

Pleasant News

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Worship Times:

9:00am Traditional

10:00am Sunday School

11:00am Contemporary

Pleasant Grove

United Methodist Church

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1915 Oakdale Road

Charlotte, NC 28216

704-392-2387

www.thegrovetoday.org

Inspiration Point

Over the last several years, we have lost a number of Mothers and Grandmothers from among our midst. As we have viewed them in their older age, with ailments and infirmities, we tend to forget just who these lovely people are and what they have done for us during our lives. That dear lady sitting there unable to bring a cup of coffee to her mouth without trembling used to patiently feed us with a spoon. She stayed up with us, all night if needed, when we were not feeling well! She knew how to kiss it and make it better, and no one else would do, just her! She carried us to our ball games, to our Cub Scout meetings, to our brownie meetings, and baked cookies for us all while we enjoyed our friends! Mama knows! She cleaned our clothes and had them ready for us when it was time to get dressed. She could sew on buttons, iron a shirt, shine a shoe, and all the while, she could make the best-fried chicken in the South! For her daughters, she would break out her patterns, and sew to make a pretty dress. She would curl your hair, put a pretty ribbon in it, and dress you up as pretty as any picture!

Mother could cut a rug with Dad, she could cook up a fancy meal, or she could take leftovers and make them into a supper fit for anyone's table! She was a master chef with the casseroles, with the hot biscuits, with the pot roasts, and anything else that was needed. She taught her daughters to cook, how to clean house, how to sew and sometimes she taught all the boys too! I know mine did! It was important that I know how to sew, how to iron, how to do my laundry, and even know how to cook. Then, if you did not mind when she wanted you to do something, she knew how to cut a mean switch too! She liked peach tree switches. They were long and flexible!

(Inspiration Point continued from pg 1)

Her yard always had flower gardens that were carefully tended. My Mom could crochet and knit, and there were examples of her handicraft on the backs and arms of the chairs in the living room and on the tabletops. She could make quilts and did so. Later, she would tailor for the men's wear store downtown! But as time wore on, her memory got worse, and she forgot how to use the telephone. Once, she had forgotten how to turn the lamp switch off, and she unscrewed the whole light socket. She forgot how to turn the shower on and off, and would leave pots on the stove with the heat on. That was when we had a lady come and live in with her to help her out.

Grandchildren love their Grandmothers! Plus, Grandmothers love their grandchildren! When Mom makes sure that the kids do not eat too much sugar, Grandmothers will spoil them rotten, and give them as much as they like whenever they like. Mother says no, but regarding her grandchildren, Grandmothers do not have that word in their vocabulary! Plus, her grandchildren are the very best in the whole wide world! If you do not believe that, just ask any Grandmother about it! If you want to see a Grandmother beam with joy, just ask them to show you pictures of their grandbabies! But stand by when you do because you are going to learn every last minute detail of that chubby little baby!

So when you forget just who that poor, feeble lady sitting there is, and how very much she is loved by everyone in her family, and how she has earned their love and trust, think back of your own Grandmother! How you loved to snuggle up with her, how you loved how she would put everything aside and pay strict attention to your every need and then remember! Now it is your time to give back without complaining! She never did, not even once!

Brother Phil

Maundy Thursday



You are all invited to mark your calendars and make plans to attend our Maundy Thursday Service. This service will be on Thursday, April 18th, in the sanctuary. It will begin at 6:00 PM. During this thoughtful and reflective service we will ponder the events of Holy Week, especially the words, thoughts and actions of our Lord and Savior on the evening before His crucifixion. We will also participate in the Holy Sacrament of Communion together as a church family. Be sure to be in attendance as we seek to experience the full meaning of Easter.



From the Pastor's Desk

If you are like me, maybe this time of year you find yourself asking this question: "When is Easter this year?" It does get confusing because Easter is never on the same date. So let me see if I can answer the question: How do we know when Easter will be? (Besides, by answering this question, it will give me the chance to blow off some of the dust that's on my old church history notes from seminary. You know, I paid a lot of money for that dust!)

Easter, the celebration of the resurrection of Christ, is the church's oldest and greatest festival. The name Easter is thought to be derived from Eostre, an Anglo-Saxon festival observed in the spring. Preceded by the 40 days of Lent, the Easter season continues for the 40 days following, concluding with Ascension Day, which falls always on a Thursday.

The first written evidence for a celebration of Easter is in correspondence in 154 A.D. between Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, and Anticetus, bishop of Rome, who were arguing over when Easter should be celebrated. Thus, we may safely conclude that it was observed church-wide by this date.

Polycarp, speaking for the church in the East, believed that Easter should be celebrated on the day of Passover according to the Jewish calendar, no matter what day of the week it fell upon. Anticetus, arguing for the West, said Easter should always be on Sunday. The Council of Nicaea in 325 adopted the western view.

Easter can fall on any Sunday between March 21 and April 25. It is observed on the first Sunday after the first full moon or after the spring equinox. Because the Eastern Orthodox Church follows the Julian rather than the Gregorian calendar, their Easter often falls one or two Sundays after the West.



WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER?

If you have been visiting Pleasant Grove and you are interested in becoming a member, we would love to officially welcome you into our fellowship by joining the church on Easter Sunday, April 21st. You can join at either the 9:00AM service or the 11:00AM service. Please contact me, Pastor Byron by April 14th, either by calling the church office 704-392-2387, or by emailing me at byron@thegrovetoday.org. Easter Sunday is traditionally the Sunday to receive new members into the Body of the Church and I would love to have you officially become part of our fellowship!



Community Fellowship Meal

**Pleasant Grove UMC – (Corner of Oakdale & Pleasant Grove Roads)
April 17th -5:00PM to 7:00PM**

Baked Ham, Potato Salad, Peas & Carrots, Rolls, Drinks & Desserts

Please Join Us for a Wonderful Meal & Great Fellowship!!!

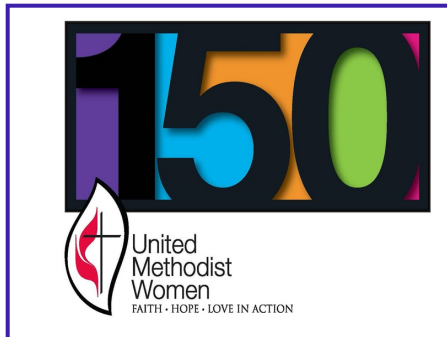
Lions and Tigers and Bears, Oh Yeah!!!



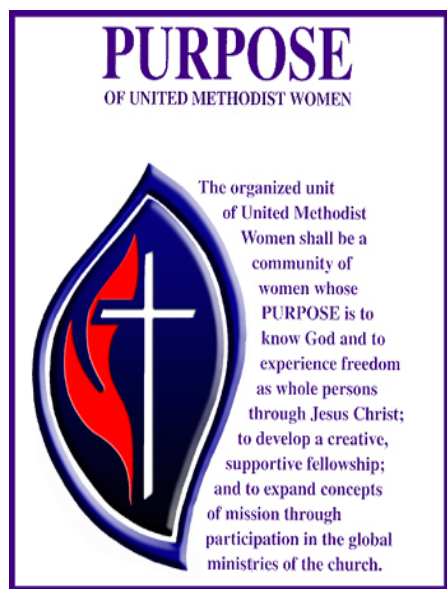
...and turtles and frogs and baby dolls too! These all found their way into our donation bins for “Stuffies for Seniors” and will soon find their way into the arms of someone needing a “furr-ever friend.” Pleasant Grove, once again you have responded to a need in such an awesome way! As a church, we have collected just over 75 stuffed animals and baby dolls. These will now be given to the young folks at “Stuffies for Seniors” for distribution to neighbors in assisted living and memory care facilities, nursing homes and even to those shut in

at home. They might just show up at the home of one of our own church members! You can keep up with this grassroots organization as they seek to brighten the days of our senior neighbors by following them on Facebook. We are sure that our donations will be greatly appreciated and will go a long way toward sharing the love of Christ. Thanks for your generosity!

United Methodist Women



The organization of the United Methodist Women continues to build upon the foundation set forth by our founders over 150 years ago. On March 23, 2019 we officially celebrated our strong foundation of 150 years and began to prepare for the next 150 years so that our daughters, granddaughters, nieces and sisters in Christ can continue our legacy. From the beginning, the United Methodist Women have led the way in countless endeavors. Our membership is comprised of women from all backgrounds and experiences, compelled by their Christian faith to serve and to lead in places near and far and in ways never imagined. This includes tutoring children and youth in after-school programs, volunteering at community food pantries, teaching Bible Study in churches, visiting the infirmed in hospitals, advocating against legislation and policies that marginalize women and children. This also includes supporting the 100 National Mission Institutions in the United States and the 107 international organizations in 110 countries that provide a pathway to healthy, productive and empowered living. The reach and presence of the United Methodist Women is felt far and wide. Their efforts have a deep and lasting impact on the lives of women, children and youth each and every day. This distinguishes United Methodist Women from other organizations, and attests to its longevity and relevance both today and especially in the years to come.

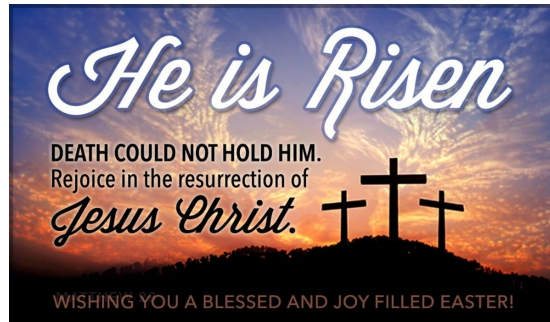


11:00AM
IN THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER

Happy Easter!!!

The Easter Bunny is precious and the Easter chicks are adorable. It's fun to hide and find Easter eggs with your kids or grandkids. The candy is delicious and the Easter meal is usually sumptuous. But let's all keep in mind the true meaning of Easter.

*Easter...
The celebration of Holy Love...
The day of resurrection...
The day that brings us new hope...
May the promise of Easter fill you with faith, joy and love!
The volunteers at Pleasant News wish you a wonderful Easter Day!*



Easter Morning at Pleasant Grove

Please note the following changes to our previously announced Easter Sunday morning schedule. We do hope that you will plan to spend it with your church family!

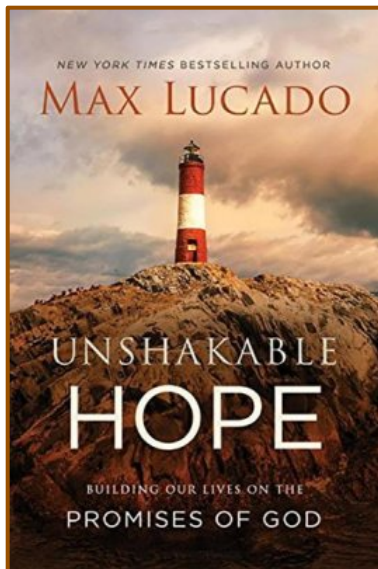
We will begin our Easter Sunday celebration with a **Sunrise Service at 7:00 AM**. This informal service will be at our Scout Hut on Pleasant Grove Road. Please bring your lawn chair and gather around the bonfire for music, scripture and meditation. This service will last about 30 minutes.

We will then move to the church fellowship hall for a **breakfast** of biscuits, fruit, juice and coffee. This will begin around **7:45**. Plan to enjoy the breakfast and the fellowship as we continue our morning together.

At **9:00** we will enter into worship in the sanctuary with the **Chancel Choir's presentation of the Easter cantata, "To the Risen King!"** This musical presentation promises to move you to a fresh realization of the impact of Christ's resurrection on each of our lives.

Sunday school will be during the **10:00** hour. Be sure to gather with one of our classes to continue focusing on the empty tomb and our risen Savior.

At **11:00** our **contemporary service** will feature uplifting and celebratory music by our Praise Band and an inspiring Easter message by Pastor Byron.



Bible Study Offerings

In *Unshakable Hope*, Max Lucado unpacks 12 of the Bible's most significant promises, equipping you to overcome difficult circumstances by keeping your focus on the hope found in the promises of Scripture rather than dwelling on the problems in front of you. For every problem in life, God has given you a promise. Join Max... as he takes us closer look... at Scripture's unbreakable promises and shows you how to live with unshakable hope.

Pleasant Grove UMC is hosting this Bible study authored by Max Lucado. "The study... Meets on Monday's at 6:30pm."

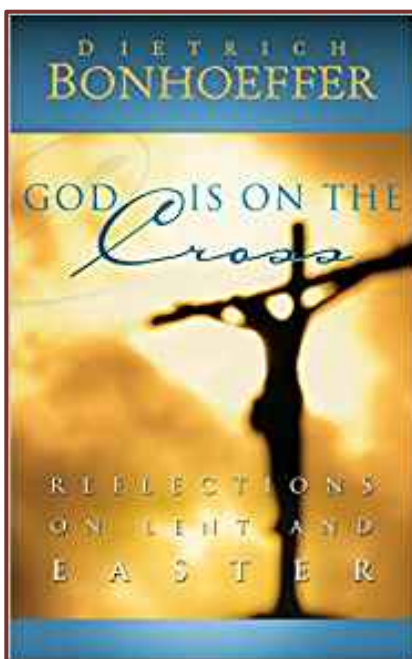
Contact the church office (704.392.2387) or John Vain (jvain@mac.com) to have your name added to the list.

You may join this study at any time during the twelve weeks. We will meet upstairs in the Family Life building.

Study guides will be available at our first meeting at a cost of \$8.

Plan to join us as we grow in our walk with the Lord together!

Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church
1915 Oakdale Road Charlotte, NC 28216



During the Lenten Season, a study centered on the life and writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer is being offered during Lent. Classes start at 10:00AM each Wednesday morning during Lent and are facilitated by Don Upton. Each class includes a video presentation visually depicting the times, places, people, and events that shaped the historical background from which Bonhoeffer emerged as a pastor, theologian, dissenter, and martyr. No books are required for this study, but for those who may be interested in a devotional guide for the Lenten season, there is a book available, *God is on the Cross*, that would serve as a suitable companion to the study. This book has an entry for each day of Lent and each entry contains a selection from Bohoeffer's writings along with a Scripture reading.

Come join us in this study featuring a person who not only followed Jesus to the cross but who also mounted it and died with him.

For further information, please contact the church office (704-392-2387) or Dianne@thegrovetoday.org Thank You!

Did You Know???



...that we are surrounded by reminders of the Resurrection and the hope that is contained in it? Sometimes, when the weather is cold and dreary, it is hard to keep our focus on the fact that we are Easter people and that our hope is found in the Resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. But, when the weather turns warmer and the grass grows greener, it is easier to understand the promise that we can all lay claim to as Christians.

For instance, take the robin. A very common bird in the United States, the robin has a red breast and there is a legend to explain this marking. It seems that once a gray robin flew to Christ's crown of thorns to peck one of the thorns from it. When it did, a drop of Christ's blood fell on its breast, leaving a stain forevermore.

And think about the bees. The honey these creatures produce is a biblical symbol of God's favor. The Torah agrees, as it describes God's Promised Land, over and over, as flowing with milk and honey.

And oh! The flowers! The beautiful flowers! The daffodil has long been considered a symbol of hope and new life. It is one of the blooms most often associated with the Resurrection. Tradition says that giving a gift of daffodils will ensure happiness for the receiver. Let's think about the forsythia, more commonly called "yellow bells." This beautiful shrub might be called the Easter tree. When its spidery branches move with the wind they seem to be arms waving in praise of the season. The name forsythia means "anticipation" – an appropriate companion for Resurrection. And finally, let's think about the dogwood. It's said that the dogwood tree used to grow straight and tall, but after it was used as a crucifix for Christ, God made it short and contorted with a weak trunk so it could never be used as a cross again. Its bloom has four parts, each with a rusty red color on the end and a small hole, a reminder of where the nails were driven into the cross. The center of the bloom looks like a crown of thorns. Amazing, isn't it, that God saw fit to provide us with such a beautiful and inspiring reminder of His love and sacrifice!

The traditions and legends that developed around these symbols of spring helped to explain the concept that God in the flesh experienced death and came back to tell us that there is hope and life on the other side. So, this spring, be a witness to the good news that Christ is risen!

- Learn about these symbols and others. Notice them when you are outside. Talk to others about them.
- Make a cross out of cuttings from spring flowers. Make it a family project. Display it on your front door or in your yard, for all to see and enjoy.
- Make a gift for someone who needs to be reminded of the love that God made known in the Risen Christ.
- Play. Not a video game or an app on your phone. Physically play. Move. Dance. The Irish jig and tap dancing have their roots in an early Saxon tradition called the "hop-egg." The aim of the dance was to step among a dozen eggs as if walking the Stations of the Cross. This dance is also, more than likely, a distant cousin to the child's game of hopscotch.

The Nicene Creed, revised in 325 AD, has as its last line: "We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." As Easter people, our exclamation point for that affirmation can be found in the budding life of spring all around us. We need look no further! Hallelujah!

(The content of this article was written by the Rev. Mark Price and was originally published on May 14, 2014. It recently appeared on the United Methodist Church website.)

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

IN MEMORY

Eleanor Plummer

David & Lynette Primm

Katherine Sloan

Richard Vinson

Kelly Kearns

Maw-Maw & Granddaddy

Carolyn Henderson

David & Lynette Primm

Dot Lanier

Vivian Houck

Gene & Nancy Edwards

Ray & Trena McClure – Bereavement Fund

Willie & Nadine Williams

Ed & Sandra Sing

Roy & Margaret Parker

Don & Jane Adams

Steve & Maria McClure

Pina Nance

Anonymous

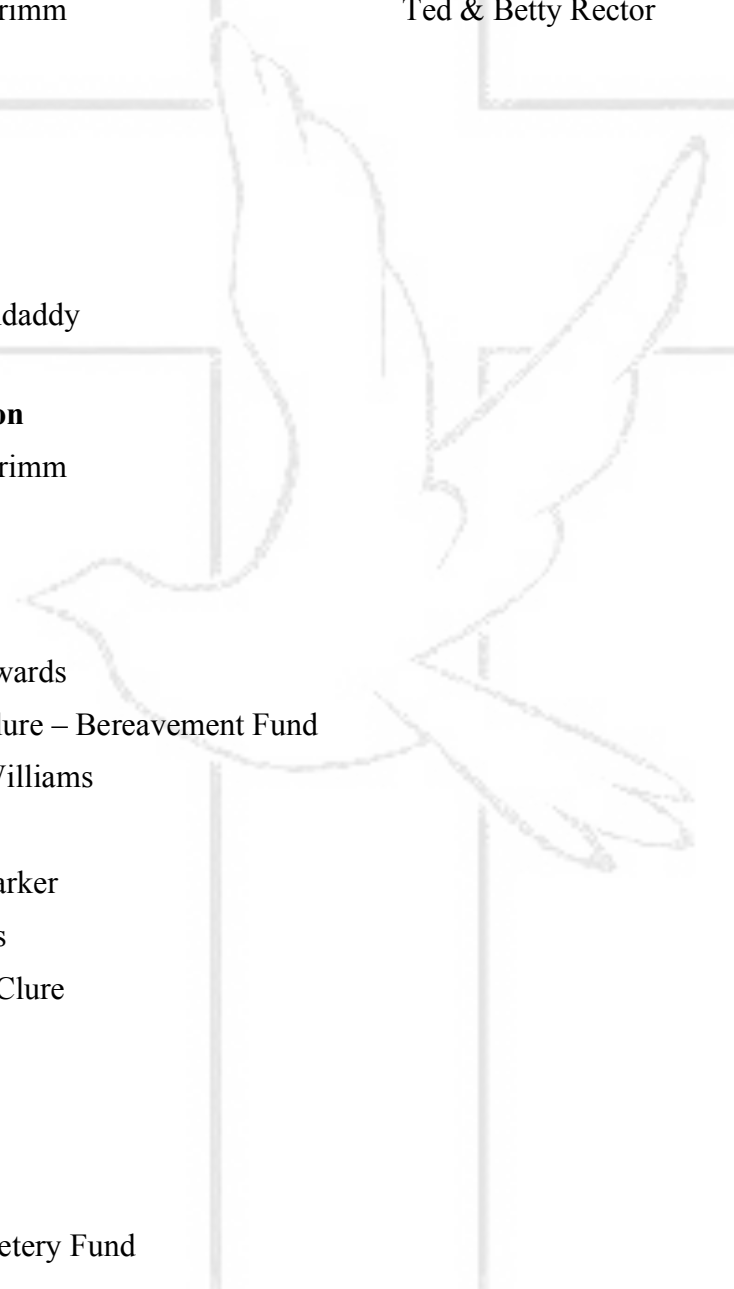
Harry Kelly

Terry Kelly – Cemetery Fund

IN HONOR

Al Godwin –90th Birthday

Ted & Betty Rector





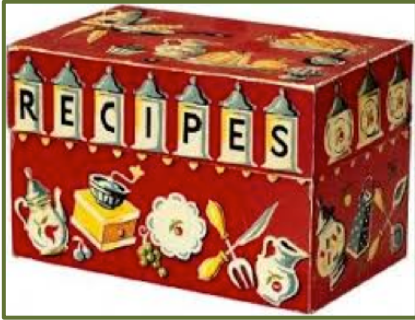
Preschool News



March has been a very busy month for the Preschoolers and teachers and everyone is now looking forward to warmer weather and more outside time! The children have continued working on age appropriate skills, experienced more fun learning activities and created some sensational seasonal artwork. Our older children enjoyed a visit from one of our former Preschool parents and her two CPCC Dental Assistant classmates who taught the children

how to floss their teeth properly. The kids loved it and also learned the importance of taking care of their teeth and gums. Of course, our "Pancakes and Pajamas Day" in observance of Shrove Tuesday is always a favorite. Our chefs were great and the pancakes were yummy. Our 1's and 2's had fun "Digging for Gold," a great tactile activity, and our 1's painted lovely "Shamrocks and Rainbows" while our 2's painted "Hibernating Bears" and "Snowy Owls hoping for Spring!" Our 3's class designed their Shamrock and Rainbow hats and made colorful pinwheels. (The March winds will make the pinwheels spin!) They also made Dr. Seuss hats in celebration of his birthday! Our 4's made Shamrock necklaces that they wore for our St. Patrick's Day party and they also created pretty beaded snails that are on display in the hallway. Story time with Mrs. Upton is always a treat for the older children and they had fun in Chapel with Colin learning about Noah's Ark. The Senior Citizens always enjoy the children singing to them and the children enjoy performing for them as well. Spring break is just around the corner and the "adults" are very excited!! We do love all of our children and it is a privilege to teach them. I have begun registration for the 2019-2020 school year. If you know of someone who might be interested in enrolling their child/grandchild, please have them contact Mary Usher at m_usher@bellsouth.net or call the church at 704-393-7895.





The Recipe Box

Although the Easter ham is usually the crowning feature of our Easter meals, the desserts just have to come in at a close second! This month we would like to offer you a recipe for Honey Bun Cake. This is such a versatile recipe because it is a dessert but it can also double as a coffee cake for an Easter breakfast or brunch. Enjoy!

Honey Bun Cake

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup oil
1 box butter cake mix
4 eggs
8 oz. sour cream
1 cup brown sugar
3 tsp. cinnamon
2 cups powdered sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
4 T. milk



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9x13 pan. Mix together the oil, cake mix, eggs and sour cream. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ of this mixture into your pan. Mix brown sugar and cinnamon. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ of this over the batter. Pour remaining half of the batter into pan. Sprinkle remaining cinnamon sugar of the batter. Bake at 350 degrees for 35 minutes. Mix powdered sugar, vanilla and milk. Pour this over hot cake. Cool and serve.

(This recipe is taken from Serving with Faith, a cookbook from the Greer Community Ministries in Greer, South Carolina. It is credited to three different cooks from three different churches...Proof that our churches are filled with fabulous cooks!)

**Honor the Lord with your wealth,
with the first fruits of all your crops;
then your barns will be filled to overflowing,
and your vats will brim over with new wine.**

Proverbs 3: 9-10



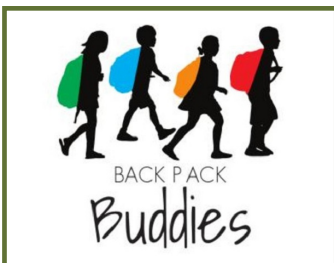
Vacation Bible School - Roar!

Summer is almost here! Well it's still quite a few months off, but I can pretend right? I can't help but be excited for Summer when Vacation Bible School is coming! So mark your calendars for June 23 – 27! Our theme this year is ROAR! We're exploring the African safari with lions to learn that "Life is Wild, God is good."

So if you're interested in getting involved contact Colin Winslette at colin@thegrovetoday.org to get plugged in to an awesome week of VBS!

I'll see you soon!

Colin Winslette



Spring Break for our Backpack Buddies

Spring Break presents a particular challenge for our Backpack Buddy families and we have the ability to ease this burden. Our Backpack Buddy families rely on their children receiving breakfast and lunch at school each day. Spring Break, although welcomed by the students, is a tough week for the parents as they struggle to provide those meals for their children. So, each year we supply each of these families with a grocery store gift card that is used to fill in these gaps. The value of the gift cards varies depending on the number in the household but the average is \$65. With this help, we are serving not only our twenty Backpack Buddy students, but a total of about 45 children, as we help to feed the entire family with these gift cards. If you would like to be a part of this effort please turn in your contribution, in any amount, to the church office or place it in the offering plate. These families are our neighbors and, as hard as it is to believe, hunger is our neighbor too. Thank you for extending the love of Christ to those in need!



Recommended Reading



Many of us have grown up in the faith or have spent most of our adult years living a life that acknowledges Christ as our Savior. We know that we are saved by grace and that we are going to spend eternity with Jesus because He died for our sins. But, we might be asking ourselves if there is more to this faith walk. We might be wondering if we can go deeper and become a true follower whose day to day life reflects the influence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and minds. Maybe it's time to ask ourselves, "Am I really following Jesus or am I just faking it?"

Andi Andrew has written a book that just might help us navigate these questions. Fake or Follower was written to encourage us to refuse to settle for a shallow faith. With eye-opening personal stories, thought provoking questions and supporting scripture, Andi Andrew invites us to examine our hearts to discover whether our faith is a genuine, life-giving marriage of belief and practice in response to Christ's life and sacrifice or just a lifestyle choice like any other choice we might make. She encourages us to daily surrender our whole lives to Jesus, to wrestle with hard questions we have been dodging, and to discover a life lived wide awake; following in the way, the truth and the life of Jesus Christ.

With chapters that can stand on their own, Fake or Follower can be read at your own pace. In fact, it might be best read slowly; pondering each point for a period of time...letting it sink in and marinate in your soul. However you choose to read this book, you will be glad that you brought it into your library. This book can make a difference in your life!

What Do You Say When Asked...

How do you deal with the hardships and struggles of life?

We simply cannot live without *Hope*. Christian hope is an anchor for our souls. It stabilizes us during difficult seasons because we know this is not how our story ends. It is rooted in our belief and trust in a personal God, his salvation and eternity. *Hope Activates Faith, Faith Deepens Hope!*



Easter Word Search



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



BUNNY
DUCKLINGS
BONNET
BASKET
CHICKS



DAFFODILS
EASTEREgg
HYACINTH
SPRING
EGGS



LAMBS
IRIS
JELLYBEANS
RABBIT
CHOCOLATE

