



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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From the Pastor's Desk

"Crashing Waves or New Possibilities?"

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

After graduating from high school, I moved to Carolina Beach to attend Marine Technology School in Wilmington. While living on the beach, I became an avid body surfer, constantly on the lookout for big waves. There are few things more exhilarating than riding atop a big breaking wave and then watching it recede back from the shore to re-form again within a never-ending cycle of life, building, crashing, returning, and re-forming.

As we currently navigate the many challenges that our church and the broader Christian Church are facing, I often wonder how we United Methodists, who were once known for our willingness to stand together under a broad umbrella of diverse peoples, politics, opinions, and interpretations of Biblical scripture, are going to navigate our way forward.

Sometimes I must remind myself that, although it feels like it's all crashing down underneath me, maybe there is something bigger and more powerful at work here. After all, Christianity and the Church have experienced many times of upheaval, change, and re-formation throughout history.

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Could it be then that, like a surfer riding a big, powerful, life-giving wave, we are all in this next wave of change together? Although we may not be able to see how “church” will reform as the next new wave of change gathers, we are still called to unite in the love of Jesus Christ for the work of transforming our world.

Perhaps in uncertain times like the present, we need to fully trust in God’s unwavering promise to always be with us, as we boldly live out our faith while

staying on the lookout for the next big wave of God’s beloved community to take shape.

Could it also be that during times like these, it’s really important for all followers of Christ to be willing to paddle out together? *Surf’s up!*

Grace and Peace in Christ,

Sam



Inspiration Point

Romans 12:1-2 says: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

As Christians who want to walk closer to God, we need to study. As we do, that makes us a disciple of the Lord Jesus. To be a disciple, we need to develop discipline. Just doing normal worldly things does not make us disciples. The Bible teaches us that, **“Whatever we ask God for, believe that you receive it, and you will have it.”** That takes faith in the Lord! Watching TV or reading novels do not build your faith. **“Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”** We need to read the Word of God. We need to hear the Word of God and we need to put the Word of God to work in our daily lives! That takes discipline!

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Our minds are like a fertile pot of soil. Whatever you put into it will grow up into a mature plant and produce fruit in our lives. If you plant cockle burrs, if you plant sand spurs, if you plant milkweeds, you will harvest those things! The Bible teaches us that whatsoever a man soweth, he reaps! If you plant lying, cheating, stealing, then you will ultimately become a liar, a cheat, or a thief! But if you have a daily discipline of reading and meditating on God's Word, filling your mind with the things the Bible teaches us, then you will become Christlike! You cannot change yourself, but The Helper, the Holy Spirit will use what you have planted to radically change you. This will enable you to renew your mind! Between this and a strong prayer life where you get up close and personal with God, you will learn how to always know the will of God!

There are many teachers that know **about** God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, but they do not **know** God or Jesus or the Holy Spirit. You need to spend sincere alone time with Him! Set aside a special place in your home that you can use as your special Holy place! Go there at a regular time every day! Bring your study Bible, a pen, and a notepad. First settle your mind! Maybe some soft worship music will help. Talk to the Lord! He is not way up there somewhere. He is right there in your heart! Talk to him as you talk to your best friend. Ask him to forgive you of your sins. If there are problems that have stirred you up and give you no peace, talk to Him about them and give them over to Him to resolve! Worship Him by singing and praising Him. This leads to worship. That was what he brought you into the world to do! When you are right with God, you will find peace like you have never experienced! Then read your Bible. It is not important how much you read, only that you understand how your reading applies to your Christian walk. This is important! Meditate on what you read. Think about it... how it applies to you right where you are today. Close with a personal prayer to your Lord God! Walk away with peace!

Remember, to have close intimate friends, you must be honest and open with them. It is the same way with your relationship with God! If you promise Him something, be sure that you always do it! If you need His help, ask Him! You have a close personal relationship with Him after all! God loves you like His own child, and you can always trust Him!

May you be blessed this Easter season! It was for you that He died!

Brother Phil



Ongoing Bible Study at Pleasant Grove

We currently have a Bible study in progress at Pleasant Grove. Phil Turner is leading a Thursday Night Small Group Meeting that takes place in the Family Life Center Upper Room at 6:00 PM. All are invited. Currently we are studying the Work of the Holy Spirit. For more information and to inquire about joining, feel free to contact Phil. It is always a good thing when a body of believers comes together to dig deeper into the Word of God!!!



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

IN MEMORY

Don Upton

Daisy and Robert Carr
Tom and Julia Grey
Anonymous
Peggy Hall
Bobby and Kim Wilkerson
Marty Moore
Rick and Lynda Elliott – Cemetery Fund
Robert and Coretha Ferrell – Cemetery Fund
Covenant Sunday School Class
Emily Adkins
Nora Sprinkle
Anonymous
Ray and Trena McClure – Cemetery Fund
Double Ring Sunday School Class – Parsonage Fund
David and Lynette Primm
Martha Ann Wilkerson
Nadine Williams – Parsonage Fund
Body and Soul Fitness
Tim and Karla Wolfe – Parsonage Fund
Pat and Kathy James

Joe Primm

Nadine Williams – Parsonage Fund
Covenant Sunday School Class – Parsonage Fund

Angela Walker

Steve and Karen Dellinger
Ray and Trena McClure – Cemetery Fund
Roy and Margaret Parker
Nadine Williams – Parsonage Fund
Covenant Sunday School Class – Parsonage Fund

Pina Nance

Hazel Sanders
Terry Kelly – Cemetery Fund
Ray and Trena McClure – Cemetery Fund
Genesis Sunday School Class – Parsonage Fund
Tim and Terri Honeycutt – Parsonage Fund
Rick and Lynda Elliott – Cemetery Fund
Bob and Bonnie Bridges – Parsonage Fund
Steve and Karen Dellinger
David and Lynette Primm
David and Susie Johnson
Roy and Margaret Parker
Lib Primm
Sue Phillips
Steve and Maria McClure
Nadine Williams – Parsonage Fund
Laura Gilleland
Verna Kay Mathews
Bonnie Johnson
David and Dora Sue Smith
Roger and Patti Beard
Brenda Watkins – Cemetery Fund
Covenant Sunday School Class – Parsonage Fund
Pat and Kathy James

IN HONOR

Jeannie Upton

Double Ring Sunday School Class – Parsonage Fund



The church office recently received this note of thanks:

Dear Church Family,

The outpouring of love to our family before and after Mom's (Pina Nance) death was incredible. All the cards, phone calls, and food showered upon us showed the love and respect the church had for Mom. We will miss her but are thankful she is with the Lord. God bless you all.

---Terry, Rick, and Lee Nance



The church family extends our deepest sympathies to:

Bonnie and Brent Stikeleather and family on the recent passing of their husband and father, Jim Stikeleather, on March 16th, 2023.



The Recipe Box

“Easter time is the time for eggs and the time for eggs is Easter time.” This was a saying that my father-in-law used many times over the years. We never really knew what he was getting at with this saying...but we knew we would hear it more than once during the time leading up to Easter!

From a Christian perspective, Easter eggs represent Jesus’ resurrection and his emergence from the tomb. When we open an empty plastic Easter egg, we are reminded that Jesus left that tomb and that the tomb is empty still today. Jesus is alive!



If you are eating Easter dinner here in the South, you expect to have eggs on the table. We usually like to see some old fashioned deviled eggs as one of our sides. But there are many other ways to use eggs around Easter. A quiche is a great way to serve eggs! The recipe we are sharing with you this month is delicious and can be served for an Easter brunch, or as a simple lunch or dinner. Serve it with hashbrown potatoes and fresh fruit for a complete meal! Enjoy!

---submitted by Peggy Green

Spinach Bacon Quiche

1 Tbsp. olive oil
 9 pieces of bacon
 1 small red onion, diced
 5 ounces of fresh baby spinach, roughly chopped
 6 large eggs
 8-10 ounces from a can of evaporated milk (not the whole 12 ounce can)

1 ½ cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided
 ½ tsp. salt
 ½ tsp. pepper
 1 package of refrigerator pie crust

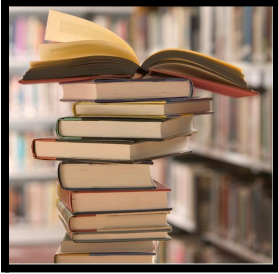
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly spray a deep-dish pie pan or quiche dish with cooking spray. Let your pie crust soften in the package for 20 minutes or so. Then, with a little flour, roll the crust out with a rolling pin, gently enlarging the crust to fit your deep dish pie pan. Lay the crust into your dish and mold it to fit. Set aside.

Sauté the onions and bacon in oil. Let the bacon cook until done so that you can chop it. Microwave the chopped spinach by itself in a micro-safe bowl for 1-2 minutes on high. Then separate the spinach with a fork. Add the chopped bacon and onion to the spinach. Allow to cool slightly.

In a large bowl, whisk eggs, milk, half of the cheese, salt, and pepper. Add onion, bacon, and spinach to the egg mixture. Pour all of this into your pie crust, adding the remaining cheese on top.

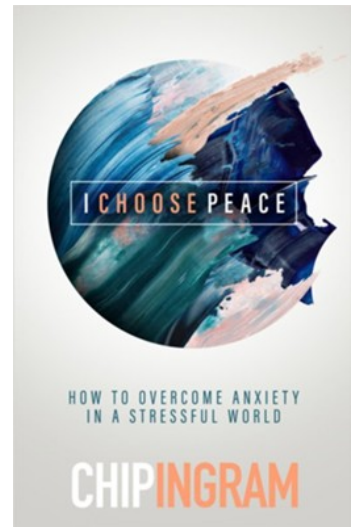
Bake at 350 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes. Use a toothpick to check for doneness. Let cool for 5-10 minutes. Serves six people.

Recommended Reading



Our lives are fraught with anxiety. Relational conflict, fears about our future, the constant barrage of information, worries over finances, the elusiveness of contentment...all of these can steal our joy because they steal our peace. Through Christ we are promised peace, but how can we find peace when the world we live in is overcome with chaos? In I Choose Peace, by Chip Ingram, we are reminded that peace isn't a feeling; it's a choice. Throughout this easy-to-read book, Ingram unpacks Philippians 4 to show us how we can choose peace in spite of circumstances. We can choose peace in our relationships, in moments of anxiety, within a broken world, amidst difficult circumstances, and even while immersed in a materialistic culture.

As a way of inviting us to choose peace, Ingram reminds us of a well-known occurrence involving Jesus and His disciples. This Band of Believers was crossing the Sea of Galilee in a small boat when a violent storm came across the waters. Waves crashed over the boat and the men were terrified. They cried out to Jesus for help, only to find that He was resting peacefully. They woke Him and questioned His care and concern for them in light of their situation. Jesus, upon seeing their distress, simply calmed the storm and then asked the disciples why they were so faithless and afraid. Jesus had astonishing, supernatural peace. We know that this kind of peace is a promise in scripture, but most of us struggle with how to attain it. But Ingram has written I Choose Peace with the express intent of letting the reader know that "You already have it." Jesus actually gave His peace to all His followers the night before His crucifixion. *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid"* (John 14:27). Now, we must understand that this promise is for the peace that Jesus has, not the kind of peace the world tries to give us.



So, when we each enter into a relationship with Jesus Christ, why don't we automatically experience this supernatural peace? It sounds like such a simple question. And it is. The answer is also quite simple. The reason this peace is difficult for us to have is that we must willfully and purposefully choose to walk in the peace He gave us. Even though we already have it, we tend to pursue peace on the world's terms. The world offers peace to us if and when we are successful, accomplished, beautiful, wealthy, famous, or secure. It holds an ideal forward that most people can never attain, and those who do attain these goals find out it isn't all that it promises. And in the process, this approach robs us of the peace we've already been given.

I Choose Peace will help you overcome the challenges that rob us of Jesus's peace. As you read, you will discover the biblical truths that allow us to experience deep, lasting peace even while we struggle in some very important areas of our lives. You will be exposed to the theological basis for experiencing the peace of Christ, but the focus isn't on theory alone. It's actually about experiencing it and by the close of the book you will have numerous practical steps you can take to experience the fullness of the peace Jesus promised and gifted to us.

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If you are tired of feeling anxious over the state of the world, your relationships, or your own heart, this encouraging book, I Choose Peace, will help you quiet your worries and experience genuine, lasting peace that doesn't depend on what's going on around you.

We strongly recommend I Choose Peace to our entire church family. We all know that these are challenging times and finding peace within our lives can be a struggle. Sometimes we need to learn something new to overcome anxiety within a biblical context, but sometimes we just need to be reminded of the goodness and provision of God. This book will, more than likely, do both for you! It is available through many online booksellers and is, of course, in our own Lending Library. It is our prayer that you will, through the teachings in this book, experience peace in your own life.

---submitted by Sherri Brown



You Still Have Time!!!



We know how it is. You hear of a chance to be a part of helping others. You hear that you can contribute to providing groceries for families in need. You hear that you can help gift \$1200 in grocery store gift cards to twelve families from our neighboring Oakdale School. And you fully intend to participate. You know that this is one way that you can extend the love of Christ to others and you feel called to act. You want to be a part of helping these twelve families provide for their children over the Spring Break week.

But, just like so many of us, life gets busy, and you don't remember to turn in your donation. Well...you are in luck! It's not too late to be a part of this loving and compassionate effort! You can still turn in your donation to either the offering plate on Sunday morning or the church office. Simply mark your contribution for Oakdale School. By joining together to help others we are living out some pretty important words and we are becoming more like Christ along the way... "Love your neighbor as yourself."



Thanks, Pleasant Grove, for always stepping up and standing in the gap for those in need! God bless you!!!

After School Care Post



What an exciting time of year! We are in the midst of North Carolina's annual "three-season days" ...shorts on one day and our winter coats the next!!! The children sure are ready for Spring, as are most of the rest of us too!

We had a great St. Patrick's Day! Everyone wore green so there was no pinching going on at all! We enjoyed cake with gold dust on top and green punch to go along with it. We read about how we came to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and then just had a blast

watching funny animal videos...sometimes there's nothing more entertaining!



For Spring, we have been working on tissue paper flowers. We will soon start painting Easter egg cut-outs. These, along with several other crafts, will soon start to adorn our rooms and brighten up our days!

After being at school all day we try to get the students to the gym as much as we can. They love to just play and be loud, getting that pent-up energy out of their systems.

A special thank you to all who came and cleaned up and cleaned out some of the rooms in the Children's building. As we get our sweet building shaped up, it will be great to be able to show the whole space off to our new parents, as well as utilize more of the space for the kids' benefit! Everything is looking great!!! We pray that everyone can stay safe and well throughout the Spring season! God Bless!



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!!!

News from United Women in Faith



Circles #3 and #6, of the Pleasant Grove unit of United Women in Faith, both met on Tuesday, March 14th, on our church campus. At each of these meetings the members participated in the Call to Prayer and Self Denial program. This is the one program during the year when a special offering is received. This offering goes to support one of the ongoing mission projects of the overall United Women in Faith. If you were unable to attend one of these meetings, you can still contribute to this special offering. Just be sure to mark your offering for Call to Prayer and Self Denial and get it to Jeannie Upton or Hazel Sanders.

The next meetings for our Circles will be on Tuesday, April 11th. Circle #3 will be meeting in the fellowship hall at 2:00 PM. Circle #6 will meet later in the day to visit with a few of our shut-in church members. Go ahead and mark your calendar now for these meetings and make your meeting a priority. If time is reserved now for the next meeting, it is easier to avoid conflicts with your schedule.

The Metro District Spiritual Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, April 29th, at Simpson-Gillespie UMC. The event begins at 8:30 AM and will conclude before lunch. The cost is \$4.50 and includes a continental style breakfast. The agenda includes a brief business meeting, worship, and communion. The featured speaker is Stephanie Hand. We will also recognize our recently deceased members. Pleasant Grove will be memorializing our dear sister, Ruth Isenhour. Simpson-Gillespie UMC is practically in our own backyard. It would be awesome if we could have at least a carload of ladies to attend this event. Register with Jeannie Upton by April 14th if you would like to attend this beautiful gathering of our sisters in faith.

The annual Spiritual Growth Retreat is coming up in early summer. This gathering is held at Lake Junaluska and is planned for June 8th-10th. The theme this year is, "Women Coming to Christ." Catherine Ritch, Mark Barden, and Jan Brittain will be leading our time together. More details are available on the UWF website. Housing reservations will need to be made in advance. Please let Jeannie Upton know if you would like to be a part of this awesome weekend.

United Women in Faith provides the women of our church with many opportunities to engage in mission related activities. Being a part of this organization is a great way to plug in to fellowship, discipleship, and outreach. If you haven't made the commitment to be a part of UWF, we encourage you to join us. Contact Jeannie Upton or Karen Dellinger to find out more about each of our Circles. We would love to have you!!!



Happy Easter, Pleasant Grove!!!

On Sunday, April 9th, the Pleasant Grove family will join with Christians around the world in celebrating our Risen Christ! The journey to Easter began on Ash Wednesday with our pausing to reflect on a holy day of repentance. Then, moving through the forty days of Lent some of us have chosen to read the Bible more, spend more time in prayer, serve our neighbors in new ways, or attend worship in a regular and intentional manner. Others have decided to deny themselves something...an indulgence or extravagance...the act of giving something up during the season of Lent. These practices were taken up in preparation for celebrating the most sacred of days...Resurrection Sunday!!!



On Easter Sunday, we will gather together to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! The grave could not hold Him and will never lay claim to Him again! And because of His act of selflessness in bearing our sins to the Cross, we are promised an eternal life spent in the presence of our Loving and Relentless God!!! Now, that is something to celebrate, for sure!



Make plans now to celebrate this most glorious day with your church family. Then, as you leave church to share an Easter meal with loved ones; as you hide and hunt Easter eggs with the little ones in your life; as you are reminded of bunnies and chicks and chocolate eggs...never, ever lose sight of the true meaning of the day. And live the days ahead as Resurrection people! We serve a Risen Savior, who is Christ indeed. He loves us! He is for us! He is with us and will never leave us! Happy Easter, Pleasant Grove! We have reason to celebrate!!!



Holy Week at The Grove



This year, in observance of Holy Week, we will hold a Tenebrae Service on Good Friday, April 7th, at 7:30 PM. This service, which will be held in the sanctuary, is a service of darkness, and is based on a twelfth century late night/early morning service. As we all hear an extended meditation on the Passion of Christ, we will be reminded of the drastic turn of events from the celebratory mood of Palm Sunday to the betrayal, trial, crucifixion, and death of the long-awaited Messiah. Our text for the Passion Story will come from the Gospel of John. Please mark your calendar

now and make plans to be with your church family for this impactful service, as we all share in this time of remembrance, reflection, and worship.



Easter Sunday at the Grove

Mark your calendars now and make plans to be a part of Easter Sunday at Pleasant Grove. There will be several opportunities to join with your church family as we celebrate our Risen Savior. We hope to see you all on this most joyous day!

<p>Easter Sunday, April 9th</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-7:00 AM Sunrise Service (Pleasant Grove Memorial Park)-8:00 AM Congregational Breakfast (fellowship hall)-9:00 AM Sunday School-10:00 AM Traditional Worship with Choral Presentation



Sunrise at Pleasant Grove

As in years past, Pleasant Grove will greet Easter morning at sunrise! But this year, we are making a few changes to this time of worship together. Our Sunrise Service, at 7:00 AM, will happen at Pleasant Grove Memorial Park, commonly known as The Cemetery. We will gather within the horseshoe drive, near the flagpole. This will be a casual worship service and we encourage you to dress comfortably and wear good walking shoes. If you can walk with no problem, then plan to park along the outer drive that borders the property. If walking is not so easy for you, please park along the inner horseshoe drive. And just as we've done in previous years, be sure to bring your own lawn chair.



Our Easter Sunrise Service is sure to be a special time together as we gather on hallowed ground. Make plans to be with us as we celebrate our Risen Savior at Sunrise!!!



Fifth Sunday Fellowship Meal



On Sunday, April 30th, we will once again hold our Fifth Sunday Fellowship Meal. Make plans now to stay after worship to enjoy some sweet church family fellowship along with a great meal. The menu will be baked potatoes with toppings, tossed salad, drinks and desserts. Of course, the church family is asked to bring desserts to share with one another...we can never provide a dessert that will outshine the dessert buffet that Pleasant Grove always provides!!! There is no charge for the meal, however, donations will be accepted to cover the costs. So, mark your calendar now! We look forward to being together, breaking bread together, and sharing smiles across the table with one another. Good food and good times...what could be better!?!

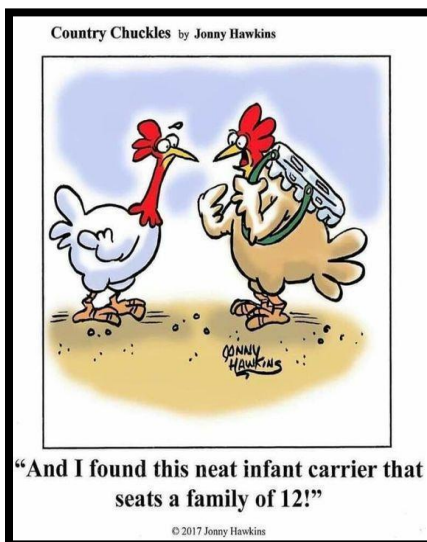
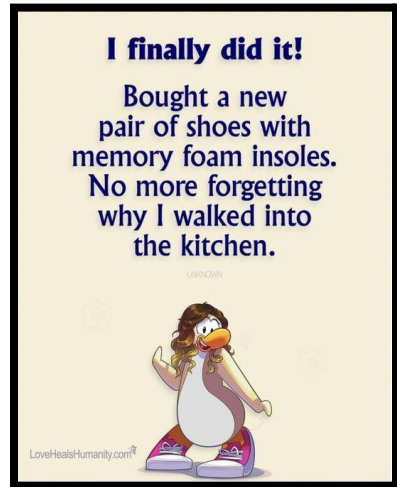


Spring Cleaning is in Full Swing!!!

Our faithful band of volunteers continues to clean up and clean out at Pleasant Grove. Most recently the work has revolved in and around the family life center and the children's building. The goal of this work is to transform our spaces from unused and unattractive to ready-to-use and inviting! We may not be using each of these spaces on a daily or weekly basis, but as we work, we are anticipating growth and activity and are intent on having our buildings neat, clean, and welcoming! There will be more work days in the near future, so keep your ears open for the next date and time. Together we can make a huge difference!!!



Just For Giggles!!!





Spring Is Here

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

APRIL
BEE
BIRTH
BLOOM
BLOSSOMS
BUTTERFLY
CHICK
CROCUS
DAFFODIL
DUCKLINGS
EASTER
EGG
FLOWERS
HATCH
LADYBUG
LAMB
LEAVES
MARCH
MAY
PLAY
PUDDLE
RAINBOOTS
RAINBOW
ROBIN
SPRING
SPROUT
SUNSHINE
TADPOLE
TULIP