

October 28, 2025

Dear Shady Grove United Methodist Church Family,

We are grateful for you and your partnership in the gospel, and for all the ways you continue to serve and strengthen our church family and community. As we begin this year's stewardship season, our theme is **"Ready, Set, GO SERVE"**. This is an invitation to prepare your heart, commit to action, and joyfully go forth to serve God and our neighbors.

Ready

Being **"Ready"** is a matter of the heart—a time for spiritual preparation and prayerful reflection. It's about remembering that all we have—our time, talents, and resources—are gifts from a generous God. Take some time this week to reflect on God's abundance in your own life and pray about how you might use your unique gifts to serve others.

Set

Once our hearts are prepared, we are **"Set"** for action by making a thoughtful and intentional commitment. Your faithful commitment allows our church to plan for the future with confidence. Your annual pledge of time, talent, and treasure is a vital part of setting our ministry in motion, enabling us to worship together, provide ministry opportunities, maintain our facilities, and more.

GO SERVE

Finally, with a ready heart and a committed plan, we **"GO SERVE"**. This is where faith is put into action. It is the joyous culmination of our spiritual journey, as we extend God's love beyond our walls. The church is the body of Christ, and we are all needed to carry out our mission of serving others.

Through your faithful stewardship, we can make a tangible and eternal difference in the lives of many. We ask that you prayerfully consider your commitment for the upcoming year. You can make your estimate of giving by returning the enclosed form or visiting <https://www.shadygroveumc.net/stewardship>.

Thank you for your generosity, your dedication, and for being an essential part of this church family. We look forward to seeing how God uses your gifts to continue building His kingdom in our community and beyond.

Please see the back of this letter for just a few of the our 2025 accomplishments and some upcoming plans for 2026!

In Christ's Service,

Rev.. Burt Brooks

Rev.. Burt Brooks
Interim Lead Pastor



John Lancaster

John Lancaster
Finance Chairperson

Your generosity over the past year has helped to provide so many opportunities for discipleship. These experiences have us in position for 2026. Take a look at your ministries .

Our middle school youth reached out in Virginia Beach to a halfway house for women and children, completing renovations to their therapy farm and prayer garden. In Pittsburgh, our high school youth renewed a community garden and partnered with World Vision to send shoes around the world. February is scheduled as month of love, each Sunday helping in the community. The mission focus for summer will be community needs in Rocky Mount, Virginia, and West Virginia with Appalachian Service Project.

Our children continue to grow as disciples through vibrant Sunday School lessons, Children's Own Worship (COW), G3, Vacation Bible School, Camp Pray and Play, and musical drama. This year families have been provided with devotional packets- Lent, Living with Joy in Jesus, and Advent Adventures - for family devotions at home. Children of G3 (grades 3-5) find joy in being pen pals with children in Otinawaa orphanage community, one of our mission focus areas. How amazing it is to see children from different situations across the world connecting in the name of Jesus! Plans are underway for Vacation Bible School, June 22-26, Snowball Mountain Challenge based on Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Preschoolers will again thrive in their faith growth at three different camps weeks in the summer.

Our adults have grown as disciples through opening themselves to Jesus with study groups, book clubs, and classes in person and on-line. A new discipleship venture this year has been FIRE, our men's group which meets the second Monday of the month for dinner, devotion, and discussion. This is a place for men to connect with each other and God, forging their faith together. Our J-term (January Monday evenings) which focuses on studying the bible with the leadership of professors will continue this January. Our hospitality area now features pew captains, ambassadors, in addition to our greeters, creating a welcoming space for guests and members alike. A new feature of our discipleship efforts is members offering faith testimonies during worship. This focus will continue into 2026 with a training for small group leaders and mentors to enable our ministers to share their faith.

Our choir has enjoyed a steady growth this year and was excited to present a mission concert in May to benefit Shalom Farms, one of our mission partners. We brought in musicians who have never before played and sung with our church. For 2026 we look forward to another benefit concert and offering wider opportunities to praise God through music.