

In This Issue; July 2020

Pg 1 Inspiration Point

Pg 2 Thank You Phil

Pg 3 From the
Pastor's Desk

Pg 5 Preschool/
Summer Camp

Pg 6 In Memory/
In Honor

Pg 7 Recipe Box

Pg 9 Recommended
Reading

Pg 10 Did You Know

Worship Times:

9:00am Traditional
10:00am Sunday School
11:00am Contemporary

Pleasant Grove United Methodist
Church
P.O. Box 681900
1915 Oakdale Road Charlotte,
NC 28216
704-392-2387
www.thegrovetoday.org

Inspiration Point

The Star Spangled Banner

(All Four Stanzas)

“Oh! Say, can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?

And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was still there.

Oh! Say, does that Star-Spangled Banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore, dimly seen thro' the mist of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?

Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream.

'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner, Oh! Long may it wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore,
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country should leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.

No refuge could save the hireling and slave,
From the terror of flight, or the gloom of the grave,
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph doth wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Oh! thus be it ever, when freemen shall stand,
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation,
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the Heav'n-rescued land,
Praise the Pow'r that hath made and preserved us a nation.

Then conquer we must, for our cause is just,
And this be our motto- "In God is our trust."
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph doth wave,
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave."

(Continued from previous page.)

Millions of our young men and women and their families have sacrificed their all to create and maintain this great nation of ours so that the ideals of Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness could be shared by everyone who claims citizenship in this fair land. Just as we share the responsibility to defend these freedoms, we also share the responsibilities to bring all of our peoples to that place where each one can walk down the street safely and in peace! In this nation, no one is above the law, and each one, regardless of skin color or of uniform color must be responsible to be our neighbor's keeper! As our pledge to our flag says, "One nation, under God, with Liberty and Justice for all!"

May God richly bless each of you!

Brother Phil

Thank You, Pastor Phil!!!



This month is sad, but thankfully not too sad!

Our beloved Phil Turner is retiring from his position as our Pastor of Congregational Care. Thankfully Phil isn't going anywhere; he and Janie will remain at Pleasant Grove and continue to love the church and be active members. It would take hours and hours of time and way too many pages to fully express how incredibly thankful we are to Phil for his years of loving service at Pleasant Grove. You can always tell if someone is working just for the sake of it or if they actually truly love what they do. With Phil it was always obvious that everything he did was out of a deep love for Jesus. For me it was always a huge blessing to have such a great "grandfather" to me on the staff. His wisdom, experience, and infectious positivity will be greatly missed in the church office.

I don't even need to write much about who Phil was because everyone knows him! He was always around, always loving on people, and being a model for Christlikeness. So we all know just how big of an impact Phil had on the church and will continue to have, even as he gets to finally kick back and retire (for the fourth time!). So Phil and Janie, we hope you both enjoy the retirement you so rightfully deserve and we look forward to spending many more days at Pleasant Grove together going forward!

Thank you Phil...we all love you so much!

Written by: Colin Winslette



FROM THE PASTOR'S

DESK



The High Priest of a New Covenant

Hebrews 8:1-13 (NIV)

8 Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, 2 and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being.

3 Every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices, and so it was necessary for this one also to have something to offer. 4 If he were on earth, he would not be a priest, for there are already priests who offer the gifts prescribed by the law. 5 They serve at a sanctuary that is a copy and shadow of what is in heaven. This is why Moses was warned when he was about to build the tabernacle: "See to it that you make everything according to the pattern shown you on the mountain." [a] 6 But in fact the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, since the new covenant is established on better promises.

7 For if there had been nothing wrong with that first covenant, no place would have been sought for another. 8 But God found fault with the people and said: "The days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. 9 It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them, declares the Lord. 10 This is the covenant I will establish with the people of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

11 No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, "Know the Lord," because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." 13 By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.

Jesus is the perfect high priest. He lives forever so he will be our priest forever. His sacrifice is once and for all, and you will never need another sacrifice to be made on your behalf, and because Jesus lives forever, he forever intercedes for you — going before the Father on your behalf. In other words, he is your representative. He takes care of you, he stands up for you, he looks out for you.

Every time we start talking about God's extended mercy, there is always the person who asks, "Does that mean I can sin all I want, and God will always give me a second chance?" The way it works out is that you sin more than you want. That is because when you surrender your life to Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit comes into your life, you become a new creation, and God begins making changes in you. He begins the process of conforming you to the image of his Son.

This does not happen overnight. I don't know how long the process takes; I can only say that it takes longer than the 59 years that I have been alive. What you will discover is that you stumble a lot more than you want to. And what you will discover is that falling flat on your face or foolishly wandering off the path does not bring you nearly as much fulfillment as does walking in close connection with Christ.

When you make the decision to follow Christ, you inevitably discover that you sin more than you want to. You can become so frustrated with your own limitations that it will lead you to despair. At this point you need to remember the basis of God's new covenant: It is based on second chances.

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If your image of God has him staring you down with stern disapproval, arms folded, shaking his head and saying, "You again?" Then you are not approaching God based on the new covenant. The new covenant says, "My people failed in the past, but I will not give up on them. I'll give them another chance." Now, this is not about thumbing your nose at God's mercy. It is about living in the security of his love and acceptance. When you fall-down, he wants you to try again. When you wander away, he wants you to come back. This is the basis of the new covenant.

Jesus Christ came into this world, lived a perfect life, and died on the cross for our sins — so that we could enjoy this new covenant with God. It is a covenant based on second chances. It is a covenant based on a personal relationship. It is a covenant based on the blank slate of God's absolute forgiveness. This kind of covenant is not as much like a covenant as it is like a will. It is your inheritance. It's what God is offering to you at this moment. Whether you are brand new to the faith or whether you've been a Christian for years, I invite you to receive your inheritance today.

Christ above all,
Pastor Byron



A Prayer for Independence Day

Guide us as we work together to build a society in which everyone has the opportunity to live with dignity and hope. Help us to be witnesses of Christ's love by practicing charity and promoting justice and peace throughout the world. Strengthen us with fortitude to choose the values of our faith as we exercise our responsibility as citizens. Inspire us to build a world of greater respect for human life and dignity. Restore us when our spirit grows weary, and bless us in our journey home to You.



Preschool Post and Summer Camp Sightings



The Preschool and Summer Camp staff hopes that everyone is doing well. Our Preschool finished up our unusual and shortened school year with a drive through event. During this time our students and their parents were able to pick up their certificates of completion as well as the artwork, crafts, and learning activities that were left behind in March. It was so wonderful to see them again! We wish the rising kindergarteners a wonderful first year in “big school”!!!

Summer Camp officially began on June 8th. We are keeping everyone busy playing outside and in the gym, exercising, taking part in dance videos, crafts, painting, and lots more! The campers have been great...however, we do miss our field trips! Hopefully things will begin to open up soon but in the meantime, the kids seem to be enjoying having time with friends. The staff is doing their best at keeping the kids busy and happy, even while practicing social distancing!

We are blessed to have these two programs at Pleasant Grove. It is always our hope and prayer to be able to impact the children of our community with the loving-kindness of Christ. Even during difficult times it seems that God is opening the door to make this happen! Thanks be to God!!!



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

IN MEMORY

Horace Nixon

Graphic Production Center
Vivian Houck – Family Life Center
Rickey and Lynda Elliott – Family Life Center
Tom and Julia Grey – Family Life Center
Robert and Coretha Ferrell

Nancy Brown

Pina Nance
Todd and Windy Holcomb
Anonymous – Family Life Center
Shanon Gerland
Hazel Sanders
Rickey and Lynda Elliott – Family Life Center
Robert and Coretha Ferrell
Covenant Sunday School Class –
Family Life Center

Ray Alexander

Hazel Sanders
Roy and Margaret Parker
Covenant Sunday School Class

Jimmy McCall

Covenant Sunday School Class
Robert and Coretha Ferrell

Vivian Kiser

Hazel Sanders
Covenant Sunday School Class
Pina Nance
Bruce and Debra Davis
Roy and Margaret Parker

Judy Maples

Hazel Sanders
Pina Nance
Roy and Margaret Parker

IN HONOR

Jimmy Puckett

Covenant Sunday School Class

Jessi Freehy

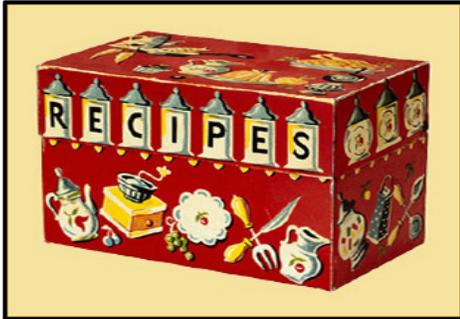
Scott and Sherri Brown – Backpack Buddies

Kappy Canfield

Covenant Sunday School Class

Patricia Yonders

Covenant Sunday School Class



The Recipe Box

The recipe selection for this month comes to us from the website stockpilingmoms.com and was featured on Pinterest! It is definitely a recipe with a patriotic flair, but is so light and refreshing that we think it would be a hit anytime between now and the onset of cooler weather. **Patriotic Trifle** would be welcomed at any gathering of friends and family and would certainly be impressive with its colors, contents, and ease of preparation. But, it would also appeal to the kiddos in your life because of the jello and whipped topping!!! It makes a pretty big bowl of lusciousness...so be sure to send out a couple of invites when you whip it up! This one is just fun...so have fun making it and enjoying it!!!



Patriotic Trifle

- 1 (3 ounce) package berry blue jello
- 1 (3 ounce) package strawberry jello
- 2 cups boiling water
- 1 cup cold water
- 2 cups cold milk
- 2 (3.4 ounce) packages of instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 (16 ounce) carton frozen whipped topping, thawed and divided
- 1 pint fresh blueberries
- 1 quart fresh strawberries, quartered
- 1 whole prepared angel food cake (8-10 ounces) cut into 1 inch cubes

In two small bowls, combine each jello flavor with 1 cup boiling water. Stir $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold water into each. Pour each into an ungreased 9 inch square pan. Refrigerate for about an hour or until set. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, whisk milk and pudding mixes for 2 minutes. Let stand for 2 minutes or until soft-set. Fold in 2 cups of the whipped topping. Set aside $\frac{1}{4}$ cup blueberries and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup strawberries for garnish. Cut the jello into 1 inch cubes. In a 3 quart trifle bowl or serving dish, layer the strawberry jello, half of the cake cubes, the remaining blueberries and half of the pudding mixture. Top with the blue jello and remaining cake cubes, remaining strawberries, and remaining pudding mixture. Garnish with reserved berries and remaining whipped topping. Serve immediately and enjoy!!!



What Do You Say When Asked...

What is a brief history of Lay Servant Ministries...?

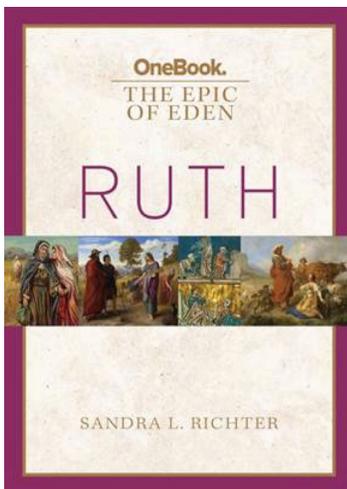
It began as an act of love; it began as an example; it began as a challenge; it lingers with us today. Mark 10:4-5 reminds us, “For even the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” We may not be able to ransom many, but we may have opportunity to serve many. Jesus helps us by naming the lost and the least, the marginalized and the traumatized of society in many scripture passages.

“Lay servant ministries: Leading, caring, communicating. Ministries all-encompassing; ministries based on love and service...”

The history of servant ministry in the United States includes many important leaders and teachers. Class leaders served in local congregations throughout the United States. They taught what we today call Sunday school and served in administrative duties. Through their simple service, these teachers and leaders, influenced and affected a large portion of the population of the United States during the 1800’s.

Excerpted from “Lay Servant Ministries Handbook” published 1989

Bible Study Opportunity...

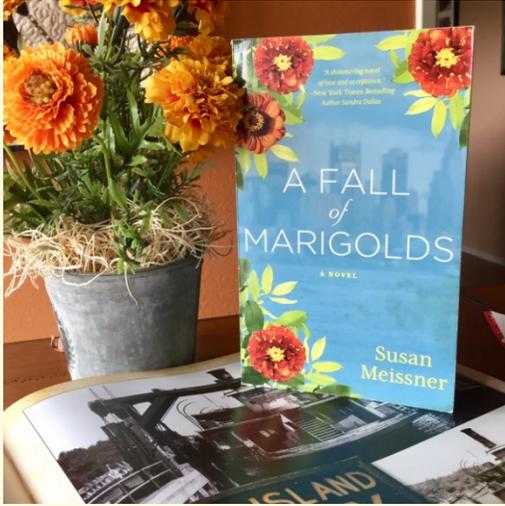


Jana Alexander is now leading a new Bible study, on the book of Ruth. The study meets via Zoom, on Monday evenings beginning at 6:30pm. To participate in the study, you'll need the study guide book for Epic of Eden:Ruth. There are still a few books available at \$14 each. Let Jana know if you would like to join the study.

Because this is on Zoom, anyone can participate! Feel free to invite your friends! The writer of this study wrote it with folks who are new to Bible studies in mind, too.

To sign up, please contact Jana directly (704-881-3736; janaalexander09@gmail.com) so you will be added to the list to receive the Zoom link.

Recommended Reading

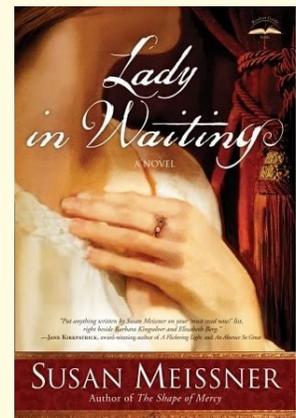


More than likely many of us have spent some extra hours over the past couple of months reading. It just might be that you have reconnected with your love of reading. Whether you are looking for a good beach read for some much-anticipated time away, or you are simply spending time in the quiet of home, finding good books that interest us and inform us can be a challenge. This month, we would actually like to recommend two books by the same author. Susan Meissner has spent her entire life as a writer, having penned her first poem at the age of four. She has authored many novels and has received several awards for her work. When she's not writing, she serves as the director of small groups and connection ministries at her San Diego church. Susan and her pastor husband are the parents of four young adults.

The first title that we would like to recommend is [A Fall of Marigolds](#). In this enjoyable book, the lives of Clara Wood and Taryn Michaels are connected in a way that is so evident but yet so hard to believe. Clara serves in the medical facility on Ellis Island in 1911. While caring for a fevered immigrant whose recent loss resonates with her, she becomes intrigued by the name embroidered onto a scarf he carries. Fast forward to 2011, and we become immersed in Taryn's story. She thinks that she has her life in order and is living a complete and full life. Then, a long-lost photograph surfaces in a national magazine and she is forced to relive that awful day that her husband died in the collapse of the World Trade Towers...the same day that a stranger reached out and saved her. But, a chance reconnection and a century-old scarf begin to open Taryn's eyes to the larger forces at work in her life.

We would also like to recommend [Lady in Waiting](#) by the same author. In this interesting read we come to know Lady Jane Grey and her dressmaker Lucy Day. Set in the sixteenth century Jane Grey is an innocent young woman whose fate seems to be controlled by a dangerous political and religious climate. The times are a very real threat to Jane's true love and the pursuit of her own interests. Dove-tailed within this story, we get to know Jane Lindsay who lives and works in New York City. While working in her quaint antiques store she comes into possession of an old ring in a box of relics from a British jumble sale. The ring contains a Latin inscription, but also one word in English...Jane. Feeling an instant connection to this mysterious ring bearing her very own name, Jane begins a journey to learn more about the ring and perhaps even about herself.

As is evidenced by this bit of information, both of these books weave together historical fiction and current day events, characters, and settings. So, if you enjoy a bit of learning, a well-written story, a book without foul language and offensive content, and an escape from the day-to-day grind, then these two books would be just the ticket! We hope that you will enjoy [A Fall of Marigolds](#) and [Lady in Waiting](#) by Susan Meissner. Happy Reading!!!



Did You Know???

...that many of our United Methodist ministries and resources have suffered during the Covid-19 pandemic? Of course you did! This reality is true to the times and follows all logic. This month we would like to highlight one of our true treasures in the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church that surely has had to adapt, repurpose, re-plan, and look forward. Camp Tekoa is near and dear to the hearts of many in our conference and quite a few here at Pleasant Grove. Many of our grown children spent many a happy week as campers at this idyllic camp in their younger years. In fact, our very own Travis Johnson spent a summer or two as a camp counselor there. As parents, we can remember dropping our kids off for the week and then picking them back up as a changed individual. Yes, they were the same

child, but they had grown and matured in some most amazing ways. They had truly had a mountain top experience in their young faith life. Camp Tekoa is a dear place and is one that we desperately need for the future.

Camp Tekoa just celebrated 70 years in ministry! It has been a vital and vibrant member of our conference and has enjoyed the trust and support from the conference, our congregations and families. Over the years, faithful generosity and the good stewardship of camp leaders, has led Tekoa to be financially healthy for a very long time. This year, the camp has been able to continue to operate in spite of having to cancel the spring schedule. With the loss of the summer revenue (upwards of \$1,250,000) it is anticipated that the impact to the ministries of the camp will be significant. It is true that some of the summer expenses will not be incurred, but that summer revenue sustains the year round, fixed costs that make the Tekoa experience possible. The administrative staff of Camp Tekoa is now asking that we join them in prayer as they work through this difficult and unprecedented time. As a nod to a time-honored and cherished tradition, Tekoa is announcing the “Raise Your Candle High” Emergency Fund. Donations to this fund will support the camps during these tough times, and will help insure the future of the life-altering, Christ-centered experiences that take place on the grounds of the camp.

Tekoa has given “The Church” so much. It has made many of us who we are today. We need to ensure that the ministry of the past 70 years will be extended another 70 years and beyond. Many of us have stood shoulder to shoulder on warm summer nights in the glow of candles lifted high into the night sky. Tekoa now needs us to stand with the camp as we all raise our candles high! So, as you continue to support our own sweet church here at the corner of Oakdale and Pleasant Grove roads, could you also consider making a donation to support Camp Tekoa? You may donate securely online at camptekoa.org/giving or you may mail a donation to Camp Tekoa, PO Box 1793, Flat Rock, NC 28731. Just be sure to mark your donation for the Raise Your Candle High Emergency Fund. Your gift will impact lives far into the future in a way that you otherwise might not be able to do.

(The content in this article was written by Phyllis Murray, Executive Director of Camp Tekoa, and originally appeared on the Western North Carolina Conference website on June 12, 2020.)



WORD SEARCH

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

AMERICA	FIREWORKS	LAND OF THE FREE	STATUE OF LIBERTY
BARBECUE	FLAG	MAJESTIC	STRIPES
BEAUTIFUL	FOURTH OF JULY	MILITARY	UNCLE SAM
BLUE	FREEDOM	RED	USA
BRAVE	INDEPENDENCE DAY	STARS	WHITE

Hidden Message:
