



Pleasant News

Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church

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WORSHIP TIMES

- 8:45am Bible Study Groups
- 10:00am Worship in the Sanctuary

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Inspiration Point

As we approach the end of this age, we can just look around our community and world and see Satan's works expanding! It is closing in around us and our families and communities even now! Our country is divided, our cities are fighting among themselves, even our churches are sharply divided over what the Bible says! While this should not be, it is! It happened back in Old Time Israel and Judah too! God blessed them with an extended period of prosperity and look at what Isaiah 2:5-11 says. **O House of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord. For you have forsaken your people, the House of Jacob, because they are filled with eastern ways; They are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they are pleased with the children of foreigners. Their land is also full of silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures; their land is also full of horses, and there is no end to their chariots. Their land is also full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made. People bow down, and each man humbles himself; therefore, do not forgive them. Enter into the rock and hide in the dust from the terror of the Lord and the glory of His majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.**

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Do we have idols in this day and time? Idols are anything that separates us from God. What separates us from God these days? Is it our material goods which we must work long and hard hours to be able to afford? Is it our golf game because we have standing commitments with our buddies every Sunday? Is it our big boats which cost us a lot of money and we sure do not want them to sit idle by? Is it our drive to build up our bank accounts to larger sums so that we may build bigger homes, buy fancy cars, and send our children to bigger and better schools? Maybe it is our addiction to social media! None of these things are bad of themselves, but if they cause us to totally focus on them to the point of neglecting God's Word or the assembling of ourselves together to worship Him then they have become idols!

Do you know that the Bible teaches us that when a man's ways please God, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him? That applies not just to man. But to countries, cities, even churches! Looking around, I am convinced that God is not pleased with us! There is no peace! I have also learned that when the leaders of a business, a nation, a church are out of order, the whole unit is out of order. The Holy Spirit does not like disorder and will not hang around if that is the case! I attended a church in Georgia years ago where a Black family came to the door to worship and were met there by a group of deacons and who turned them away! Within six months, every active, believing member had left the church! Ichabod! The name for a church who has grieved the Holy Spirit! We do not want that to happen! But we must be in prayer and walk in obedience to do otherwise!

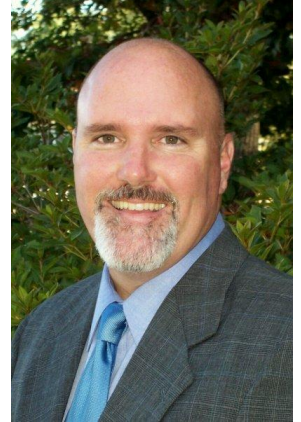
We as a nation have heard the call, 2 Chronicles 7:14. **If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.** We know what is required, but will we choose to ignore the call and pretend that everything is ok as it is? We cannot ignore that things are going from bad to worse, but can it be that we do not know our Lord well enough to hear His voice as it calls from the wilderness? Each of us must choose!

Brother Phil

From the Pastor's Desk

Our United Methodist denomination is at a crossroads and is going through a restructuring process. You may or may not like it. Or you may not know anything about it, but that is why we will be having two informational meetings on Oct 5th & Oct. 12th in our sanctuary. Both meetings will be at 6:30 pm. I encourage you to come and hear about what is going on within our denomination and how it affects us as a local congregation.

Because of this "crossroads" that we find ourselves at, some have asked me what I believe. For me it is straightforward. I am a sinner saved by grace and every day I fall short of who I need to be in Christ. All are welcomed into church to worship a Holy and Righteous God. I claim as best I can in my personal spiritual life the Traditional Apostle's Creed:



I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

The late Rich Mullins, who was a Christian musician, wrote a song titled "Creed" that basically puts the Apostle's Creed to music. Here is the link to that musical video in case you would like to view it:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LR2hFP1yb4>

In addition to the Apostle's Creed, I believe many of the same things that Matt Walsh writes about in his book Church of Cowards: A Wake-Up Call to Complacent Christians. Along with his thoughts, here are a few of my own.

I believe in the authority of scripture. I believe in all the teachings that Christianity has professed for two thousand years. I believe God's grace and mercy are available to all people. I believe in Heaven and Hell, in the necessity of repentance and obedience, and in the merciful saving work of Christ on the cross. There is nothing I can do to earn my salvation! I believe I must try to be more like Christ each day. I believe that not all religions are equal. I believe that only Christianity is the true path to live in eternity with the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit. I believe that those who do not repent and follow Christ are in danger of damnation. I believe that Biblical marriage should be between a man and a woman. I believe in the dignity of human life & in the sanctity of the family. I believe that we are called to be loving, forgiving, modest, and humble. I believe that the Christian life is something distinct and visible and that if I am not living it in a distinct and visible way then I am not living the Christian life to its fullest potential. This is what I believe.

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In 1972 I surrendered my will to God & accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior; I have tried to live out these words. So many times, I've failed, but God's grace has always brought me back to the foot of the cross. No one is beyond God's grace, but His grace came at a price which was paid in full by the blood of the Lamb. I have been an Elder in the UMC since 1994.

My heart is heavy because this conflict within the UMC has brought us to this place. My friend and colleague Steve Autrey summarizes the lay of the land this way: "The presenting problems are complex yet are often reduced to binary options of conservative vs. progressive or LGBTQ affirming vs. LGBTQ prohibitive regarding marriage & ordination. A new denomination (The Global Methodist Church) has launched seeking to provide a home for "traditionalists" while assurances from UMC leaders are being offered that everyone can find a home in the "big tent" of the UMC."

My question is, where does the "big tent" stop? Looking ahead I have concerns about the assurances from UMC leaders that traditionalists will be able to find a home in the big tent church. My concerns come from seeing traditionalists become marginalized in other mainline denominations that have gone through similar splits.

Please be in prayer for our church. We need to seek God's wisdom individually and collectively. I will do my best to help us navigate these waters. You are in my prayers and please keep me in yours!

In His Service,

Pastor Byron



Important Meetings for the Entire Church Family

On Oct. 5th & Oct. 12th at 6:30pm we will have informational meetings in our sanctuary regarding the changing status of the United Methodist Denomination and how that might affect our role as a local church congregation. Our church is at a crossroads, one way or another we will be deciding about the direction we'll go. One of the questions that will be discussed is: "What is disaffiliation and how does that affect the local church?" On the 5th we will hear from Rev. Dan Pezet who is the Metro District Superintendent of the Western North Carolina Conference, and on the 12th we will hear from the Rev. Dr. Cliff Wall from Clarksbury UMC, Harmony, NC. **Please make every effort to come to these two meetings as our church prayerfully discerns our future.**



THE FOLLOWING GIFTS WERE MADE TO THE CHURCH IN MEMORY OR IN HONOR OF:

IN MEMORY

Ruth Isenhour

Hazel Sanders

Shirley Williamson

Nadine Williams – Cemetery Fund

Tim and Terri Honeycutt – Cemetery Fund

Brenda Watkins – Cemetery Fund

UMW Circle #3 – Cemetery Fund

Covenant Sunday School Class – Cemetery Fund

Roy and Margaret Parker

John Lowe

Joel and Lea Jones

Steve and Karen Dellinger

Rick and Lynda Elliott – Cemetery Fund

Steve and Maria McClure – Cemetery Fund

Laura Gilleland

Anna Therrell

Ted and Jo Mitchell

Gail Moore

Ted and Jo Mitchell

Brad Baucom

Nadine Williams

Mikeal Mitchell

Ted and Jo Mitchell

Steve and Karen Dellinger

Roy and Margaret Parker

Carson and Judy Watts

Ted and Jo Mitchell

IN HONOR

Ray McClure

Rick and Lynda Elliott – Cemetery Fund



The Recipe Box

Ahh...October!!! That time of year when we are craving those foods that bring us comfort; not only a comforting taste to savor, but also foods that bring us comfort through our other senses as well. We want foods that smell of pumpkin and spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, and ginger. We want to see toasted pecans atop a favorite cake or pie. We want to use those fresh fruits and vegetables that only make themselves available to us at this time of year. The featured recipe for October does just that!!

Sweet Potato and Pecan Loaf brings together the sweet potato, the spices, and the pecans, with other pantry staples to produce a great loaf that can be a real treat with a cup of coffee. It can also be a sweet finish to a savory Autumn supper. It can make a great gift for a neighbor, a lifetime friend, or someone who just needs a little pick-me-up. This recipe comes to us from the September issue of Our State Magazine. We do hope that you will give it a try. Who knows??? It just may find its way into your own Recipe Box!!!

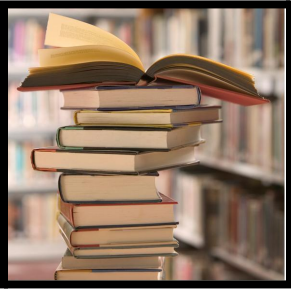
Sweet Potato and Pecan Loaf

¼ cup unsalted butter, melted and cooled
 ¾ cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed
 1 cup mashed sweet potatoes
 2 large eggs, at room temperature
 ½ cup buttermilk, at room temperature
 2 tsp. vanilla extract
 2 cups all-purpose flour
 2 tsp. baking powder
 ½ tsp. baking soda
 1 tsp. salt
 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
 ¼ tsp. ground ginger
 ½ tsp. ground cardamom
 ¾ cup chopped pecans, toasted
 Whipped topping, optional



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare a 9x5 loaf pan with cooking spray. In a medium bowl, use an electric mixer to beat butter and brown sugar on medium-high speed until creamy. Add sweet potatoes, eggs, buttermilk, and vanilla. Mix well. In a separate mixing bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, ginger, and cardamom. Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and pour in sweet potato mixture. Fold until just combined. Scrape batter into the prepared pan and spread evenly to all four corners. Sprinkle toasted pecans on top. Bake for 50-60 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean. Place on a wire rack to cool for 10 minutes. Remove the loaf from the pan and finish cooling on the rack. Cut into slices and serve with whipped topping, if desired. (And who are we kidding...we indeed do desire the whipped topping!!!) Easy Peasy!!! And impressive!!! Enjoy!

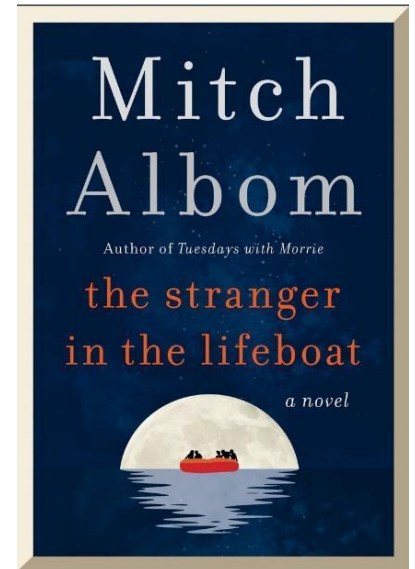
Recommended Reading



What would happen if we cried out to God for help and someone claiming to be God actually showed up? Mitch Albom, in [The Stranger in the Lifeboat](#), poses this very question and asks his readers to ponder some incredibly profound truths, reaching to the heart of every believer and non-believer alike. In this novel, a group of shipwrecked passengers must face that question when a strange man they pull from the water says he is The Lord and can save them all, but only if they all believe in him.

Adrift in a raft after a deadly yacht explosion, ten people struggle for survival at sea. Short on food, water, and hope, they spot a mysterious man floating in the waves. They pull him in. “Thank the Lord we found you,” a passenger says. “I am the Lord,” the man whispers. This encounter sets the scene in this beguiling and inspiring book, one that drives to the core of our deepest beliefs. The story is narrated by a lonely passenger named Benji, who recounts the events in a notebook that is discovered, a year later, when an empty raft washes up on the island of Montserrat. It falls to the island’s chief inspector, a man battling his own demons, to solve the mystery of what really happened out at sea.

Albom, having written of heaven in two of his bestsellers, ponders within the pages of this work of fiction, the question of divine intervention. What would we do if God, or someone claiming to be God, answered our call for help? Would we accept it? Would we dismiss it? Would we base our belief on the stranger’s appearance, words, actions, or our own desperation?



[The Stranger in the Lifeboat](#) weaves a web of mysteries that jump time and keep us guessing: What caused the ship to explode? Who was actually in the lifeboat? Which of the ten will survive and how will each make peace with their circumstance and the end to their own story? Is the man claiming to be “the Lord” for real?

One of the pivotal passages in the book happens late in the story. “How did you do it, Benji? How did you survive all that way alone?” Benji’s response... “I was never alone.”

One lifeboat.
Ten survivors.
A stranger who claims to be God.

Full of Albom’s signature life wisdom, yet paced, at times like a thriller, [The Stranger in the Lifeboat](#) is a uniquely uplifting story that will leave you examining your own beliefs, while suggesting that answers to our prayers may be found when and where we least expect them.

Although the faith-life questions may be posed in a different manner and the story may be one that is unconventional, we think you will enjoy and find value in [The Stranger in the Lifeboat](#). We think it will give you the opportunity to ask yourself some important questions when it comes to your own faith in God and your belief in the power of prayer. We encourage you to pick up a copy and give it a read! You can find the book from any online or brick and mortar bookseller...but better yet, you can also find it in our own lending library!!! Happy Reading!!!

News from United Women in Faith



United
Women
in Faith

The United Women in Faith will have a “Called” meeting on Sunday, October 23, immediately following Worship in the Fellowship Hall. It is of **utmost** importance that all members of Circles #3 and #6 plan to be present. We will keep this meeting as brief as possible, but it is a meeting we need to have. Please come to the Fellowship Hall as quickly as possible.

Voting for the 2022 Mission Pin took place at the September Circle meetings. If you were absent, please call Margaret Parker so your vote can be counted. We will be presenting the 2022 Mission Pin during our upcoming UWF Sunday later this Fall.

Thanks to all who participated by walking or contributing to the UWF “Mission Walk” on September 24. Highlights from the “Walk” and the details about this successful mission effort will be available in the next newsletter.

We believe
love in action
can change
the world.



All Saints Day at Pleasant Grove

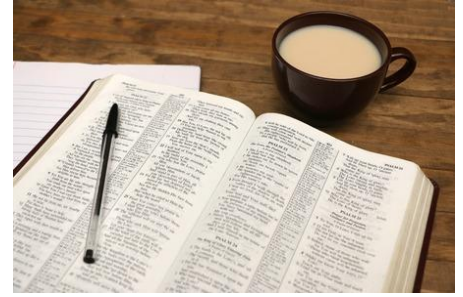


On Sunday, November 6th, Pleasant Grove will once again observe All Saints Day during our 10:00 worship service. During the worship service, we will have a time of remembrance as we give thanks for the lives of those church members who have gone on to their heavenly reward in the past year. The names of these saints will be read, and a candle will be lit in their memory. Please make plans to be in worship with your church family on this incredibly special Sunday. For All Saints Day 2022 we will remember:

*Louise Cobb ~ Patricia Yonders ~ Clay Todd
Hiram Handy ~ Foy Lee Phillips ~ Glen Reynolds
Yogi Maples ~ Richard Tweed ~ Debbie Zimmerman
Grace Nixon ~ Judy Watts ~ Herby Vanhoy ~ Ruth Isenhour*

Ongoing Bible Study at Pleasant Grove

We currently have two Bible studies in progress at Pleasant Grove. Colin Winslette is leading a Sunday evening study on the Book of James. Phil Turner is leading a Thursday evening study entitled, "Praying for Results." For more information and to inquire about joining one, or both of these studies, feel free to contact Colin or Phil. It is always a good thing when a body of believers comes together to dig deeper into the Word of God!!!



Worship, Food, and Fellowship!!!



Pleasant Grove has a rich history of meaningful worship, beautiful fellowship, and delicious meals shared at the table together. We are launching a new opportunity this fall here at Pleasant Grove and we want you to be a part of it!!! Whenever the calendar gifts us with a fifth Sunday, we are going to gather in a different way that you don't want to miss. There are four of these fifth Sundays each year and the next one is coming up on October 30th. Go ahead now and mark your calendars for this very special Sunday. We will worship together in the Family Life Center at 10:00 and will then gather at the table together

to share lunch with one another. This is just one more way that we can build up the Body of Christ here at Pleasant Grove. Please come and invite a friend!



Save the Date...Plan Ahead!!

On Nov. 20th @ 4pm we will be hosting in our Family Life Center, a Cluster Charge Conference with several other UMC churches. Please come and celebrate with us the work that God is doing in our congregations. We will have a time of fellowship and refreshments following the Charge Conference.



Way To Go, Pleasant Grove!!!

In August, as the beginning of another school year approached, once again Pleasant Grove reached across the road to our neighbors at Oakdale Elementary School. We inquired of the administration as to how we could



support the students and staff as they were welcomed back to school. Communicating these needs was all it took to light a fire within our sweet church family!!! The week before school began, we delivered a car full of donations that would then be distributed to the classrooms at Oakdale. Thanks to you we were able to supply white boards and clipboards, markers and pens, tissues and paper sacks, band aids and disinfectant spray, copy paper and card stock, a whole bin full of treasure chest prizes, as well as fourteen sets of headphones for use in



class!! The staff sure did appreciate these items and we are sure that they have been put to good use. Thanks to everyone who donated items for Oakdale...just one more way that we can be the hands and feet of Christ as we meet needs in our community!!



Our Lending Library is Here for You!!!



Don't forget that Pleasant Grove has its own lending library! If you are looking for a good read...something that will inspire, inform, entertain, or help you along on your walk with the Lord...then we just may have what you need. We are located in the Gathering Room of the Family Life Center. Simply choose your title, take it home, enjoy it, and return it for others. Simple, isn't it? The books await. Let's get reading!!!

Summer Camp Post



Wow!!! We had an unbelievably GREAT start at After School Care this year!!! The two buses that drop off at the church went so smoothly...it usually takes a couple of weeks to get everything sorted out and get the kinks worked out for afternoon drop off, but not this year! Amazing!!! We have a good group of students and a wonderful staff in place for this year. Mrs. Upton has helped the kids make fall wreaths and apple people and will soon start working on pumpkins. Mrs. Graham has returned to work with our program, and she will have the children working on an acorn project. The children have a great time when we go to the gym...sometimes they just love to run around and chase each other, stopping occasionally to make up a game or two of their own! We are so happy that the students are back in school with their friends and we are praying that they have a wonderful school year!



Love In Action

Jana Alexander, one of our ten regular nursery volunteers, was recently spotted putting love into action on a Sunday morning in the church nursery. She opened a Bible story book to share with a little one and his big brother sidled up next to them to hear the story too! This two-hour volunteer slot is very important to our ministries here at Pleasant Grove. Not only do we have the opportunity to impact young lives with the love of God, but we can also give parents a chance to worship with their church family while their children are cared for in our nursery. We are always looking for more volunteers because there are times when one of our regulars can't be at church. If you would be willing to serve as a substitute, hanging out with our littlest church members, please contact Sherri Brown at 704.562.3914. This is one of the most rewarding ways to serve God through the church and we hope that you will become a part of our team!!!



Operation Christmas Child Shoe Boxes Are Here!!!



It's October...and it's time to think about Christmas...Operation Christmas Child, that is!!! Our boxes are in the sanctuary and ready to be picked up by our sweet Church family. Be sure to stop by and pick up one, or two, or ten! Then fill your box with the items you have chosen to include, fill out your label and shipping donation form, pray over your box, and bring it back to the sanctuary. We will collect our filled boxes through Sunday, November 20th, when they will be delivered to a local collection site. Our goal this year is to collect 200 boxes! Please plan to be a part of this effort as we reach

around the globe with the love of Christ! What an exciting time in the life of our church!



Men's Fellowship Breakfast
Every Tuesday at 7:30am
Circle G Restaurant
4818 Rozzelles Ferry Rd,
Charlotte



LUNCH TIME

PG Prayer Lunch

The PG Prayer Lunch meets every Thursday at 11:30 a.m. at The Stockyard Restaurant. Everyone...men and women, church members and friends, are welcome to join us. We would love to have you with us for this time of food, fellowship, and prayer as we come together seeking God's power and presence in our lives and in the world around us.

Thursdays - 11:30 AM - The Stockyard



The church office recently received the following notes of thanks:

Ted & Jo Mitchell would like to thank all of you for the many prayers, cards, and calls they received upon the passing of Ted's son, Mikeal Mitchell.

Troy & Audrey Crisp would like to thank all of you for the many thoughts, prayers, cards, and calls they received during the time of Troy's surgery. They really appreciate and love every one of you.

Tecil & Sue Curlee would like to thank you for all the prayers and cards they have received. "It's good to know our friends at Pleasant Grove are praying for us."



The church family extends our deepest sympathies to:

Ted and Jo Mitchell on the passing of Ted's son, Mikeal Mitchell.

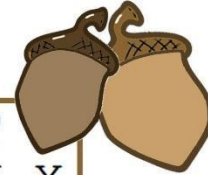
Just For Giggles!!!



Autumn



WORD SEARCH



E	A	X	W	A	L	R	S	T	S	T	
T	K	W	Q	U	E	E	F	G	C	N	Y
F	B	O	O	T	S	F	A	E	I	D	L
H	A	E	A	R	C	I	L	S	K	A	I
M	F	E	O	E	A	P	L	S	C	S	E
A	W	H	H	E	P	U	M	P	K	I	N
S	I	H	K	A	R	B	E	T	P	R	D
E	A	A	N	E	Y	N	M	R	O	A	C
O	R	J	X	K	V	S	N	C	G	R	Q
H	L	E	A	F	S	C	A	R	F	I	O



SCARF
TREE
ACORN
HAY

APPLE
FALL
PUMPKIN
SWEATER

BOOTS
RAKE
PIE
LEAF