



Pleasant News

Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church

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WORSHIP TIMES

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

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Inspiration Point

Song Of Solomon 2:8 to 13 The voice of my beloved! Behold he comes leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he stands behind our wall; he is looking through the windows, gazing through the lattice.

My beloved spoke, and said to me: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtle dove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth her green figs, and the vines with tender grapes give a good smell. Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away!"

Oh, the time of youth when love was in the air! Can you remember those times? You were strong in body and mind, and your beloved was beautiful and set your mind ablaze? You rode by her house a thousand times hoping to get a glance of her? But you had to get past her father! Riding around together in your automobile, drive-in restaurants, sock hops, or maybe skating rinks and swimming pools? She thought you were the best and you just knew she was the one for you!

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Then, as time passed, work became a chore and took a lot of your time. Babies came along, Mom had to go to work just to help feed the family! Sicknesses occurred, with doctors and sometimes hospitals! Relationships, when not nourished, begin to break down! Sharp words and angry arguments cause bitterness and resentfulness to build! Pretty soon, communications break down and each one begins to seek comfort from outside the marriage! It will not be long before a divorce comes along! Looking back, what happened?

I counsel folks that in a relationship, the most important words one can say to the other is not "I love you," though that is very important, but the words, "I am sorry, please forgive me!" Each bitter word is like adding another feather to the load! It does not weigh much, but they build up until the load becomes too heavy to carry! When that happens, communications cease and the relationship becomes broken! It is time to swallow your pride and to humble yourself! Confess your sins to each other and renew your commitments to each other! Do not take each other for granted! Court each other again! Spend time together! The test of a loving relationship is not when you are young, strong and beautiful, but when you are both 80, walking with canes or pushing one in a wheelchair, when your hair is white, or gone and maybe even your teeth! Then you look at her like you did when she was young and beautiful and shout to her (because neither of you hear very well anymore!), "I love you my darling wife! I always have and I always will!"



Brother Phil



Pleasant Grove's Little Lending Library



Just a friendly reminder that our Lending Library is open and available to each and every one of you. We are small in the number of books that we have at this early point in our existence. However, we have an excellent selection of books ranging in category from Christian formation and discipleship, to Bibles, to small group resources, to daily devotionals, to Christian fiction, to historical fiction, to non-fiction. Some of your favorite

authors are on our shelves as well as some of the newer authors that you might not have read yet. Our system is quite simple...just take what interests you and when you are finished with it, bring it back for others to enjoy! That's it!!! Also, we are always accepting donations to enlarge our collection. If you have some really great books at your house that you have already enjoyed, you may place them in the donation bin beside the library in the Gathering Room of the Family Life Center. We just ask that they be clean, unmarked, and in new or like-new condition. Our Lending Library is a great resource for the church family, and we do hope that you will take advantage of the reading opportunities that are available to you!

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

IN MEMORY

Anna Therrell

Rebecca Stephens
Martha Rawdon
Terry Kelly – Cemetery Fund
Rick and Lynda Elliott –
Cemetery Fund
Mary Louise and A.R.
Tinkham
Anonymous – Parsonage
Glen Reynolds Family
Alex and Lillian Barnette

Foy Lee Phillips

Steve and Karen Dellinger
Covenant Sunday School
Class – Family Life Center
Nadine Williams – Family Life
Center

Nancy Brown

Don Brown

Leslie Davis

Steve and Karen Dellinger

Patricia Yonders

Pina Nance
Les and Vicki Hunter
UMW – Circle #3 – Family
Life Center
Bobby Wright (Family of
Patricia Yonders)

Al Godwin

David and Lynette Primm

Betty Guess

David and Lynette Primm
Glen Reynolds Family

Clay Todd

Pina Nance
Steve and Karen Dellinger
Anonymous – Family Life
Center

Buddy Hamby's Father

Steve and Karen Dellinger

Lila Hopkins

Steve and Karen Dellinger

Louise Cobb

Pina Nance
Hazel Sanders
Ray and Trena McClure
Genesis Sunday School Class
– Family Life Center
Anonymous – Family Life
Center
Steve and Karen Dellinger
Tim and Terri Honeycutt –
Family Life Center
Roy and Margaret Parker
Steve and Maria McClure –
Family Life Center

UMW – Circle #3 – Family

Life Center

Buddy and Barbara Hopkins

Rolandus and Edna Harwell

Don Brown

Hiram Handy

Nadine Williams – Family Life
Center

IN HONOR

Jane Adams

Tim and Terri Honeycutt

Elizabeth Puckett

Anonymous

Hazel Sanders

Anonymous

Kay Matthews

Anonymous

United Methodist Women

Don and Jeannie Upton –
Family Life Center



The Recipe Box

Many of us make resolutions for the new year and many times at least one of those resolutions will center on our health and wellness...possibly the foods we eat. Although we did not publish in January, we thought we might give you a relatively healthy recipe idea to help you along with your goals. This recipe comes to us from Ree Drummond, otherwise known as The Pioneer Woman. Sometimes we might struggle to incorporate a variety of vegetables in our cooking, but this is a hearty dish, full of great vegetables, which can be accompanied by a salad to round out the meal. Because this recipe has an extensive ingredient list and a couple of steps to its preparation, you might be somewhat intimidated. But don't be! Give this recipe a try! It makes a casserole dish full so you might want to make it with the intention of sharing it with family or friends!

Veggie-Packed Pasta

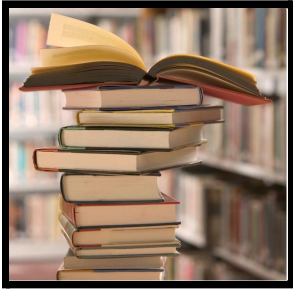
Kosher salt, to taste
 12 ounces whole wheat penne pasta
 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
 1 yellow onion, thinly sliced
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 bunch asparagus, cut into bite-size pieces
 1 medium zucchini, cut into bite-size chunks
 Black pepper, to taste
 ½ cup white wine

2 cups torn fresh kale
 1 cup frozen peas
 ½ cup ricotta cheese
 ½ cup prepared pesto
 1 cup seasoned breadcrumbs
 ¼ cup grated Parmesan
 ½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
 Fresh parsley leaves, for serving

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Cook the pasta until al dente, according to package directions. Drain, reserving ¼ cup of the pasta water (plus a little more). Set the pasta and pasta water aside. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When the oil is hot, add the onion and garlic and stir. Add the asparagus and zucchini and sprinkle with a good pinch of salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, to soften the vegetables, 2 to 3 minutes. Add the white wine, scrape up the bottom of the pan and let the wine cook down. Add the kale, peas, ricotta cheese, pesto and the reserved ¼ cup pasta water and bring to a boil, cook for 1 minute. Add the drained pasta and mix thoroughly. Use more pasta water as needed if the mixture is too thick. Transfer the pasta mixture to a 9 x 13-inch baking dish. In a medium bowl, add the breadcrumbs, Parmesan, crushed red pepper flakes and remaining 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Mix until combined. Sprinkle the breadcrumb mixture over top of the pasta, then bake until the breadcrumbs are golden, and the pasta is bubbly, about 15-17 minutes. Remove from the oven and garnish with the fresh parsley. Serve, enjoy, and appreciate the fact that you have fueled your body with an awesome mixture of good-for-you vegetables!!!



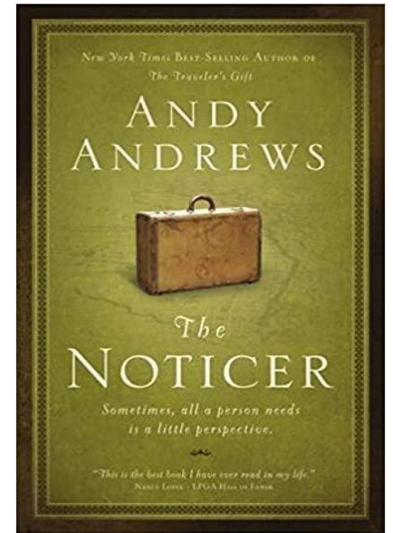
Recommended Reading



The written word can have a great influence in our lives. We have all read books that have had a great impact upon us and have imparted a much needed perspective to our lives. This month, we would like to recommend a relatively small volume to you...but one that is sure to loom large in your thoughts upon reading it. The Noticer, by Andy Andrews, is a New York Times bestseller and is based on the true story of “Jones,” a remarkable and mysterious drifter who has a knack for showing up in people’s lives at just the right time. Through his gentle ways he provides timeless lessons about love, life, and just how very important perspective is as we navigate the life we have been given.

This endearing allegory is set in the town of Orange Beach, Alabama...a simple town of simple people. But, just like all of us, the people of Orange Beach have their fair share of problems – marriages headed for divorce, young people losing hope and giving up on life, business owners on the verge of bankruptcy, and other obstacles that just seem to be a part of life. To the good people of this small town, these situations seem to be dead ends. But, to Jones, who has a gift for seeing what others miss, there is no such thing as a dead end. Jones contends that it only takes a little perspective to recognize the miracles in our moments and the seeds of greatness that are divinely tucked into our struggles.

Jones has a “knack” for showing up just when things seem their darkest...to a young man living beneath a pier, to someone struggling to define happiness...let alone experience it, to a business owner whose business practices border on the illegal, to the widowed woman who believes that her life has no meaning or purpose, and even to a group of young friends who simply want to know how to avoid some of the common heartaches which adults inevitably seem to encounter. To these characters, and others, Jones shows up when he is needed most, with nothing more than his battered old suitcase and his love.



The Noticer beautifully blends fiction and allegory in this entertaining and inspiring book. It challenges the reader to a better way of living...a better life. As you read through the pages of this little volume, you will no doubt see much of your own life, or the lives of those around you. You will also see a remarkable representation of the presence of Christ in our lives...always showing up, always guiding, always encouraging, and always wanting the very best for us! We do hope that you will want to read The Noticer. It is now available in The Lending Library here at Pleasant Grove and is also available through the public library, on-line booksellers, and bookstores everywhere.

As a way of encouraging you to invest a few hours in this book, here are a couple of quotes from Jones:

“Remember, whatever you focus upon, increases.”

“Most people think it takes a long time to change. It doesn’t. Change is immediate! Instantaneous! It may take a long time to decide to change...but change happens in a heartbeat!”

“Move into the light.”

**(Book recommendation submitted by Sherri Brown.
She read this book on a snowy, icy morning in about three hours!)**

News from Our United Methodist Women

The United Methodist Women at Pleasant Grove had a good year in 2021, considering trying to meet goals and “keep the spirit” with the Covid pandemic still causing turmoil in our midst. The end of year reports were sent into the district organization and Pleasant Grove UMW met its pledge for the year. Membership in the UMW at Pleasant Grove is now down to 43 members and this is an area we need to see improve. The successful bake sale on UMW Sunday in November allowed us to send donations to three organizations we support (Red Bird Mission, UMAR, and Crossnore Children’s Home). Locally we gave donations to the Lord’s Fund here at Pleasant Grove and to Oak Grove UMC Food Pantry. And, as a new way of reaching out to those in need, we were able to send a donation to the Kentucky Tornado Relief Fund.



In early January Circle #3 met and made plans for the year. Hopefully, with Covid still causing interruptions, these monthly meetings can be held as scheduled. The February meeting for Circle #3 will have Pastor Byron as guest speaker and in March, Jeannie Upton will do the “Call to Pray and Self-Denial” program for both Circles. Circle #6 has yet to meet this year but plans to do so by March.

Circle #6 wants to thank the church family for their support of our annual Country Ham Sale Fundraiser. The Circle was able to sell 124 packs of ham for a total profit of \$310. These funds will now be dispersed to local, regional, and global efforts to extend the Love of Christ to His children everywhere! Thanks again, Church, for helping us make a difference in the world!!!



The invitation to join one of the Circles is always open. Just make a note that the second Tuesday of each month is Circle meeting day. Circle #3 meets at 2 PM in the Fellowship Hall and Circle #6 meets at 6 PM, either in the Fellowship Hall or on Zoom. We really look forward to having you come join us as we minister to one another and bless others with the love that Christ has so freely given to us!



After-School Care Post

The After School Care staff hopes that everyone had a wonderful start to a fabulous New Year! Everything at After School is going well. The students have made penguins and snowmen...quite fitting for this past month, wouldn't you say? We did have a beautiful snow and were all so excited to see it!!! But as is usually the case here in Charlotte, the snow was followed by ice and school closings. What is not so usual for us here in the piedmont of North Carolina, is that the first storm was followed by a second storm, just a week later!!! These weather events have certainly kept us on our toes. Because our students have the capability to switch to remote learning when needed, we will only have one make-up day for Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools.



We want to extend a very special thank you to the church members who cleared our parking lot. This act of love and caring allowed us to get back to the business of serving our families in a timely manner. As of this printing, we have an enrollment of 18 students from 14 different families. These families rely on our ministry, and we are glad to be used by God in this way.

As we look forward to February, we will participate in the fun that surrounds Valentines Day and will observe President's Day with the knowledge of all that we have for which to be thankful! We do hope that everyone will stay warm and safe in these waning days of winter!!!



Did You Know???



...that we aren't the only United Methodist Church reaching out to our homeless neighbors with the love of Christ? Of course, you did! But we thought we would highlight two other UM congregations who are stepping up to help in a new and different way.

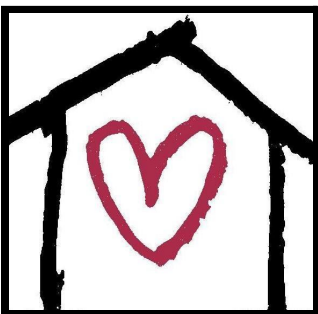
On Saturday, January 15th, two Louisville, Kentucky churches teamed up to hand out about seventy backpack kits to the homeless. These kits had been assembled by Kentucky Annual Conference staff as a Christmas-season service project. The two churches, Fourth Avenue UMC and St. Paul UMC, also had about three dozen blankets for distribution. These much-needed items were given out as part of Fourth

Avenue's Open Door Ministry and St. Paul's Resource Center, which have teamed up as ministry partners during the Covid-19 pandemic. The kits included socks and gloves, hand-warmers and winter hats, toothbrushes and toothpaste, small first aid kits, wipes, hand sanitizer, and face masks.

Before the pandemic, St. Paul offered a weekly Resource Center, providing a hot meal, clothing, showers, bus tickets, and other essentials. When the pandemic hit, they were forced to cease that offering. The actual event had to come to a halt, but the generosity of their congregation continued to exist and even flourish. In response to this generosity and the trying times, the church decided to pivot and take the ministry on the road. In June of 2021, Fourth Avenue set up a monthly event on the sidewalk at the church. This well-received regular event occurred out-of-doors until December, when the weather necessitated moving indoors.



Open Door began in 1990 with a focus on nutrition and healthcare. It goes well with Fourth Avenue's mission of "sharing the love of God in the heart of the city." When you combine these two ministries with the efforts of the Annual Conference Staff on mission, you get a beautiful outcome...blankets in the hands of those who are cold, food in the bellies of the hungry, hygiene items for those living without such creature comforts, and warm clothing on the bodies of those who are cold.



During February, as you pack a "Fresh Start Kit" for Roof Above right here in Charlotte, please remember to pray for the individual who will receive your kit. But also remember to pray for the homeless in Louisville, Kentucky and across our nation as United Methodist congregations reach out to them with love and compassion.

(The content of this article was written by Alan Wild and first appeared on the United Methodist website on January 17th, 2022.)

Blessing Others as We Have Been Blessed!!!

Isn't it just awesome to have the desire to serve, the ability to serve, and the opportunity to serve? The answer to that question is a resounding, "YES!!!" And here at Pleasant Grove we embrace every chance we get to pass God's blessings onto others!

The beginning of a new year always feels like a fresh start! And everyone who has decided to make a change in their life deserves a fresh start! From now through the end of February, we are going to assist some folks with their fresh start.

Pleasant Grove is partnering with **Roof Above** in Charlotte to collect completed "Fresh Start Kits." These kits include the basics for someone who has qualified for transitional housing but hasn't yet secured a job. The items in these kits are essential for successfully moving a person from a life on the streets to a life with housing, safety, cleanliness, and pride.

The process is quite simple. Shop for the kit items. Bring them to the sanctuary. Place all items in one of the boxes. Fold the flaps down to close the top. Then, pray for the person who will be receiving your box. You can pack one of these kits for around \$25. It might be fun to shop together with your family for the kit. Or you could team up with a friend or neighbor to accomplish this. A Sunday school class could pack several together. We just want to impact as many lives as we can with the love of Christ. Thanks for being the hands and feet of Jesus in a world that needs to see Him at work! God has so abundantly blessed us...we can't help but pass those blessings on to others!!!

Kit Items: *(Incomplete kits cannot be accepted.)*

- Dish Detergent (one large bottle or two small bottles)
- Laundry Detergent (at least 32 ounces)
- Multi-Purpose Cleaner
- Floor Cleaner
- Bar Soap
- Toothpaste and Toothbrush
- Trash Bags (at least 30 gallon)
- Toilet Tissue (8-10 rolls)
- Paper Towels (2 rolls)
- Shampoo

ROOF ABOVE

Working together to end homelessness

Oak Grove Food Pantry Needs Our Help



One of the many beautiful partnerships that Pleasant Grove is a part of is the regular support of the food pantry at Oak Grove United Methodist Church. This is an ongoing, day-to-day, regular as clockwork, never-ending partnership. Because it is an on-going partnership, it can sometimes get lost in the shuffle of being one of our many outreach efforts. We want to remind you that we have donation bins in our sanctuary and office buildings to receive your donations to the food pantry. You can bring any shelf-stable, non-perishable food item to these donation bins and

we will make sure that it gets to Oak Grove. Just remember, quality over quantity! We are called to give our best! Not our leftover, out of date pantry items. One good test of this guiding principle is if you would serve it to your family. If so, it is probably a good bet for other families as well. So, tie a string around your finger, write this donation opportunity on your calendar, or call and remind your good friends that it is time to donate! Whatever it takes, let's get behind this opportunity and give to others straight from our hearts!!!



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

Look at Where the PG Travelers Have Been!!!

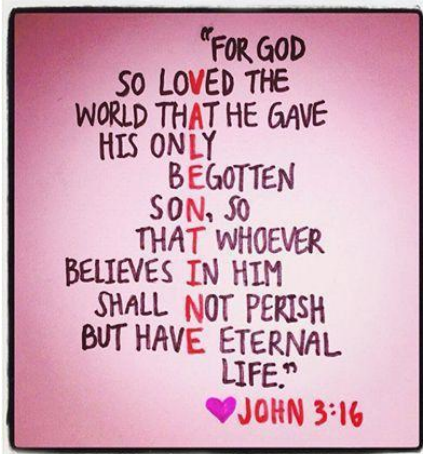


In December, the PG Travelers enjoyed a day in Asheville, NC. We visited the NC Regional Farmer's Market, took in the National Gingerbread Competition entries at the Grove Park Inn, and enjoyed a great meal together at The Moose Café. We enjoyed all these stops while traveling on a chartered bus and just reveling at being together. This trip really put us in the holiday spirit and was just what our spirits needed!

What a beautiful day in the life of the church!



Happy Valentine's Day to Our Church Family!!!



During this time of expressing our love to one another, let us not forget that we have all been given an amazing gift from our Father above. He has blessed us with His love, even as we don't deserve it, and He has given us the ability to pass that love onto others. So, while the sweet cards hit the racks, the boxes of candy make their appearance in the stores, and the bouquets of flowers spring up by the check out lines, let's be sure to express our love and gratitude to God for loving us first, and then, let's make sure that others also know of God's love for them!!!
Happy Valentine's Day!



LUNCH TIME

PG Prayer Lunch

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

Thursdays - 11:30 AM - The Stockyard



Dear Church Family,
Thank you for the deli tray you provided for us. Your kindness and thoughtfulness meant so much to us.
Love,
The Family of Foy Phillips

Thank you so much for providing the wonderful deli tray in recognition of the passing of our father. Jeff was blessed to have a caring church family. He is now with our Lord and Savior.
Love,
The Handy Family



The church family extends our deepest sympathy to...

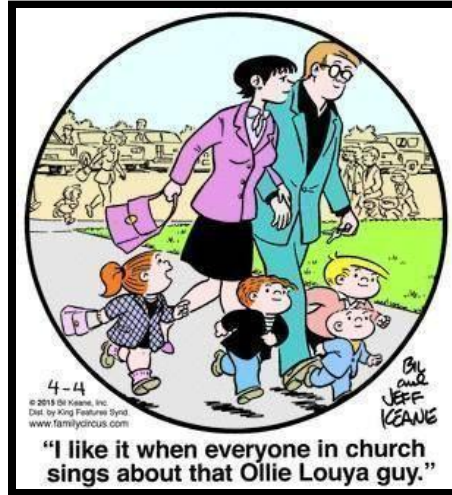
The Hiram (Jeff) Handy Family on the death of Jeff.

The Foy Lee Phillips Family on the death of Foy Lee.

The Glen Reynolds Family on the death of Glen.

Mary Usher and Family on the death of Mary's Mother, Iola Burns Winesett.

Just For Giggles!!!



Love Word Search

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Find the hidden words.



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

Is **PATIENT**

Is **KIND**

Is Not **JEALOUS**

Does Not **BRAG**

Is Not **ARROGANT**

Does Not Act **UNBECOMINGLY**

Does Not Seek Its **OWN**

Is Not **PROVOKED**

Does Not Take Into Account A
Wrong **SUFFERED**

Does Not Rejoice In
UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

REJOICES With The Truth

BEARS All Things

BELIEVES All Things

HOPES All Things

ENDURES All Things