



Pleasant News

Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church

1915 Oakdale Rd, Charlotte, NC 28016 – www.thegrovetoday.org - 704-392-2387

PGUMC Newsletter – Feb 2019

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Pleasant Grove
United Methodist Church
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Inspiration Point

Who am I? Why am I here? Where do I fit in? At some point in our lives, many of us come to that place where we look at our lives and ask these questions. We go through secondary school, and maybe undergraduate school but we are still confused about our lives. Maybe we have tried many jobs, but nothing seems to fit! When we look around, our friends are stumbling about too! They do not know what it is all about either! We make life decisions on things like marriage, but since we really do not know and understand who we are, those things do not work out either!

The truth is, we have no anchor! We have no concrete reference to weigh our decisions and our directions against! You see, without Jesus Christ in our lives we make decisions based upon what we have learned in our carnal lives! Those things may be good or they may be bad! Sadly, until we come to that place that our circumstances are just too big for us to handle alone (and sooner or later, we all come to that place!) we all just struggle through life. But there is an answer! One we will not find until we acknowledge and accept Jesus Christ as the Lord of our lives! The Holy Spirit enters us and becomes our counselor and our comforter! He brings a God awareness to us! As we read the Bible, the Holy Spirit shows us how to apply it's teachings to our daily activities! He leads us into situations where we discover our place in the world! With the help of the Holy Spirit and the teachings of the Bible, we have a reference for our life decisions! As we apply God's Word in our lives, we are loved and we can love back! We learn to sow into our business lives and as a result, we prosper! Then with our prayer life, our daily Bible readings and our taking part in our Church activities, we begin to know just what God put us on earth to do! God created us to be in three parts; Spirit, Soul, and Body. Until we accept Jesus Christ as Lord, we are just Soul and Body! But when salvation comes, the Holy Spirit enters and we become Spirit, Soul and Body, three parts just like God created us to be! That is when the peace comes!

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have been made new!

The Story Behind Valentine's Day

Valentine's Day is coming up – the day we celebrate special relationships. Most people are unaware of the story behind the holiday. Valentine lived in Rome during the reign of Emperor Claudius II. He had everything going for him: he was wealthy, young, healthy, and passionately in love with his fiancé. As the day of the wedding approached, Valentine's future looked storybook bright.

However, his world suddenly began to fall apart when the emperor declared all Christians to be guilty of treason. In order to escape punishment, all citizens had to declare "Caesar is Lord." Valentine refused to make such a declaration. Worldly success and worldly love were secondary priorities for him – he was first and foremost a follower of Christ.

As a result, Valentine was arrested and put in jail. There was no trial, just a sentence to public execution in the Roman arena. While awaiting death Valentine wrote love letters to his girlfriend—beautiful romantic letters assuring her of his never-ending love. On February 14, 259, he became another of thousands to be martyred for faith in Jesus Christ. Since then, Christians have celebrated his fidelity to Christ and romantic love by sending love letters to special people.

A funny but sad PS to this story is that in 1998 the Hillsborough, New Jersey school system decided that the name St. Valentine's Day created an oppressive environment since some students and faculty were not comfortable with the implied religious overtones in a day named after a Christian martyr. Fearing that celebration of the day constituted a violation of church and state, the school board voted to rename February 14th "Special Person Day."

Pastor Byron

Presentation by Pastor Byron Alexander

**Pastor Byron will update our congregation on the Methodist Churches –
"Commission on a Way Forward" – Please join him in our Sanctuary –
Feb 10th at 3:00pm**

Worship times for our Sunday Morning Services

9:00am	Early Worship in the Sanctuary
10:00am	Sunday School (with fellowship time from 10 – 10:15)
11:00am	LifePoint Worship in the FLC

Happy Valentine's Day to You!!!

LET ALL
THAT
YOU DO
BE DONE
WITH
LOVE.

1 CORINTHIANS 16:14 NKJV



Valentine's Day, February 14th, is for some a day of love and for some a day of dread because of the emphasis that society places on roses, chocolate, candlelight and expensive dates. However, we hope that you will take the opportunity, on Valentine's Day and beyond, to simply be intentional in showing your love and appreciation for the people who are special to you. Many great religious thinkers and spiritual texts

have offered thoughts on the power of love. Proverbs 15:17 (NLT) says, *"A bowl of vegetables with someone you love is better than steak with someone you hate."* Mother Teresa is quoted as saying, *"Smile at each other, smile at your wife, smile at your husband, smile at your children, smile at each other – it doesn't matter who it is – and that will help you to grow up in greater love for each other."* And C.S. Lewis said, *"Love is not affectionate feeling, but a steady wish for the loved person's ultimate good as far as it can be obtained."* So, the volunteers at Pleasant News wish you all a very happy Valentine's Day! May you know the love of Christ, deep in your bones...deep in your soul...and may that love spill out onto others as you show His love to your world!

Urban Ministry Center



The Urban Ministry Center is an interfaith organization dedicated to bringing the community together to end homelessness; one life at a time. One of the ways they work to accomplish this mission is through the Outreach & Engagement Team. This team is focused on reaching the most vulnerable homeless individuals living on the streets of our community in order to connect them with permanent supportive housing, healthcare, disability income, and other transformative services. The hallmark of the team is that they meet people where they sleep; on the street, under bridges and in the woods.

As our weather turns colder, the street outreach team works to keep neighbors sleeping outside safe, and as warm as possible. Until they are housed, they need sleeping bags, blankets, tarps and thick, warm, waterproof gloves. Here at Pleasant Grove, we will be collecting these items to donate to Urban Ministries for the next couple of weeks. Please bring your donations to the tubs in the sanctuary or by the church office. We will collect these much-needed items until Sunday, February 10th. Thanks for caring for those who find themselves in less fortunate circumstances and for extending the hand of Christ to them!



Ash Wednesday Service

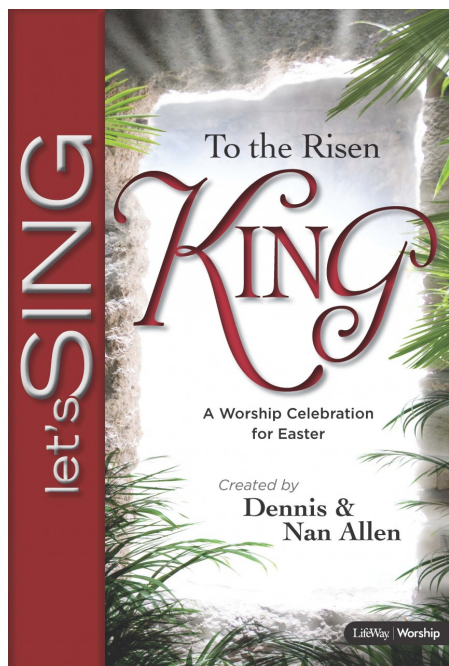


We will hold our traditional Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, March 6th, at 6:00 PM. Please join us in the sanctuary as we gather together as a community of faith to participate in the call to repentance and reconciliation. Each year, the palm branches that we joyously wave above our heads on Palm Sunday, are gathered, burned and ground into ashes. These ashes are



then imposed on the foreheads of those who come forward to contemplate their own mortality and their need for repentance. Make plans now to begin the season of Lent with your church family by attending this thoughtful and impactful observance.

Lifting our Voices on Easter Sunday



Calling all voices! On Easter Sunday, April 21st, the Chancel Choir will present "To the Risen King" by Dennis and Nan Allen. And you are all invited to be a part of this joyous offering! If you are interested in being a part of our Easter choir, you can join us in rehearsals on Wednesday evenings at 6:45. You will receive your cantata book and a rehearsal cd to help you learn the music. No choir experience is required. You need only bring your willing voice, your joyful heart and your desire to glorify "... The Risen King" through music!



Recommended Reading



While we are all closed in during the winter months, we tend to turn our thinking towards cleaning up, cleaning out and decluttering our homes. January and February are the perfect months for such activities, long before the lure of our beautiful spring and summer months become too great a pull on our time! If you need a little motivation to get started, and to finish, with your discarding and donating tasks, we have just the book for you!!

“the life-changing magic of tidying up,” by Marie Kondo, has sold over six million copies and sits on the New York

Times Best Seller list. In this book, Kondo presents a revolutionary and systematic approach to discarding what is not needed in your home. She mandates looking at and holding each individual possession and asking two simple questions: “Does this item serve a real purpose in my home? Does this item spark joy in my life?” If your answers cannot illicit at least one affirmative response, then it is time for that item to leave your home!

As you read this small volume, you will need to keep in mind that much of her thinking and writing is influenced by her Japanese culture and may seem a bit foreign and far-fetched to you. You might not think in exactly the same way as Kondo. But, if you read the book to gain some insight as to how to go about getting rid of the excess in your life (and sadly, excess has become so accepted, so normal in our world today!) then you will certainly take away ideas to help you along on this journey.

With a three-month-long waiting list of people who want to be her clients and sell-out conferences around the world, as well as a Netflix series and her best-selling book, it is obvious that the Kon-Mari method of tidying the home is impacting many people. So, why don't you pick up a copy and see if it lights a fire under you to bless others with things in your home that aren't serving a purpose or sparking joy for you?

“When your room is clean and uncluttered, you have no choice but to examine your inner state.”

– Marie Kondo

You Are Stamped with God's Image...

God's Promise:

Let us make human beings in our image,

make them reflecting our nature.

(Genesis 1: 26 msg)



Community Fellowship Meal

Feb 20th at 5:00pm to 7:00pm

Pork Loin - Baked Potato - Salad

Drinks - Desserts

Pleasant Grove UMC - Family Life Center

(Corner of Oakdale & Pleasant Grove Roads)

Join Us for Great Food & Warm Fellowship

Invite your **Sweetheart**, Family, & Neighbor!!!

Getting to Know You!!!

In December of last year, we welcomed two amazing young women into the membership of Pleasant Grove; Kaylan Brown and Emily Roberson. Now, we know that these two are not new to Pleasant Grove, in any stretch of the imagination, since they have actually been around the church since before they were born! They also have both been active here at our sweet church for their entire lives. But, now they have made it official by going through Confirmation classes and making a public statement in front of the church as to their intentions to be full, active, participating members of Pleasant Grove....And we couldn't be more proud! We realize that most of you already know Emily and Kaylan but we thought it might be fun to learn a little bit more about them. So, we posed a few questions to them and are pleased to share their answers with you.

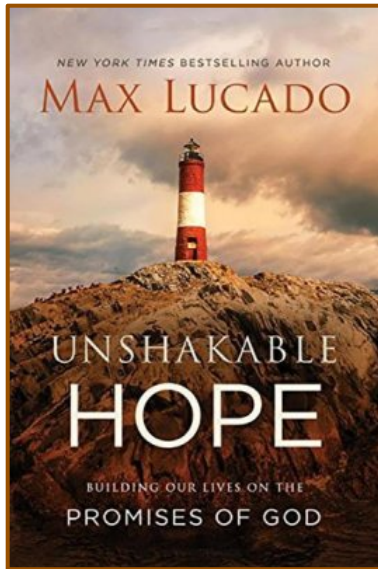


Kaylan Maria Brown is 14 years old and is in 9th grade at Mountain Island Charter School. Her parents are Eric and Karen Brown. She has an older brother, Cameron, who is a freshman at NC State. The family is rounded out with two dogs...Charlie and Luke. Kaylan enjoys playing softball and volleyball and she also enjoys attending youth group here at Pleasant Grove. Although she is just now a freshman in high school, Kaylan is already looking to the future. She thinks that she might want to go into the medical field; possibly becoming a nurse. When asked what her favorite Bible verse was, she selected John 1:5... "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." Kaylan says that during Confirmation classes she really enjoyed gaining an understanding of the history of the Methodist denomination. She also says that she would love to see our church sponsor more mission trips in the future. Kaylan would even like to serve abroad on a mission team! One of Kaylan's favorite things that she does each year is helping out with our preschool kids at Vacation Bible School. She also shared that the Confirmation beach trip last year was a blast and that it made a lasting impression on her.



Emily Ann Roberson is 12 years old and is in 6th grade at East Lincoln Middle School. Her parents are Chuck and Tammy Roberson. She has an older brother, Joseph, who is a junior at East Lincoln High School, and an older sister, Sydney, who lives in Maryland where she is an attorney. Emily loves to draw...really she loves anything having to do with art! She hopes to one day be an animator or cartoonist. When we asked Emily about her favorite Bible verse she pointed us to Proverbs 18:13... "He who answers before listening – that is his folly and his shame." She says that this verse teaches her that it's important to listen because you don't want to regret how you respond if you didn't really understand what was being said! Emily says that during Confirmation she learned that every person has their own relationship with God and that this relationship is personal and individual, with no two people's experience being the same. When asked about what she might be dreaming of for Pleasant Grove, Emily said that she would like to see more young people in our youth group and that she would like to see even more overall church growth.

We are so proud of Kaylan and Emily...for who they are, for how they are living their lives and for their maturity in their walk with Christ. With the future of the church in the hands of these two beautiful people, and many more like them, we can be confident that the future is bright! Welcome (officially!) to Pleasant Grove, Emily and Kaylan, welcome home!



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 for twelve weeks and begins on Monday, February 25th, at 6:30 PM. If you are interested in attending this study please register by February 15th.

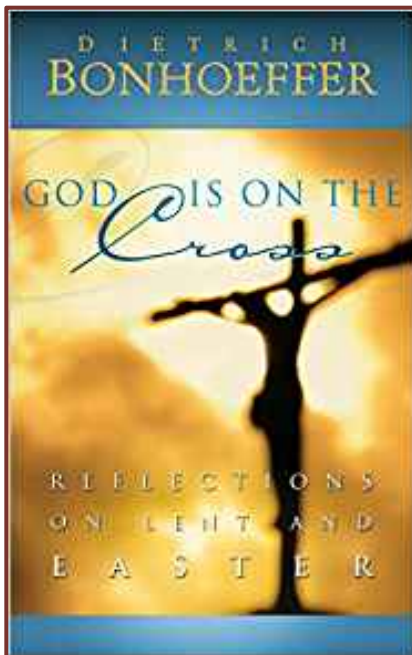
Contact the church office (704.392.2387) or John Vain (jvain@mac.com) to have your name added to the list.

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!

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1915 Oakdale Road Charlotte, NC 28216



Beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 6, a study centered on the life and writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer will be offered during Lent. Classes will start at 10:00am each Wednesday morning during Lent and will be facilitated by Don Upton. Each class will include a time of 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, bearing the title, *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 Bonhoeffer'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.

To order a book or to sign up for the study, please contact the church office (704-392-2387) or Dianne@thegrovetoday.org by February 20th. Thank You!

Pleasant Grove UMC Benevolent Fund Summary 2018

Matthew 25:31 – 40 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?' 'When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Even though it has been a tight year for our congregation this year, you have been very generous in reaching out to help the needy. As a result, six people have been helped with their rent money, sixteen have received help with food, sixteen have received help with gasoline for their transportation, eight have been helped with their electric bills, One has received help with their car insurance, one has received help with their storage bill, one has been helped with their medicines, three have been helped with their natural gas bills, and one has been helped with their car tags. All told, you have generously donated \$6883.94 toward helping these people. In addition, we have collected food for the Oak Grove UMC food pantry, and have referred about a dozen folks to them for food.

Every person who comes for help must apply with us, and their stories are checked out for credibility. They must bring their bills with them, because we do not hand out cash, we mail the check to the company to whom they owe money.

Thank you very much for your faithful support of this ministry of the Pleasant Grove UMC! May God richly bless each of you!

Pastor Phil



Roof Fund Campaign Update:

Our goal of \$27,000 is so close to being realized. As of Sunday Jan 27th, we've collected \$26,400. Way to go Pleasant Grove!

Thank you for all your donations. Every little bit helps!

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

IN MEMORY

Harry Kelly

Terry Kelly – Cemetery Fund

Ben Blankenship

Joann Marz – Family Life Center

Myra Wright

Joann Marz – Family Life Center

Neana Philips

Harold & Nadine Williams

Katherine Sloan

Harold & Nadine Williams

Pina Nance

Hazel Sanders

Wayne & Anna Therrell – Roof Fund

Anonymous – Roof Fund

Jenks Trotter

Polly Needham

Steve & Karen Dellinger

Raymond Auten

Carolyn Henderson

Hazel Sanders

Don & Jane Adams

Ed & Sandra Sing – Roof Fund

Roy & Margaret Parker – Roof Fund

Dwight & Reba Henry – Roof Fund

Harold & Nadine Williams

Glen Reynolds Family

Pina Nance

Anonymous – Roof Fund

John & Susan Goins

James & Harriet Collier

Steve & Karen Dellinger

Raymond Auten

Sonny & Brenda Watkins. – Family Life Center

Eleanor Plummer

Covenant Sunday School Class

Harold & Nadine Williams

Pina Nance

UMW – Circle #3

Dwight & Reba Henry – Roof Fund

Anonymous – Roof Fund

Don & Jane Adams

Tate & Phyllis Rust

Vivian Houck

Roy & Margaret Parker – Roof Fund

Steve & Karen Dellinger

Raymond Auten

Sonny & Brenda Watkins – KidLife

Julie Wewers Family & Suzanne Brothers -

KidLife

Hazel Sanders

Sybil Reynolds

Patricia Farmer

Shirley Blankenship

Steve & Karen Dellinger

Raymond Auten

IN HONOR

Byron Alexander Family

Anonymous – Lord's Fund

Anonymous

Phil & Janie Turner

Anonymous – Lord's Fund

Anonymous

Shirley McClure

Covenant Sunday School Class

Jean Lynch

Covenant Sunday School Class

Jimmy Puckett

Covenant Sunday School Class

Anonymous – Lord's Fund

Roy & Margaret Parker

Doug & Laura Haynes – Roof Fund

Colin Winslette

Anonymous – Lord's Fund

Lindsay Wright Family

Anonymous – Lord's Fund

Kay Mathews Family

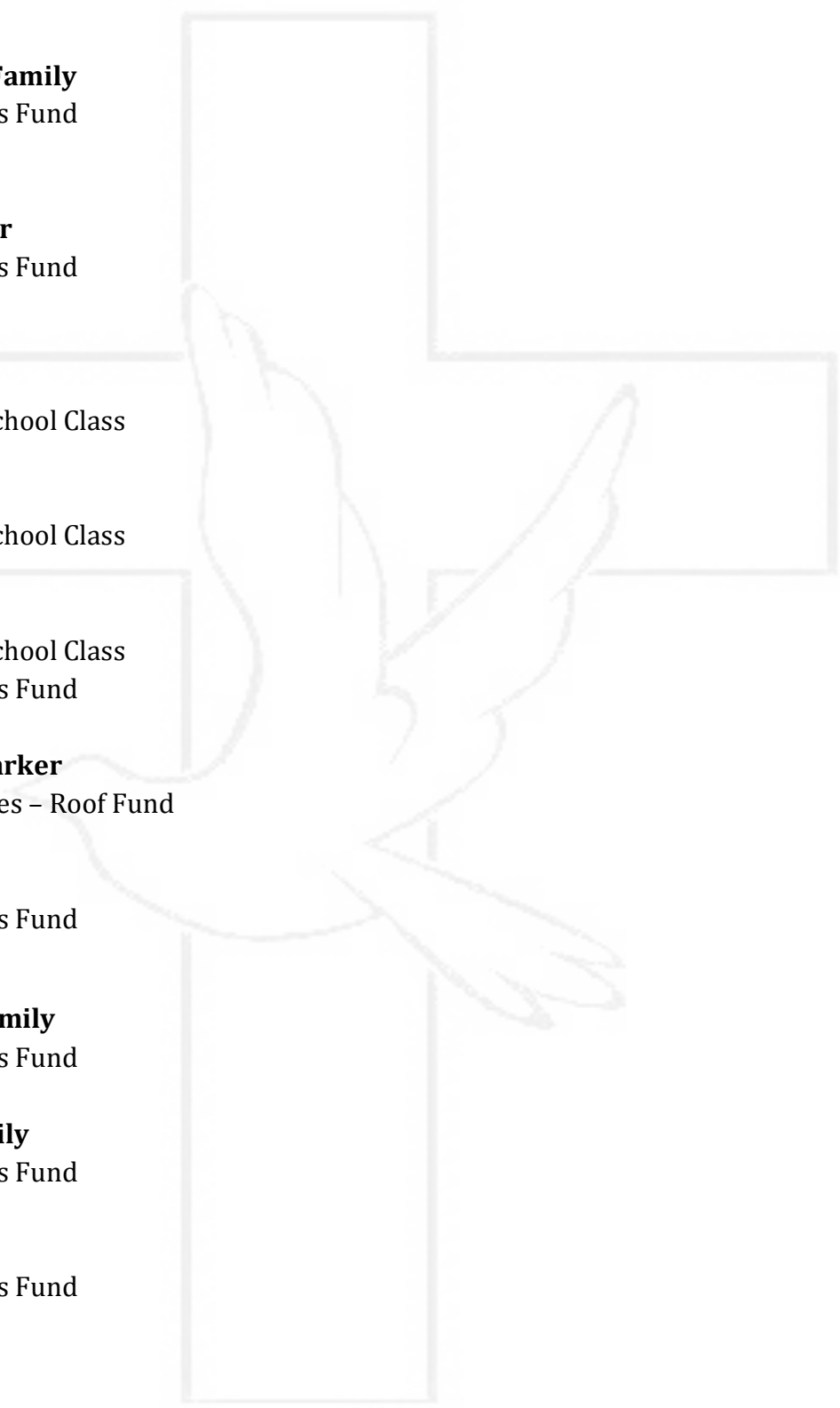
Anonymous – Lord's Fund

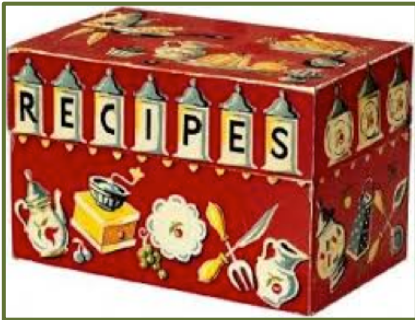
Bill Wright

Anonymous – Lord's Fund

Troy Wilson

Anonymous – Lord's Fund





The Recipe Box

This month we would like to highlight another of Pleasant Grove's legendary cooks. If you went looking for Eleanor Plummer, and you knew that she was somewhere on the church campus, the first place you would have looked would have been the kitchen. She was at home in the kitchen like most of us are at home on the couch! If there was a church function going on that involved food, she was always offering to help in any way that she could. I will never forget one particular time when we were planning a church wide dinner and quite a few suggestions had been put on the table for the menu for this event. Eleanor sat quietly listening to all of the ideas and then very calmly said, "These are all good meals but they are all too expensive! I can feed as many people as we need to serve with chicken, potatoes and gravy, green beans and a roll for \$1.38 a person!" Guess what we served!!

So, now we offer Eleanor's Peanut Butter Pie. Since it's February, you just might need to make this sweet treat for someone special in your life. And when you do, remember Eleanor with a smile on your face!

---Submitted by Sherri Brown

Peanut Butter Pie

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 frozen pie crust
- 2 small packages instant chocolate pudding
- Milk to make the pudding
- 8 oz. Cool Whip

Bake the pie crust following package directions while you make the peanut butter crumbs.

Mix together the peanut butter and powdered sugar until crumbly. Reserve 4 Tbsp. of crumbs for the top of the pie. Put the rest of the crumbs in the pie crust while it is still warm or hot.

Make the pudding according to the package directions. Put the pudding on top of the crumbs in the crust. Top with the Cool Whip and then sprinkle the reserved crumbs over the top of the pie. Chill in the freezer for about one hour. Yummy!!!



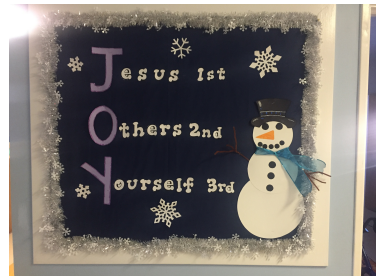
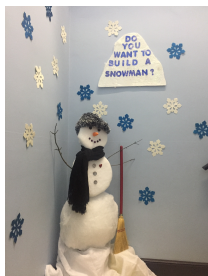


11:00AM
IN THE FAMILY LIFE CENTER

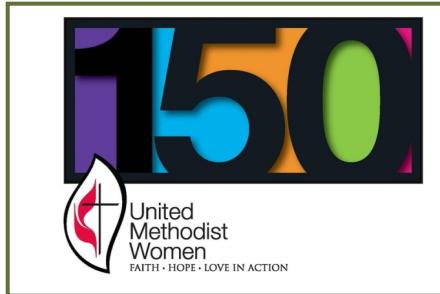
Preschool News



The children returned from their Christmas break excited to see their friends and happy to be back in Preschool. They have been busy this month creating beautiful "Winter" artwork, learning about penguins (our 4's class), and everything related to winter. If you walk into the children's building, you will be greeted by lots of snowmen!! The teachers talked to them about Baby Moses and the older children enjoyed story time with Mrs. Upton and Chapel with Colin. The children also sang some fun winter songs to the Senior citizens. January has been a great month!



A New Year for the United Methodist Women



Our local unit of the United Methodist Women has two Circles that meet regularly at Pleasant Grove. Circle #3 meets on Tuesday afternoons at 2:00. Circle #6 meets on Tuesday evenings at 6:30. (Our Circle numbers seem odd but are the remnants of a much larger number of members from many years ago!) The invitation is graciously extended to women of the church to come at any time and meet with either of these Circles. In order for the United Methodist Women's organization to continue and thrive, new members need to become involved.

Now a bit about the plans for 2019...

Circle #3 will meet on February 12th, at 11:30 (note the changed meeting time) for a salad lunch. This will be held in the Gathering Room of the FLC. Pastor Byron will give a short devotion and a time of fellowship will follow. Everyone is asked to bring a small, \$3-\$5 gift to exchange. On March 12th, Circle #3 will meet in the fellowship hall for the UMW Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Program. We will be visiting shut ins on April 9th and on May 14th Martha Honeycutt will have the program and play the harp for the group. Circle #3 participates in local and district askings as well as giving to church needs as they arise.

Circle #6 began the year by allocating the funds raised from our annual Country Ham Dinner (held in December each year). We gave donations to Backpack Buddies, the Oak Grove Food Pantry, the Bereavement Fund, the Lord's Fund and the Roofing Fund. On February 12th, we will have an evening of service as we work to clean and sanitize the tables and chairs in the FLC. On March 12th, we will meet in the fellowship hall for the UMW Call to Prayer and Self-Denial Program. In April we will be visiting our shut ins and in May we will be visiting at one of our local assisted living facilities with ice cream sundaes for everyone.

This is the 150th anniversary of the founding of the United Methodist Women. Along with a special event to commemorate this occasion, there will also be opportunities to attend a District Mission Study and the District Prayer Breakfast. Hopefully this information has informed you about what we are all about and inspired you to become a part of this great organization. Simply put... We are a group of women trying to do good in the world! Who wouldn't want to be a part of that??? See you at Circle!!!



Pastor Byron's Sermon Series...

Ruth: A Story of Redemption – For the past four weeks we've been privileged to hear the story of Ruth and Naomi, daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. These two discovered how no situation is beyond the reach of God's redeeming love, and that any life surrendered to Him can be blessed beyond imagination. Thank you Pastor Byron Alexander!

Fixed Focus Sermon Series: This sermon series will begin on **Feb 3rd**.

In this series you will be challenged to fix your focus on that which matters most in life; serving Jesus above all else, seeking to do his will, an loving others as he has loved us – each and every day of our lives.



Just a friendly reminder to all of our faithful Backpack Buddies monthly sponsors!! Please remember to drop off your donation each month so that we can continue to meet the needs of families who find themselves struggling to put food on the table. We are serving twenty students at Oakdale Elementary School this year. This is a big undertaking...but we are certainly up to the task, with God's help! Thanks to all who assist with this effort!

What do you say when asked...

How do I keep my focus on Jesus amidst distractions?

To be single-minded means to have one desire that trumps all others. One goal. One focus. From the beginning God made clear that he should be his people's main focus. But is challenging in a hectic; fast paced world. It's easy for days, weeks, months and even years to get away from us. The spiritual practice of single-mindedness is all about determining our priorities to ensure we are practicing our faith, living out our beliefs and accomplishing God's will for our lives.

All Pleasant Grove Women are invited to attend the
29th Annual Ecumenical Luncheon
at
Paw Creek Presbyterian Church



Saturday, February 16th, 2019
Registration: 10:30-11:00 AM
Speaker and Salad Lunch: 11:00 AM-12:30 PM



Paw Creek Presbyterian Church
7400 Mt. Holly Road
Charlotte, NC 28214

Guest Speaker: Hannah Martin

Please bring \$1 and a canned good for a local food pantry.

We hope you can join us in fellowship, study, prayer and celebration of women on this special day! If you would like to attend please let **Jeannie Upton** or **Karen Dellinger** know by Sunday, February 9th. This is well worth your time!

Happy Valentine's Day!

- Candle Light
- Cards
- Chocolate
- Cupid
- Date
- Dinner
- First Kiss
- Memories
- Movie
- Pink
- Poem
- Proposal
- Red
- Romance
- Roses
- St. Valentine
- Sweetarts
- Teddy Bear
- True Love



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