the year, in late June and July, I always looked forward to Vacation Bible School. In the late 1940's and early 1950's the VBS that I attended was for 5 days a week, 9 AM till Noon for two weeks. This meant we had 10 days of learning about Jesus and the Bible.

If I remember correctly, the complete VBS school met together for opening exercises, where we sang songs, prayed, and did such things as a Bible drills. We each had a Bible and the leader would call out a verse of scripture and the first one to find it and read it aloud was the winner. Another thing I remember was at the beginning we took an offering each day. The offering was designated for a mission either locally or foreign. This taught us that giving is a very important part of worshiping, learning and giving, as we shared with others in need.

We then went to our age-related classes where we studied our Biblical lesson. This always included a craft-time, a time for learning a memory verse, and to learn to memorize it, putting it in our heart and mind.

To conclude our day, we would once again gather to sing, pray and even share the memory verse given to us that day.

One of the things I enjoyed was singing the various choruses that were taught over the years in VBS and

during Sunday School throughout the year. Perhaps some of you remember one or more of these choruses.

- This Little Light of Mine, I'm going to let it shine.
- He's got the Whole World in His Hands.
- Give Me Oil in MY Lamp (Keep it Burning).
- Zacchaeus Was A Wee Little Man.

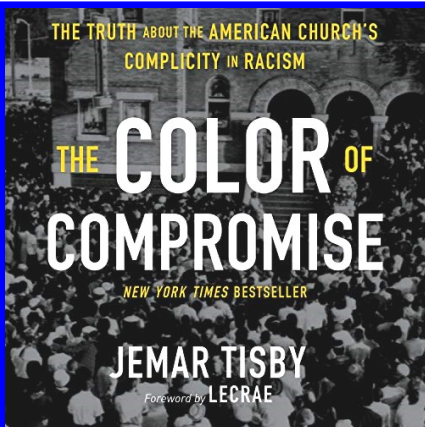
- Jesus Love Me, This I know.
- I Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy, Down In My Heart.
- Deep and Wide
- Praise Ye the Lord.
- Trust and Obey
- The B-I-B-L-E, That's the Book For Me.

I truly give thanks to my Sunday School teachers for all that I learned about the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in the Holy Scriptures. For it set my pathway of life and has led me to where I am today.

I trust the members of our church will see the importance of our up-and-coming Vacation Bible School, being held on July 10th to 14th and enrolling our children, grandchildren and even our great-grandchildren.

Youtube has many of these children choruses recorded and here is the pathway to "Trust and Obey". Why not check it out. <https://www.youtube.com/watch%3Fv%3DJyglFH4Ly9g>

Pastor Jim



New Fall Book Study

Starts Saturday, September 9th at 10am

This will be a grand opportunity to listen, learn, discuss, agree, and disagree. One sure trust we hold in our hearts is that each is a gift to the other! These sessions will give us the chance to hear a Black historian unfold the story of the church's complex relationship with people of color. Since the trigger word "racism" can sometimes be on target and other times falsely accusatory, we will have to unwrap that a bit. That process is part of the package this book will help us breakdown. Let your Christian commitment to the brother/sisterhood of all believers keep you curious! Join the facilitators, Mel Leaman and Peter Mullen as we turn

the pages to deeper understanding of our shared history. Each of the sessions will begin with a 15 minute summary of the chapter by the author. We plan to offer both personal and virtual opportunities to participate.

The book's website for further information is: <https://jemartisby.com/>



SAVE THE DATE!

Vacation Bible School

July 10-14

This year at Hero Hotline, In the depths of a colorful underground cave, is the beating heart of the hero community, the Hero Hotline Headquarters, where everyone's gifts are valued and every hero has a role to play. Each day, our team of heroes will spring into action and explore the ultimate Hero Handbook -the Bible- to discover how all Heroes can follow the examples set by a cast of supporting Bible Heroes in stories from the Old and New Testaments, who work together to bring peace, build each other up, and

share the great story of God's love for us where they are and with the whole world.

We hope you join us for a fantastic week of games, stories, songs, and fun with friends!

Registration will open on June 1 with a shared link on Facebook, constant contact, and the children's ministry news email.

Contact Melanie Jones, Director of Children and Youth Ministries, for information at childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org.

Interested in volunteering?

Volunteer needs:

K-6 Bible story leader

K-6 Science leader

PreK Science leader

Assembly leaders (lead kids through songs and opening/closing skit)

Grades 2nd & 3rd group leader

Grade group assistants

It takes many hands to make it happen, and you won't regret it! Everyone has fun at VBS! Youth (starting at grade 7) and adult volunteers are needed; contact Melanie Jones.

childyouthdirector@westgroveumc.org

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! **June: Thursday, June 29;**

July: Thursday, July 6 and Thursday, July 20; August: Thursday, August

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!



VBS AND ALL CHURCH BBQ SUNDAY, JULY 16TH

ON SUNDAY, JULY 16, after the 9:30 Blended Worship Service, we will celebrate the VBS kids, their families, and the volunteers with a BBQ and games! The whole church is invited. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be



provided, and we invite all who are able to bring a side dish, beverage, snack item or dessert to share. Bring your lawn chairs and yard games! **So, save the date and we hope to see you there!**

Food Pantry



West Grove UMC Food Pantry

Weekly Hours:

Wednesdays: 5:00—6:30 p.m.

Thursdays: 1:00—2:00 p.m.

We have over 250 registered families, which is more than 1200 individuals. Our church is serving approximately 140-160 families each week. **Donations are greatly appreciated** and some of the most requested items include peanut butter, crackers, canned vegetables, tuna, granola bars, cereal, dog food, cat food and cooking oil. We are in need of additional volunteers. There are a variety of ways you can help: stock the shelves, help check in the clients, be an assistant shopper, clean up after the shopping by breaking down boxes for recycle, and much more. Anyone who has an interest should contact Joan Leaman.

We ask for your prayers for the families that are in need of the food support that we provide.

If you are interested, please contact Joan Leaman (jmleaman@comcast.net)



Prison Ministry launches Toiletry Bowl campaign

As professional and college football teams begin preparing for their 2023 seasons, many have dreams of playing in big, championship bowl games in front of thousands of fans. But now we can participate in a bowl competition that will improve the lives of thousands of our brothers and sisters who are incarcerated in Philadelphia

prisons. It's the first-ever Toiletry Bowl! Learn more.



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**

2023 LAITY ACADEMY

August 5 – 6
Eastern University

1 Kings 19:12

After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a still, small voice.



Hear God's whisper at Laity Academy #2, August 4-5

United Methodists of Eastern PA may hear God's still, small voice speak to their minds and hearts with new knowledge and fertile aspirations when they attend EPA's annual Laity Academy August 4-5, at Eastern University in St. Davids. **Register by July 22.** The 10 courses offered—including four new courses—comprise the core Christ Servant Ministry categories of Speaking, Leading and Caring, along with the Basic Course. **Learn more.**

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.



CHURCHES RESPOND. HOMELESSNESS ENDS. HOPE BEGINS.

Can I borrow your lawn mower?

Have you ever needed to borrow something from a neighbor? Stephanie*

recently moved to a new rental with a small yard to take care of. Not having a lawn mower, she checked with her Neighboring church, but no one had a mower they could donate. Her Bridge of Hope case manager then reached out to all Chester County Neighboring Volunteers and found just what was needed. One of Stephanie's Neighboring Volunteers picked up the mower and dropped it off. As Stephanie was getting settled into her new space, her next door neighbor asked to borrow her mower and she was happy to lend it to him. Kindness and generosity go a long way in inspiring others to pay it forward, and might just be someone's answered prayer!



Stephanie's family is just one of three families that signed leases within 3 weeks and we are celebrating the move from homelessness to stability! Despite the affordable housing crisis, moms and children in Bridge of Hope are finding landlords to rent to them, thanks to connections through Neighboring Volunteers. Neighboring Volunteers are opening the door to housing for families and we are celebrating answered.



Rachel Thomas Steadman, Program Director

BIRTHDAYS IN JULY

Kris LeStourgeon	02
Michael Brown	08
Tom Eason	09
Barb Lytle	09
Jeffery Mullen	09
Gene Aucott	11
Janis Schrader	13
David Black	15
Ann Figueroa	15
Joan Saller	15
Megan Dilworth	17
Brady Castaldi	18
Francis Capuano	19



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

Janelle Hadly	19
Kevin Barrett	20
Elizabeth Gula	21
Jacob Rinehimer	21
Buddy Winters	22
Cora Boyd	23
Josh Fulton	25
Pat Heist	28
Nate Howard	29
Scott Steele	29
Mya Ditzel	31



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