



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

To begin with, Happy 4th of July this month! Celebrate your freedom with your family and friends this holiday period! We usually do this with Swim parties, barbecues, and such out in the backyard. But please be safe! There are many deaths during this period from people overextending their drinking and driving. Barbecues-I love a good barbecue! I usually eat until I believe I will never be hungry again! But you and I know that I will again soon! Over in the Book of John, Jesus had something to say about food!

He said, **"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."** Now bread is wonderful, and one can live on bread and water for a long time. But Jesus says that He is the bread of life. But now the problem is how can we eat Him if He is the bread of life? He has already died, rose again and sits in heaven on the right side of God, how can we eat Him? It is not easy is it? But to make things even more difficult, He goes on, **"Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you."** Almost sounds like He wants us to be cannibals, doesn't it? Can you imagine someone outside the Christian faith hearing us talking about eating His flesh and drinking His blood? What would they think of this religion? A bunch of cannibals, that is what they are! Just a bunch of cannibals!

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But you and I know that we can eat His flesh in two ways. We can meditate in God's Word, that is one way to eat His flesh. The other way is to partake of the bread during Communion. Jesus said, **"This is my body which is broken for you."** We also know that we can "drink of His blood" by partaking of the Cup during Holy Communion. John Wesley taught that eating the bread and drinking the wine during Communion brought Jesus into our souls. If you think about it, that is correct according to the Scriptures. We are eating His flesh and drinking His blood, and we are remembering Him as He asked us to do. This is for all true Christian believers!

Over in John 6:37 Jesus reminds us that anyone who comes to Him will never be driven away! He is not like us. Anyone who is different from us, a different culture, a different outlook on life, looks different, smells different, we want nothing to do with. If they come to us, we will move over or move on not to be in their presence. But Jesus will not! He will never leave nor forsake them either! Many of us have been treated very shabbily at times in our lives. People were pushing us off, turning their backs on us, taking things from us that we had worked hard to earn, and saying bad things about us behind our backs. But not Jesus! Jesus was right there with us through our hard times! Whether we bathed, whether we agreed with some church's theology, or whether we could speak His language, He was always there with us. He never leaves nor forsakes us because He loves us!

We need to remember that Jesus was wounded and bruised for the healing of our bodies, and He spilled His precious blood for the payment of our sins! It is in the eating of the bread, remembering the punishment upon His body, and in the drinking of the cup, remembering He was paying for our sins, that we truly eat of His flesh and drink of His blood. Jesus, during the Last Supper, told His disciples to do this, and we have made it one of our Sacraments. I would have you to remember this also: when we eat of this bread and drink of this cup, we are covenanting together and are saying to one another, "Things are right between us, and we are members of the one family, God's family!"

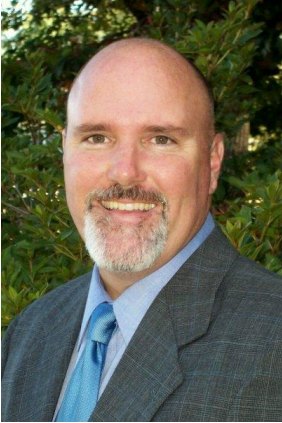
Go in peace and remember who you are and whose you are!

Brother Phil



From the Pastor's Desk

WHAT'S HOLDING YOU BACK?



Shortly after returning home from World War II, a fellow named Earl decided to buy a television set. He went to the store and asked for a demonstration. He was impressed, but decided to postpone the purchase — it was a little too expensive. A couple of years later Earl reconsidered buying a TV, but again decided against it — there weren't enough stations in his city offering sufficient variety. Later when his city was the home of several new stations, he considered getting a TV but didn't — he heard that in a couple of years color television would be available. So, he waited. Then he heard vacuum tubes would be replaced with solid-state. So, he waited a little longer.

You've probably detected a pattern by now. Finally, Earl's wife said, "I've waited long enough! Go to the appliance store today and don't come home without a television."

At last Earl was going to buy a TV. Just as the salesman was saying, "Cash or credit?" Earl began telling his story. He said, "You know, I've never owned a TV before. I can't wait to get my TV set home because there is a show I've always wanted to watch: *Gunsmoke*." The salesman said, "Uh, Earl, I've got bad news for you. *Gunsmoke* was canceled in 1970." Earl stared at the man in disbelief. "They canceled *Gunsmoke*? Then forget it. I'm not buying this TV."

Some people spend their lives just like Earl. They know what they want out of life, or at least they've got a pretty good idea, but they just can't bring themselves to do anything about it. I frequently see people who are unhappy, and their condition seems terminal — they live unhappy and they die unhappy — yet they refuse to do anything about it. My question for them is, "What's holding you back? Why are you unwilling to change the things in your life that aren't working?" Of course, you know what the answer is: It's fear. Fear of failure. What if things don't work out? What if I buy the TV and it breaks down, or I can't make the payments, or a better one comes along? It is fear of failure that holds us back and prevents us from experiencing the kind of fulfillment in life that God wants us to have.

God created us to live life in one direction: forward. We were not made with a neutral or reverse. Yet, in spite of the fact that God wants the best for us, many people feel there's something holding them back, preventing them from experiencing fulfillment in life.

David knew about being held back by fear. He was king of Judah, but we must remember that he was not born a king. He was born a shepherd boy. He wasn't groomed to lead a nation of people; he was groomed to watch sheep. He was still very young when he found himself facing challenges and problems greater than anyone in his family had ever faced. In the Psalms we discover that there were times when David was absolutely paralyzed by fear. However, David learned to overcome his fear and to this day he is known as Israel's greatest leader. Let me ask you a question. If you could try anything and guarantee the results, what would it be? If failure wasn't a possibility, what would you attempt to do?

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Would you choose a new career...start your own business...get married...have children...go back to university...take dancing lessons...become a missionary...get serious about your relationship with God? If you could guarantee results on anything at all, what would it be? Now let me ask you another question: What's holding you back from trying it anyway? Is it the fear of failure?

More than anything else, the fear of failure prevents people from realizing the fullness of their potential.

If you find yourself afraid to move forward in life because of the fear of failure, I've got good news for you. It doesn't have to be that way. King David had the very same problem, and he overcame his fears. In **Psalm 66:1-9**, he shows us how we can eliminate this fear from our lives. Get your Bible out and read this Psalm. Find comfort in His Word.

*Christ above all,
Pastor Byron*

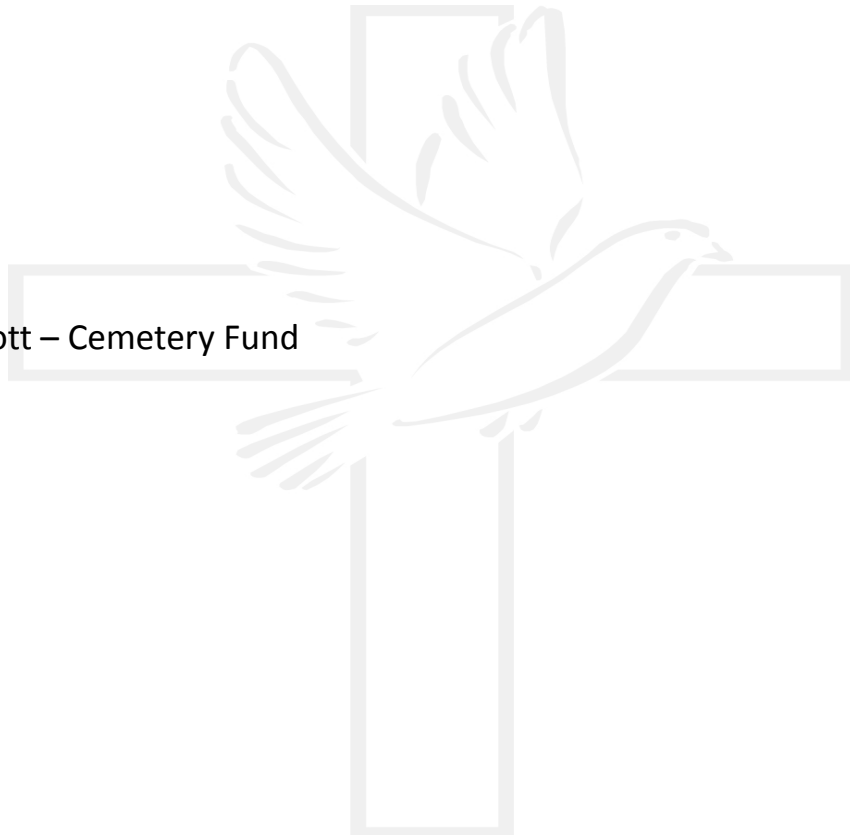


THE FOLLOWING GIFTS WERE MADE TO THE CHURCH IN MEMORY OR IN HONOR OF:

IN MEMORY

Judy Watts

Rick and Lynda Elliott – Cemetery Fund





The Recipe Box

It's summertime and we all would enjoy a light and refreshing dessert, wouldn't we? Well, we have just the thing for your 4th of July gathering or really any summer gathering...and remember, a gathering can happen with just a couple of people sharing a treat together!!!

This recipe for a **Patriotic Berry Cake** originally appeared on the website thebestcakerecipes.com and had the baker making white cake layers from scratch. And you can certainly do that if you wish! But who wants to spend lots of time in the kitchen when the same outcome can be achieved with a simpler approach? Don't think of this as a "dummied down" recipe...instead, think of it as a smarter way to impress your guests!!! Using strawberries, blueberries, and Cool Whip, along with three white cake layers, this recipe is light, simple, patriotic, and delicious too!! We hope you will enjoy making, and eating this cake with friends and family...if you are in the mood to share!!!



Patriotic Berry Cake

1 white cake mix (plus ingredients called for on the box)
 1 large container of Cool Whip
 A few fresh strawberries and blueberries for garnish
For the strawberry filling:
 6 ounces frozen unsweetened strawberries divided (about 1 ¼ cups total)
 1/3 cup granulated sugar
 ¼ cup water plus 1 Tablespoon of water
 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

1 Tablespoon cornstarch
 ½ Tablespoon butter
For the blueberry filling:
 6 ounces frozen blueberries divided (about 1 ¼ cups total)
 1/3 cup sugar
 ¼ cup water plus 1 Tablespoon of water
 1 Tablespoon cornstarch
 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
 ½ Tablespoon butter

Bake the white cake mix according to package directions, making three round layers. Allow to cool completely.

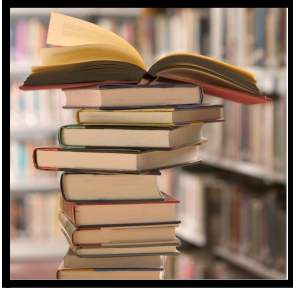
Make the strawberry filling:

In a saucepan, over medium heat, stir together ¾ cups strawberries, sugar, and ¼ cup water until the sugar is dissolved. Heat the mixture to boiling, stirring often. Reduce heat and add the vanilla. In a small cup, combine the cornstarch with the tablespoon of water. Mix well. Pour this into the boiling strawberry mixture. Stir and boil over medium-low heat for 3-4 minutes or until the mixture has thickened a bit. Remove pan from heat. Add ½ tablespoon of butter and mix until the butter has completely melted. Allow mixture to cool for 15 minutes, then add the last of the strawberries and stir to mix. Refrigerate the filling until you assemble the cake.

Repeat the steps above with the blueberries to make the blueberry filling.

To assemble the cake, place a layer on your cake plate. Spread a thin layer of Cool Whip over it. Use a slotted spoon to spoon the strawberry filling on the layer. Allow some of the liquid to drip off the fruit before placing it on the cake. You may have some leftover...that's okay...it's delicious on ice cream! Place a second layer on top. Spread a thin layer of Cool Whip on the second layer. Add the blueberry filling to the stack in the same way you did the strawberries. Place the third layer on top. Frost the entire outside of the cake with the Cool Whip. Garnish with fresh blueberries and strawberries if desired. Serve this cake the same day you prepare it. Store in the refrigerator until ready to serve. Beautiful before and after you slice it!!! Enjoy!!!

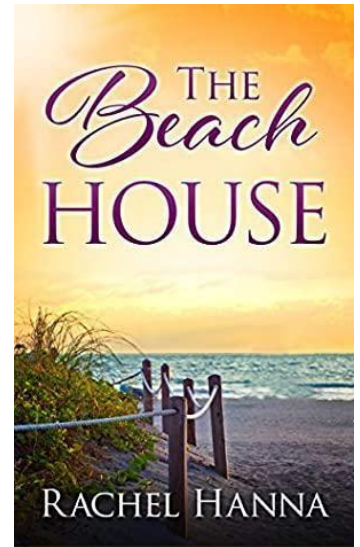
Recommended Reading



It's that time of year when some of us are looking for that perfect little book to take to the beach or the lake or the back porch. We don't want anything too involved...that requires a ton of thinking. We just want to enjoy the read, be entertained, and be able to finish the book pretty quickly. The Beach House by Rachel Hanna fits the bill to be sure!!! (Sorry guys...this one is probably just for the gals!!!)

The main character of our book, Julie, had been married to her husband for twenty-one years, and they were getting ready to live the dream...buy a house at the beach and live there full-time. What Julie didn't know was that her husband had been living a double life. This ended their marriage and forced Julie to start all over again at the age of 43. Faced with this new reality, Julie decides to go ahead and live her dream. She will rebuild her life on an island off the coast of South Carolina and learn to be the strong, independent woman that she hopes she can be.

But as is the case with life's twists and turns, the unexpected happens and must become a part of the new plan. Julie isn't expecting to be thrown together with her estranged sister, the flower child, yoga teaching, bane of her existence. She doesn't expect to meet a handsome stranger who will help her rehab her money pit of a house into the home of her dreams. She never dreamed that she would meet someone like Dixie, the epitome of Southern charm, wit, and toughness; and that Dixie would become one of her dearest friends and her true champion. And she doesn't expect to fall in love with the wild, marshy, beautiful place that she now calls home. As the life she wants begins to come into focus, her soon-to-be-ex-husband throws a wrench in her plans once again. Will she be forced to help the man that broke her heart? Or will she finally be able to break away from her past and live life on her own terms?



We think you will love The Beach House. It is actually the first book in the *South Carolina Sunsets* series by Rachel Hanna. So, you might even want to continue reading in the series as summer goes along. The story isn't a hard one to unravel but the cast of characters is certainly engaging. You will probably think of someone you know that seems to mirror a couple of these folks. Some are kind. Some are confused. Some are quirky. But they will all find a way into your mind and into your heart. So, pick this one up and take it with you on a summer adventure. It's available on Amazon and in our very own Lending Library in the family life center at Pleasant Grove. Happy Reading!!!



Scripture of the Month

Hey church family!

As many of you know I have been hard at work attending Seminary lately and one of my assignments was to perform cultural research on a church of my choosing. Of course I did Pleasant Grove and was able to interview, observe, and research in order to come to know the heart of this church better. Below is a short excerpt from my final paper about the calling of Pleasant Grove that I hope you find edifying:

Over 130 years ago a small body of believers came together to worship in a home within a small community in Northwest Charlotte. This wasn't a church plant strategically placed, it was a small group of people who wanted to come together and support one another as a Christian community. That desire brought more and more people together until they had to expand enough to build a larger permanent building somewhere that it could be at the very heart of this community. Where Pleasant Grove was built was financed by land donations and numerous church members putting their own money on the line because it was a cause important enough to them. Built so it could be a place of refuge, a place of support, a place of belonging where all who live within Oakdale could find a place to belong. Matthew 5:14-16 are the Bible verses that I feel most exemplify Pleasant Grove UMC: **"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."** Pleasant Grove was built to be a light within the community and is best at serving that mission.

~Colin Winslette



News from United Women in Faith



United
Women
in Faith

The July meeting of United Women in Faith at Pleasant Grove will be a covered dish supper in the Fellowship Hall on Tuesday, July 12th. We would like for everyone to plan to be there at 5:15 so that we can begin our meal at 5:30. Members of both Circles are encouraged to attend this if at all possible. Jo Boyd, Spiritual Person Chairperson for the United Women in Faith, Metro District, will be our guest. She will be giving our devotional and also share a few words about up-and-coming District

events. Martha Honeycutt will be providing some beautiful harp music for us as well. Let's all make this meeting a priority.

The Metro District Annual Meeting will be on Saturday, August 27th, in Harrisburg. There will be more information about this meeting at our July meeting. There is a registration form that will need to be sent in. It would be awesome if Pleasant Grove could be represented by having several of our members in attendance.

Membership in our unit of United Women in Faith is always open to anyone who would like to be a part of this fabulous organization. We would love to have some new faces amongst us as we seek to serve at Pleasant Grove, in our community, and throughout the world. You are needed!!!

We believe
love in action
can change
the world.



Our Lending Library is Here for You!!!



Don't forget that Pleasant Grove has its own lending library! If you are looking for a good read...something that will inspire, inform, entertain, or help you along on your walk with the Lord...then we just may have what you need. We are located in the Gathering Room of the Family Life Center. Simply choose your title, take it home, enjoy it, and return it for others. Simple, isn't it? The books await. Let's get reading!!!

Save the Date

The Pleasant Grove family has a very exciting evening coming up on Wednesday, September 28th! And we want you to be here with us!!! So, save the date!

We are calling this fun time together “Dinner with Andy” and that’s exactly what it is. We will have a catered dinner with Andy Lambert. Andy is a retired UMC pastor. He is an evangelist and a former stand-up comedian. Andy loves to re-tale Biblical stories with a humorous slant. The meal and entertainment will be provided by the church, but donations will be accepted at the door to help offset the cost. You are asked to call the church office to make your reservations as we need to make sure that we order enough food for everyone. This event is open to all...church members, their friends and family, and anyone from our community. Church members are asked to bring a dessert to share with the entire gathering.

This is one fun night that you do not want to miss. Go ahead and mark your calendar, invite your friends and family, and let us know that you are coming. We can’t wait to see you for “Dinner with Andy.”



**Dinner
with
Andy**



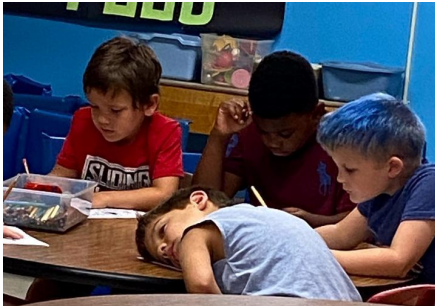
*Join us for a night of laughter
and BBQ. Donations at the
door.*

Sept. 28th at 6 PM



1915 Oakdale Rd.
Charlotte, NC
RSVP to: 704-392-2387

Summer Camp Post



Well, school is out and summer camp has begun! We have been playing in the gym and just having fun with different activities inside. They are such a great group of students and they get along with each other really well. Our field trips were set to begin on June 21st. However, some may be canceled due to a lifeguard staffing shortage at the pool that we usually enjoy. We hope that we won't need to miss many of our pool days!!! But we will make sure that the kids are kept busy with plenty of fun and interesting activities at the church. The children have already made Father's Day cards, colored flags for Flag Day, and painted beautiful butterflies together. Along with these activities the kids just love playing together and we will do plenty of that!!! Independence Day comes up very early this month and we will do lots of fun things that center on patriotism, freedom, and how grateful we should all be to live in the greatest country on the globe! We have a couple of new employees this summer so that everyone can go on their family vacations without stretching us too thin. We are very blessed with both our current staff and the great group of kids that has come our way this summer!!!



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

Happy 4th of July!!! Celebrate and Remember our Freedoms!!!

On Monday, July 4th, we will observe that one day each year when we, as a nation, take time to celebrate our independence and our freedoms. Unfortunately, many people just see this day as a convenient time to head to the beach or the lake or the pool. Many will fire up the grill and enjoy the “All-American meal” of hot dogs and hamburgers. Fireworks shows will be available, either in-person or on television. And lots of folks will decorate their yards and will even be wearing the traditional red, white, and blue!



But, how many of us will truly take the time to consider what it means to live in a country with so many freedoms? How many will think of all of the sacrifices that have made those freedoms possible? How many will consider the war going on between Ukraine and Russia and realize that peace is not a given and that in a global society we are all vulnerable to the powerful and aggressive characteristics of other nations?

So, this year, while we are enjoying parades and cookouts, fireworks and flag-waving, take a few minutes to pause, think about what has gone into the making of America, and thank God for His grace,

mercy, and love and for His guidance and protection of our dear country. Then, continue to pray for His hand to be on us as we move forward and live into the future that He has prepared for us. It is with grateful hearts and with the knowledge of God’s blessing that The United States of America will continue to be the greatest nation in the world!

God Bless America!!! Today and every day!!!





We recently partnered with Oakdale Elementary School to collect canned goods and non-perishable food items for the Oak Grove Food Pantry. The collected items were delivered to the food pantry and then a representative from the pantry stopped by the church office to offer their heartfelt thanks for that donation. His comments included the following:

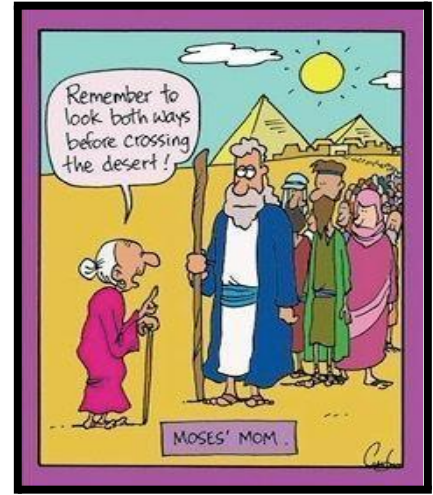
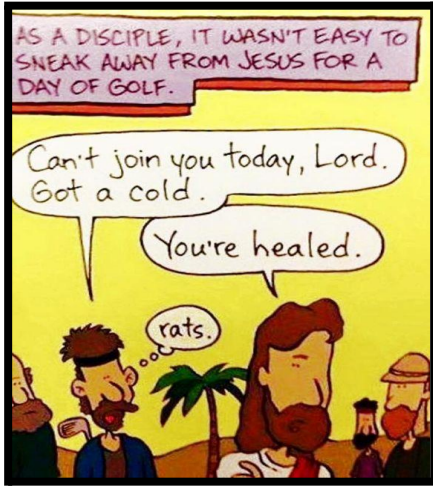
"Our shelves had gotten very bare. We were overwhelmed. THANK YOU!"



The Church Family extends our deepest sympathies to:

Phyllis Vanhoy on the passing of her husband, Herby.
Tim, Cara, and Hayley Vanhoy on the passing of Tim's father, Herby.

Just For Giggles!!!



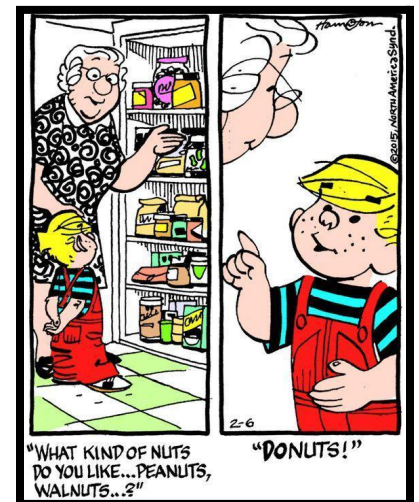
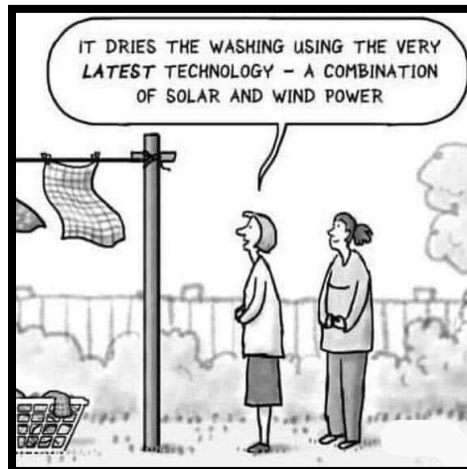
Who was the greatest investor in the Bible?

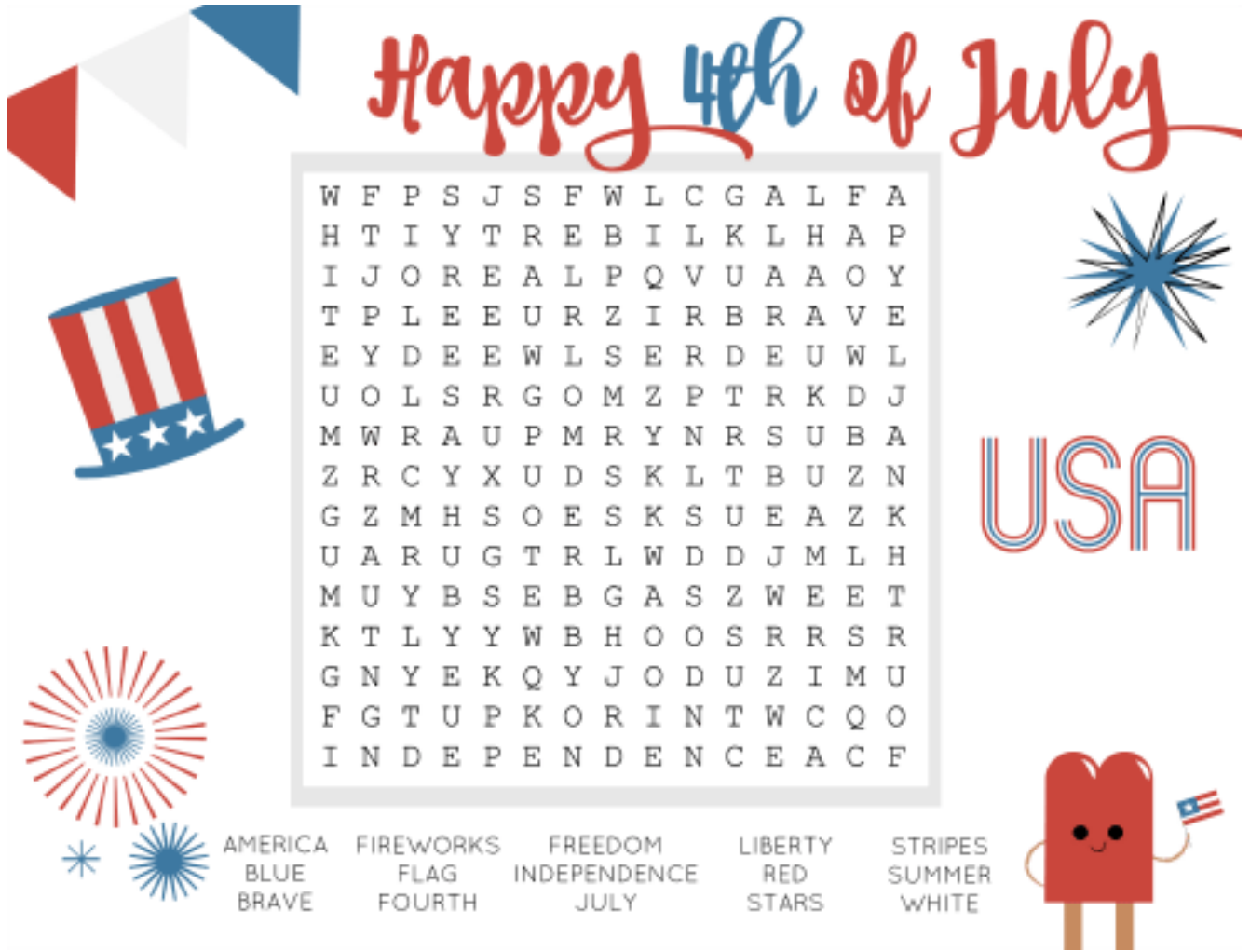
NOAH, HE WAS FLOATING HIS STOCK WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WAS IN LIQUIDATION.



Two things to make your day better

- 1. Do not watch the news.**
- 2. Stay off the bathroom scales.**





Happy 4th of July

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

AMERICA
BLUE
BRAVE

FIREWORKS
FLAG
FOURTH

FREEDOM
INDEPENDENCE
JULY

LIBERTY
RED
STARS

STRIPES
SUMMER
WHITE