



# Pleasant News

## Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church

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### **WORSHIP TIMES:**

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

### **CONTACT US:**

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## INSPIRATION POINT

**Arise, shine, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee.**

----Isaiah 60: 1, 2----

These are dark times for the whole earth! Sin and debauchery cover the world! The minds of all the people have turned from the worship of the Lord, our God to "what ever seems right in their own eyes!" It is okay to lust after someone and then break into their homes at night and commit sexual assault on them! It is okay to drive by some one's home and fire shots into it, never mind the children there nor the fact that with the materials the house is constructed of is so thin that a bullet can enter the front and travel through the house and go out the back! If you don't have enough money, go rob someone! Racial prejudice is everywhere, and it is so deeply ingrained that most cannot tell!

How did we get that way, and what can we do about it? First of all, we have gotten away from God's Word! We have filled our minds with everything of the world, and have neglected our time with the Lord! We do not read our Bibles, we do not pray, and even if we do, we have long since arrived at the conclusion that there is no power in that, and it never works for us anyway, so why bother! Our society has convinced us that we need to "go along in order to get along!"

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If you take a stand against something that some are doing and society accepts as okay, you are narrow minded and judgmental! You are the problem! But if you do not take a stand and accept their actions as acceptable, then you lose the power of the Holy Spirit in your life! Folks, if the Bible says that something is a sin 2000 years ago, then it still is a sin today! Even if the law says it right! The Bible tells us that God says, "I am the Lord your God and I change not!"

These are the last days my friend! The Bible tells us that in the last days, spirits of deception will be poured out across the earth! They are here! Most people have no defense against them because they have no true standard for right and wrong! We get that from the Bible! Today most folks have a Bible or even two or three, but they have never studied it! They do not know what is in it! There is a story that has been around a long time about a college teacher who was questioning a Christian student about his belief in God. He stated that you can read all sorts of things in the Bible, and parts contradict other parts. How can you believe in that? The student replied, " The Bible is God's letter to Christians, and if you cannot understand it, obviously you have been reading some one else's mail!" We need the help of the Holy Spirit to understand the Bible! You get the Holy Spirit when you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior! Perhaps the reason some of us can not get into true Christianity is because we never truly made Jesus Christ the Lord of our lives! You can not tell others about Jesus if you do not know Him personally yourself! Think about it!

*Brother Phil*



## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

### **GIVING YOUR ALL TWO BITS AT A TIME**



Are you fully devoted to Christ? You call yourself a "Christian" but how does that play out in the ethics of how you choose to live, work, speak, and play? You say, "but I'm a member at "such & such" church." But how often are you involved in the weekly life and ministries of your church?

Yes, these are pointed questions, but sometimes we need to be honest with ourselves and look in the mirror and self-reflect about our spiritual standing with Jesus Christ. A day is coming, either sooner or later, when all of us will stand face to face with our Creator and He will say either, "Welcome home good and faithful servant" or "I never knew you". Then off to one of two eternities we will go.

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So, what does it mean to fully give your life to the Lord? Maybe the following might help answer this question.

*Here's an adapted, paraphrased version of an illustration The Rev. Fred Craddock often used to explain what it means to give your life fully to Christ.*

We think giving our all to the Lord is like dropping a one-thousand-dollar bill in the offering plate, as if to say: "Here's my life, Lord. I'm giving it all."



The reality is that it's more like the Lord sending us to the bank and having us exchange the \$1000 bill for four thousand quarters. And then we go through life giving away twenty-five cents here and fifty cents there, in His service.

Like when we help a neighbor in need. Or minister to someone who is lonely. Or offer a word of encouragement. Or prepare a meal for a friend. Or serve on a committee at church.

Giving your all to God isn't as flashy as one might think. It's done in all these little acts of love, twenty-five cents at a time. It would be comparatively easy to go out in a flash of glory. Much harder it is to live the Christian life little-by-little over the long haul, two-bits at a time.

***"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."  
(Matthew 25:40)***

*Christ above all,  
Pastor Byron*



## TWO METHODISMS

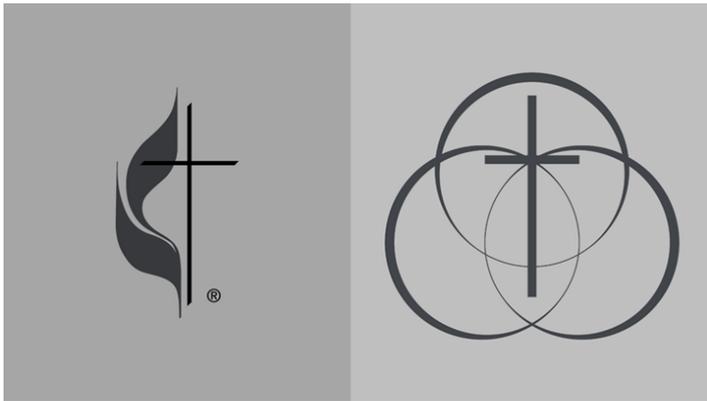
The United Methodist Church and how it is structured is at a crossroads. In August/September, 2022 there will be a General Conference of the United Methodist Church to decide how our denomination will go forward. Those decisions will affect us here at Pleasant Grove UMC.

Here is a good summary by someone who has actually read the new proposed structures and also knows the present structure well. - Pastor Byron

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## Two Methodisms: A Comparison Chart (v. 1.4) by Rev. Chris Ritter, May 2021



The Separation Protocol agreement announced in January 2020 creates options United Methodists will want to carefully consider. If the legislation is approved at the next General Conference (August/September 2022), annual conferences and congregations will be empowered to change affiliation without losing their properties or incurring significant exit costs. Separation has already begun with the exit of both traditionalist and

progressive congregations, but these exits tend to be expensive and contingent upon local negotiations. The Protocol is designed to open a wider door in the interest of peace and goodwill. The primary options for congregations will be (1) remaining in a post-separation United Methodist Church or (2) joining the new Global Methodist Church. Votes will happen first at the level of the annual conference. Congregations that disagree with the decision made by their annual conference may hold a church conference to consider a different affiliation.

Planning for the Global Methodist Church has been the work of the Wesleyan Covenant Association and a wider Transitional Leadership Council that includes some UM bishops. The vision for this new denomination supports more local control, less denominational bureaucracy, and classic Christian doctrine/ethics. Walter Fenton of WCA estimates that 3,000-5,000 congregations in the U.S. will join the GMC initially, with perhaps another 1,000 joining a bit later. These numbers include a handful of U.S. annual conferences that will take a 57%+ vote to opt into the new denomination. There will likely be significant numbers of United Methodists overseas joining the new connection, but this is impossible to calculate. It is fair to say the new denomination will be distinctly global.

So far, there are two competing visions for the future of the post-separation UMC. The first is an effort on the part of Progressives to shape the remaining institution around the concepts of intersectional justice. This is the “Out of Chaos... Creation” Group. The other vision is captured in a working document shared by a group of bishops that calls for a regionalized, theological “big tent.” This more recent proposal seems to be aimed at keeping Centrists and Traditionalists in the UMC. The post-separation United Methodist Church will go through an undetermined period of adjustment following separation. We can anticipate a decided shift in the Progressive direction. This will show up initially in terms of theological emphasis, marriage and sexuality standards, and advocacy for abortion rights. A proposed re-write of UM Social Principles provides a preview. District, annual conference, and jurisdictional maps eventually will need to be adjusted in light of the new demographic realities. There will also likely need to be further attempts to right-size the general agencies in light of separation and decline.

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Here is a simple chart that compares the two primary branches that will flow from approval of the Separation Protocol (should that happen at General Conference in August/September 2022). Information about the Global Methodist Church is based on the draft Book of Doctrines and Discipline. These provisions will not be enacted unless and until adopted by a convening General Conference (late 2023 or early 2024). In the meantime, the Global Methodist Church will be governed by the Transitional Discipline which is much closer to what we have today.

v. 1.4

**Post-Separation UMC**

**Global Methodist Church**

*General Conference, AC, District Structures?*

Yes. Annual conference and district boundaries likely will be adjusted in many locations following the separation.

Yes. Annual conference and district boundaries will be new in many places. General Conference will meet every two years while the church is organizing and every six years afterward.

*Boards and Agencies?*

Inherits the current 13 general boards and agencies.

New, leaner structure with a single connectional operations officer over all.

*Name?*

The United Methodist Church

The Global Methodist Church

*Trust Clause on Local Church Properties?*

Local church property held in trust for the annual conference.

Local church property owned by the local church.

*Global in Nature?*

Likely yes (U.S., Western Europe, parts of Philippines, and maybe Africa)

Likely yes (U.S., Eastern Europe, part of Philippines, and Africa). Some former UMC conferences in Latin America and Asia have indicated an interest in joining, too.

No

*Openly Non-celibate homosexual or Transgender Bishops and Clergy?*

Yes

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<i>Clergy Performing Same-Sex Weddings?</i>	Yes, if they so choose.	No
<i>Female Clergy at All Levels of Leadership?</i>	Yes	Yes
<i>Clergy Deployment</i>	Ordained clergy guaranteed an appointment by the bishop, and the local church guaranteed a pastor of the bishop's choosing- with consultation.	Collaborative appointment system where church lay leaders have a bigger voice in the appointment. No guaranteed appointments for clergy. Bishop must sign off on the selection made. Minority candidates must be considered.
<i>Ordination</i>	Elders and Deacons are separate orders. Commissioning is a step toward ordination in both orders. Many/most clergy are non-ordained, licensed local pastors with limited sacramental authority. Deacons do not have full sacramental authority.	[Note: This is a work in progress.] In an effort to restore the connection between ordination and the sacraments, there may be a return to the pre-1992 understanding that elders are first ordained deacons. Local pastors will be ordained as deacons. There will be permanent deacons and deacons on their way to becoming elders. Deacons have sacramental authority.
<i>Bishops</i>	Yes. Bishops for life (in the U.S). Selected by Jurisdictional/Central Conferences and paid by General Church.	Yes. Term-limited. Called by the annual conference from a list of candidates approved at General Conference.
<i>District Superintendents?</i>	Yes. Appointed by the bishop.	Presiding Elders (the historic term for DS's) may also serve a local church. They will be selected by the bishop from a nominated slate elected at a district conference. District size will be smaller.

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<i>Clergy Appointment Length?</i>	One year at a time.	Open-ended. The bishop's consent is required to declare a pulpit open.
<i>Clergy Pensions?</i>	Administered by Wespath	Administered by Wespath
<i>Apportionments?</i>	Yes	Yes, General Church apportionments will be about half of what is paid by a UMC congregation currently. Conference apportionments are up to each annual conference but encouraged to be lean.
<i>Position on Abortion</i>	Likely Nuanced Pro-Choice	"We believe that life is a holy gift of God whose beginnings and endings are set by God, and that it is the particular duty of believers to protect those who are powerless to protect themselves, including the unborn. We believe human life begins at conception and abortion ends a human life."
<i>Theology</i>	Pluralistic, flexible per "Our Theological Task," with articles and confession retained as historic markers.	Classic per the Methodist Articles of Faith and EUB Confession of Faith, but updated into a single document in today's vernacular (this work is to be done by a blue-ribbon commission created at the first Convening Conference).

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## “THE FOLLOWING GIFTS HAVE BEEN MADE IN MEMORY OR IN HONOR OF”

### **IN MEMORY**

#### **Paul Walker**

Anonymous - Backpack Buddies

#### **Carson Watts**

Jody Jessup and Michael Bledsoe

Jim and Nancy Brown

Darren and Robin Tinney - Lord's Fund

James and Donna Thompson

Anonymous - Backpack Buddies

#### **Brian Lynch**

Janet Brown

#### **Danny Wilson**

Terry Kelly

Tim and Terri Honeycutt

Disciples Sunday School Class

#### **Lorena Wilson**

Disciples Sunday School Class

#### **Billy Joe Edwards**

Disciples Sunday School Class

Terry Kelly

Tim and Terri Honeycutt

#### **Judy Oliff**

Disciples Sunday School Class

#### **Carolyn Earp**

Steve and Karen Dellinger

### **IN HONOR**

#### **Anna Therrell**

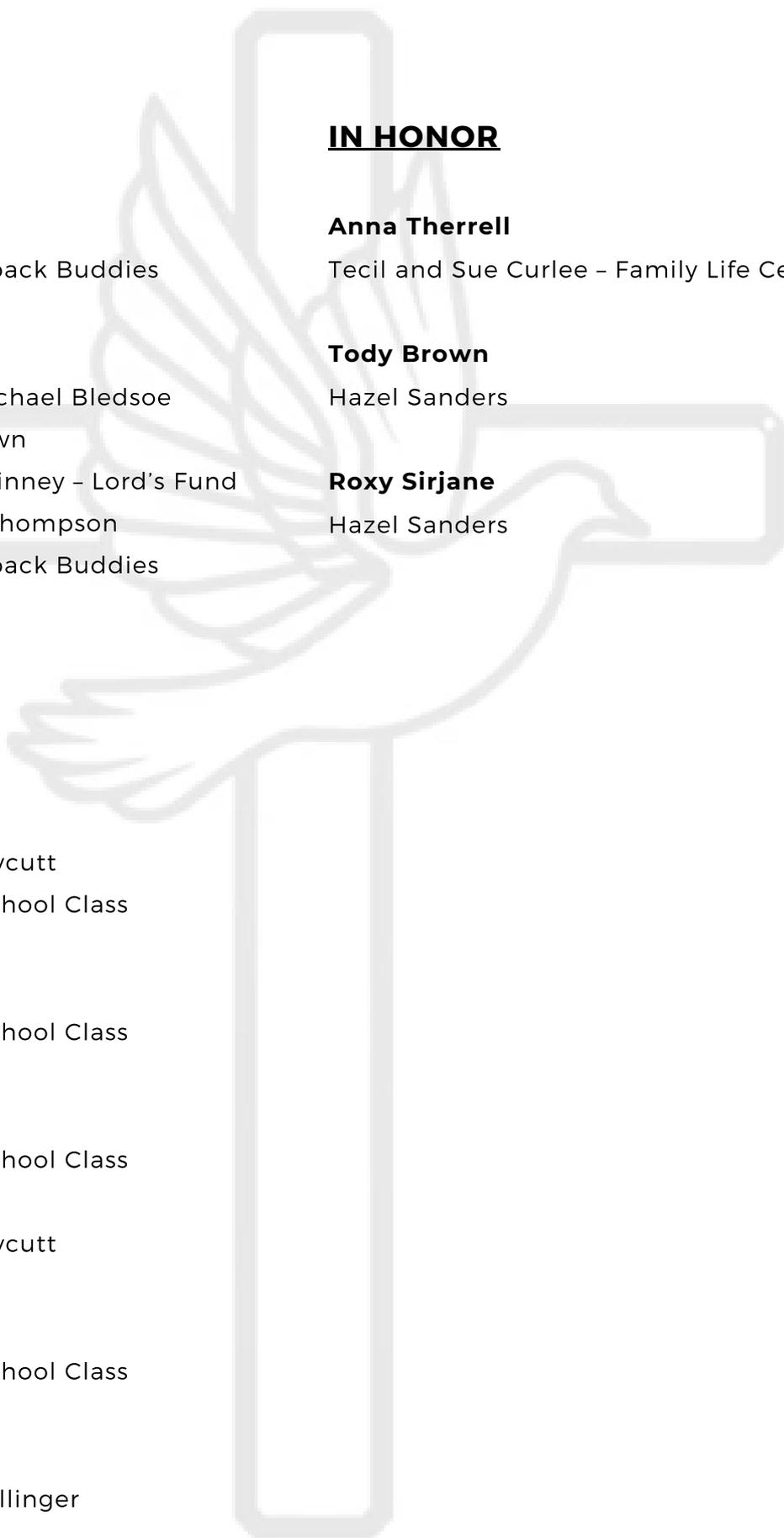
Tecil and Sue Curlee - Family Life Center

#### **Tody Brown**

Hazel Sanders

#### **Roxy Sirjane**

Hazel Sanders





## THE RECIPE BOX

Since summer officially begins later this month, we thought we would bring a new twist on a summertime favorite to The Recipe Box! We think just about everyone enjoys a glass of fresh lemonade on a hot summer's day. Can't you just about taste it when you think of that sweet and tart, ice cold lemonade? Can't you just see the water droplets slide down the glass as the lemonade meets the sultry summer day? Many of us probably think that there is no improving upon the fresh lemon juice, pure cane sugar, fresh cold water, and chunks of clear ice. But this recipe just might have you thinking otherwise. Sparkling Raspberry Lemonade is a refreshing bubbly summer drink made with fresh raspberries and lemons and sweetened with both sugar and honey. The recipe comes to us from the food blog Cooking Classy and we sure do hope you will enjoy both the making and the sipping of this new classic! And, if you do make it, we hope you will invite us over!!!

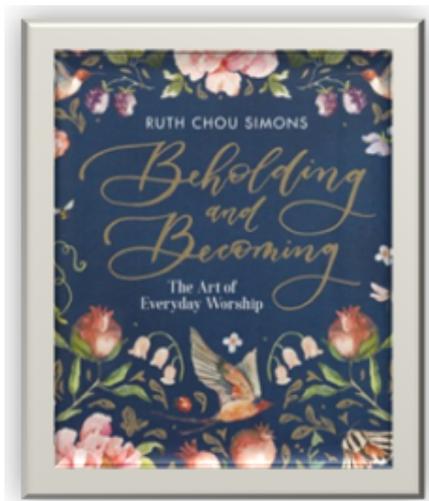
### **Sparkling Raspberry Lemonade**

12 oz. fresh raspberries  
1 cup fresh lemon juice, chilled (about 7 lemons)  
1 extra lemon (to be cut into wheels for garnish)  
½ cup cold water  
½ cup granulated sugar (or to taste)  
½ cup honey  
1 liter of sparkling water or club soda, chilled  
Fresh mint leaves (optional)



Place raspberries (reserving a few for garnish) in a food processor and pulse until well-pureed. Force raspberry puree through a fine mesh strainer into a bowl to remove the seeds. In a large pitcher whisk together the water and sugar until sugar has dissolved. Pour in honey and mix until blended. Stir in raspberry mixture and lemon juice. Pour in the sparkling water and stir once. Serve with ice, a fresh cut lemon wheel, and a whole fresh raspberry for garnish. Add a fresh mint leaf or two if desired. If you are making this fresh lemonade in advance, wait until you are ready to serve to stir in the sparkling water. Otherwise, it will lose its fizz before you and your guests can enjoy it!

## RECOMMENDED READING



For the month of June, we are going to recommend a beautiful book that will more than likely appeal to the ladies in our church family more than the men. But this volume, beautiful in its words and in its artwork, could be a source of inspiration for anyone! Jana Aleander brought [Beholding and Becoming](#), by Ruth Chou Simmons, to our attention as she shared from it at a recent United Methodist Women Circle meeting. Jana says that she has genuinely enjoyed using this book as a resource in her daily walk with the Lord and finds beauty, serenity, encouragement, and peace within its pages. We hope that after reading the following description and recommendation, you will take the time to look this book up and add it to your own storehouse of Christian discipleship materials.

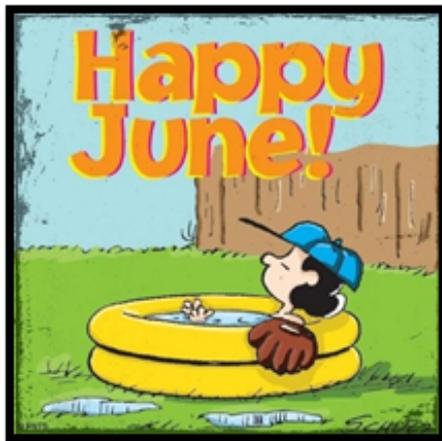
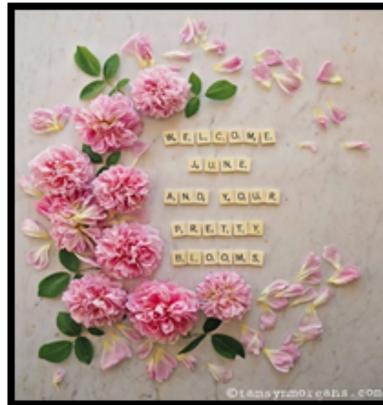
We are all in the process of becoming. Every day presents us with the opportunity to be molded and shaped by the very things that move our hearts, drive our thoughts, and capture our gaze. Where we direct our eyes and our hearts truly do matter in our day-to-day living. We become what we behold. And, when we set our hearts and minds on Christ and His story of redemption, right in the middle of our every day lives, we become increasingly like Him in both subtle and grand ways. Our becoming happens not just on Sunday, not just on holidays, not just during times of unbelievable hardship or unspeakable joy, but in the middle of our ordinary Tuesdays, or any other seemingly insignificant day. Today is an opportunity for God to demonstrate His faithfulness and love to us in the midst of our mundane. There is no situation, no time in our lives, which is too plain or too forgettable for Him to meet us right there in our worship. His transformative grace turns our “everyday ordinary” into a beautiful, holy place of becoming.

Bestselling author Ann Voskamp (The Broken Way and One Thousand Gifts) says of [Beholding and Becoming](#), “In a world battling for our eyes and attention, this is a deeply important book for our times. These pages are more than a feast for the eyes – they are direly needed manna for souls who want what fulfills...A masterpiece forming us more like our Master. Behold. Become. Be held.”

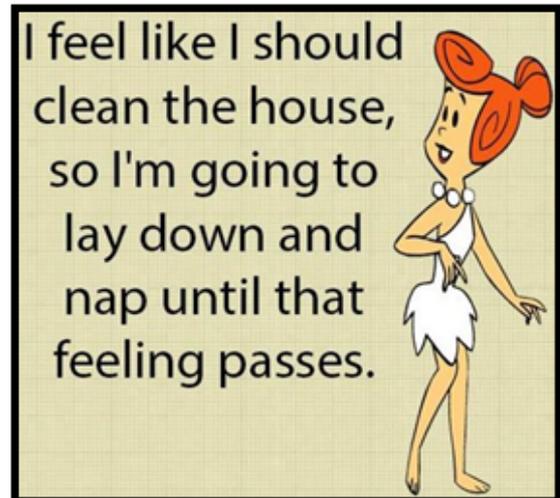
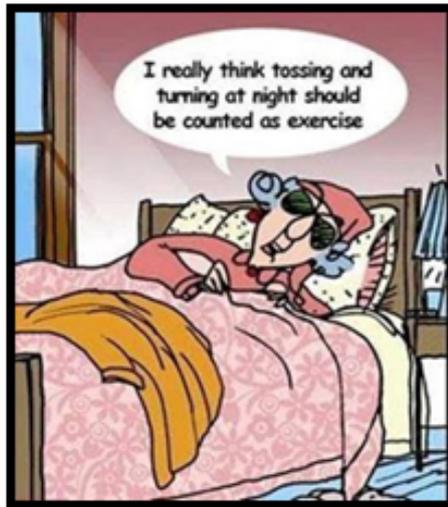
Ruth Chou Simmons invites us into this book and on a new journey to behold and become. With more than 850 pieces of intricate, original artwork, she encourages us to elevate our gaze to the One who created all things...including each of us!

We truly do hope that you will invest in this book as you invest in your own walk with our Savior. Your life will be enhanced, enriched, and encouraged! Happy Reading!!!

# HELLO JUNE!!!



# JUST FOR GIGGLES!!!





## HONORING OUR GRADUATES AT PLEASANT GROVE

On Sunday, June 13th, at our 9:00 worship service, we will be honoring our high school and college graduates for 2021. Please make plans to join us on this very special Sunday as we let these fine young people know how very proud we are of them and send them on to their next adventure with our love and prayers. This year we are pleased to honor:

**Macy Lynn Monteith!** Macy is the daughter of Shellie and Don Monteith and the granddaughter of Reba and Dwight Henry. She has graduated from South Point High School. Macy participated in varsity cheerleading and served as senior captain this past year. She was inducted into the National Honor Society. While in high school she completed the first steps to further her education by completing her CNA certification. Macy plans to attend Appalachian State University to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.



**Savannah Brianne Pruette!** Savannah is the daughter of Alisha and David Pruette and the great-granddaughter of Shirley Gilsinger. She has graduated from Stuart Cramer High School. Savannah had the honor of being inducted into the National Honor Society and the Beta Club while in high school. She plans to attend Gaston College in the fall to pursue cosmetology while also exploring her options in business management. Savannah hopes to own her own salon in the future.

**Emma Ruth Rhines!** Emma is the daughter of Jane and Brian Rhines. She has graduated from Lake Norman Charter School. During Emma's middle and high school years she has been an integral part of our youth group here at Pleasant Grove. She has been a consistent volunteer with Vacation Bible School and our past Fall Festivals, as well as participating in many other youth group activities. Emma has received a scholarship to, and plans to attend, Coker University to play Women's Lacrosse.



**Sydney Nicole Tadlock!** Sydney is the daughter of Lynne and Robbie Tadlock and the granddaughter of Rob Tadlock. She has graduated from East Carolina University with a Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology majoring in Exercise Physiology with a concentration in Exercise as Medicine. Sydney plans to continue at East Carolina this next year in the pursuit of a Master of Science degree with a concentration in Exercise Physiology.

These graduates are a testimony to the outpouring of blessing that God continues to give to our sweet church. We are so proud of each and every one of them and can't wait to see what God has in store for them in the future. Please remember them all in your prayers as they step out into a new chapter of their young lives. God bless the 2021 Graduates at Pleasant Grove!!!



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



**Men's Luncheon**  
Every Thursday at 11:30am  
Stockyard Grill  
4925 Rozzelles Ferry Rd, Charlotte

All men are invited to join for fellowship & good food!

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## DID YOU KNOW???

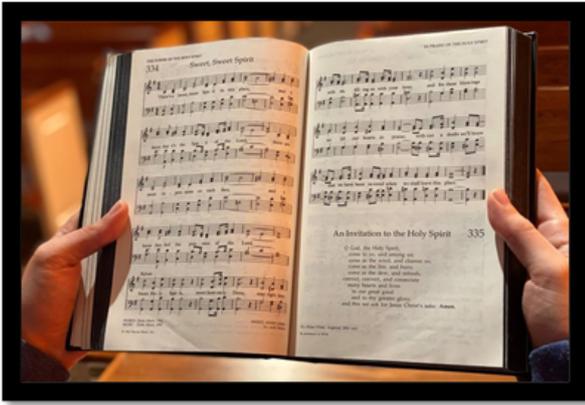
...that many of the beloved hymns that we sing in church have a beautiful back story to them? Well, you probably did know that, but we thought we would bring one of these stories to light this month!

"Sweet, Sweet Spirit," written by Doris Mae Akers, has as its origin, the choir that she was directing. The story goes this way. Akers had a custom of praying with her choir, The Sky Pilot Choir, before every performance, asking God to bless their songs. On one particular Sunday morning in 1962, she would not dismiss the choir to enter the worship service, even though the pastor was waiting for them to begin the service. She had prayed with them, but she felt that they were not prayed up enough, so she asked them to pray again. She is quoted as saying, "You are not ready to go in." As her choir followed her direction and began to fervently pray, Akers knew that it was going to be difficult to draw the time of prayer to a conclusion. "Finally," Akers recalled, "I was compelled to say to the choir, 'We have to go. I hate to leave this room and I know you hate to leave, but you know we do have to go to the service. But there is such a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place.'"

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*(Photo by Steven Kyle Adair at Glendale UMC, Nashville, TN.)*

That now well-known phrase stuck with her, and she wrote the hymn the next day. The refrain, “Sweet Holy Spirit, Sweet heavenly Dove,” was inspired by Matthew 3: 16-17, Akers said. These often-quoted verses are about Jesus’ baptism and read, “he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him; And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (KJV)

“Sweet, Sweet Spirit” was included in The United Methodist Hymnal in 1989 and became an immediate favorite, according to Dr. C. Michael Hawn, University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Church Music at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. Professor Hawn notes that the hymn became a staple for many congregations during their greeting time in worship. It is easily memorized and is often played and sung as church members and visitors shake hands and embrace one another in worship. It is also a hymn that is used frequently at Pentecost.

When Akers wrote and published “Sweet, Sweet Spirit” she had already been writing and recording gospel music for 15 years. The Missouri native, who grew up in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, had formed the Simmons-Akers Trio in 1948. This trio recorded on several labels, including RCA Victor. In 1957, she released her first solo album, “Sing Praises Unto the Lord.” The following year, along with Mahalia Jackson, she co-wrote “Lord, Don’t Move the Mountain,” which sold more than a million copies. It was during the late 1950s that Akers started the Sky Pilot Choir. It was a racially diverse choir that had numerous radio and television appearances. They also performed regularly at Los Angeles area churches. Akers continued recording and performing across six decades, joining the Gaither label in the 1990s.

Other accolades bestowed upon Akers include being named Gospel Music Composer of the Year in 1960 and 1961 by the Gospel Music Association, being honored by the Smithsonian Institute in 1992 as “the foremost black gospel songwriter in the United States,” and being posthumously inducted into the Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2001. She was also inducted into the Southern Gospel Music Hall of Fame in 2011.

Doris Mae Akers, also known as “Miss Gospel Music,” died on July 26<sup>th</sup>, 1995, at the age of 72, in Minneapolis, where she was serving as minister of music at Grace Temple Deliverance Center. It is amazing to think that a simple phrase, uttered during a sweet time of prayer could lead to one of our most treasured hymns! Most of us could probably sing this hymn right now...even if we lack a bucket in which to carry our tunes! Now that’s a true testament to the power of the right words spoken at the right time! We should always remember that when God is in it...we better be ready for something beautiful!!!

*(The content of this article was written by Crystal Caviness, who works for UMC.org at United Methodist Communications. It first appeared on the website for the United Methodist Church.)*

# UNITED METHODIST WOMEN NEWS



The UMW "Missions Walk" on Saturday, May 15th, was quite successful! Thanks to the seven members that walked and to everyone that donated to the cause. As a result of all the participation, \$585 will be sent to mission efforts supported by the United Methodist Women. What a reward for a first-time endeavor!

On Tuesday, June 8th, Effie Bailey will speak at Circle #3's monthly meeting. Her presentation will be about pancreatic cancer. Anyone interested in hearing Effie's presentation is welcome to attend. This meeting will take place in the fellowship all at 2:00 PM. Again, anyone can attend, members and guests, women and men.

Please plan to join us as we gain some very valuable information about pancreatic cancer as it is affecting more and more Americans.

Also, that same day, Tuesday, June 8th, Circle #6 will meet in the sanctuary at 6:00 PM. We plan to give the sanctuary a good once-over...doing some cleaning that isn't routinely done. Make plans now to be in the sanctuary with your cleaning supplies and high energy levels! As we are beginning to return to normal in our community, it is important that we catch up on some things that haven't been on our radar for a while. Having our sanctuary in tip-top shape for our worship times together is just one thing we can do to serve God, serve our church family, and serve those who might come to Pleasant Grove as visitors. Anyone is welcome to come and be a part of this service opportunity and this chance for some great fellowship together!





## AFTER SCHOOL EDITIONS AND PRESCHOOL POST

It is an exciting time at After School Care and Summer Camp! It looks like we are well on our way back to normal! After School Care ended on May 28th. These students have had a very different year and they certainly have handled it very well! As we transition to Summer Camp, some of our students will not be with us and we will miss them. Some can spend time with their extended family and that is wonderful after the limited time they have shared over the past year. Summer Camp begins on June 1st, and we can't wait to get started. This year we will have the return of field trips and that makes the fun we have each and every summer even richer! Bring on the park, the putt-putt, the bowling, and the swimming...we are ready!!!



The Preschool staff has been hard at work over the past few months sprucing up our children's building, and in particular, our Preschool rooms. We are excited to get back to our normal schedule after not meeting this past school year. We look forward to getting started again in September and have already had very good response from the community and our Preschool family! Registration is open...so if you have a preschooler in your life, please recommend our program to them. Detailed information can be found on our church website or by calling Sherrie Cannon at 704.393.7895.

Please keep in mind that we have openings in our Preschool staff. If you or someone you know is interested in the best part-time job anyone can have, contact Sherrie at the number above.

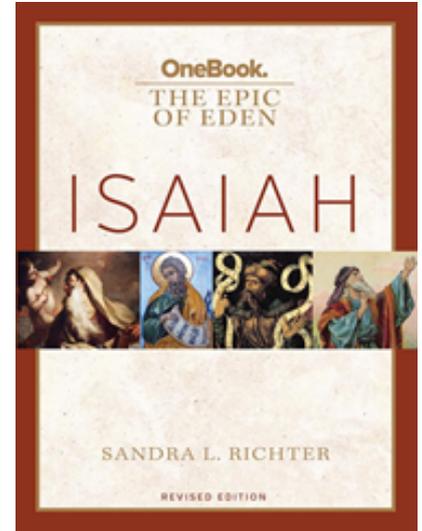


# ONGOING BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITY

**It's not too late to join the Monday Night Bible Study group for the study, The Epic of Eden: Isaiah, by Dr. Sandra Richter.**

Often named "the fifth gospel," the book of the prophet Isaiah has more to say about Israel's coming Messiah than any other Old Testament book. Brilliant, courageous, uncompromising, this prophet declared that "the year of the LORD" had come and God's people needed to either step up or stand down. Indeed, when Isaiah spoke, kings trembled.

But too often, when Isaiah speaks today, God's people have trouble hearing. Why? We often miss the larger context. In *The Epic of Eden: Isaiah*, Dr. Sandra Richter takes participants back to the eighth century BCE. This eight-week study explains Israel's religion and economy, explores the definition and role of the prophets, and helps us to apply the message of this great champion of the faith to our lives today.



The study began earlier in May, however you can still join in on Monday evenings at 6:30 PM. We meet via Zoom. If you are new to the study, please email Jana at [jalexander09@gmail.com](mailto:jalexander09@gmail.com) so you can get the Zoom link. Books are available through Amazon or from [www.myseedbed.com](http://www.myseedbed.com).



## CELEBRATE FLAG DAY ON JUNE 14TH!!!



The summer months have a couple of much-celebrated patriotic holidays. We observe Memorial Day in late May as we remember those who have given themselves in service to our country. We celebrate Independence Day in July as we reflect on what it means to be an American and live in the greatest country on the face of the earth. But there is another day of patriotic observance that we shouldn't let slip by unnoticed.

Flag Day is celebrated in the United States each year on June 14th. The history of our flag is one of fits and starts but this history is a part of who we are as a country and bears remembering. When the American Revolution broke out in 1775, our colonists did not fight under a single, united flag. Most regiments who were fighting for independence from the British were flying their own flags. In June of that same year the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia to create the Continental Army. This established a unified colonial fighting force with the hopes of a more organized form of battle. This led to the creation of what was essentially the first "American" flag...the Continental Colors.

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The Continental Colors though, was much too similar to the flag of the British. It was comprised of thirteen red and white alternating stripes with a Union Jack in the corner. George Washington realized that flying a flag that was even remotely similar to that of the British was not a great morale-builder for the revolutionary effort. So, he began the effort to create a new symbol of freedom for the soon-to-be fledgling nation. Then, on June 14th, 1777, the Second Continental Congress diverted from drafting the Articles of the Confederation to pass a resolution that “the flag of the United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white,” and that “the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.” Later, President Woodrow Wilson, in 1916, marked the anniversary of that decree by establishing June 14th as Flag Day. This happened over one hundred years after that first resolution! Suffice it to say that sometimes the wheels of government turn quite slowly indeed!

So, on June 14th, as you look at and reflect upon our nation’s flag, here are a couple of facts that you might find interesting.



1. Bernard Cigrand, a small-town Wisconsin teacher, originated the idea for an annual flag day in 1885.
2. It is commonly believed that Betsy Ross, who assisted the Revolutionary War effort by repairing uniforms and making tents, made and helped design the first American flag. However, there is no historical evidence to support these claims.
3. Flying the flag upside down is not always an act of protest. According to the Flag Code, it can also be an official distress signal.
4. The Flag Code clearly states that the Stars and Stripes should not be used as apparel, bedding, or drapery.
5. The practice of draping a casket with an American flag is not reserved for military veterans or government officials. Any burial may incorporate this custom.
6. Flag etiquette calls for the American flag to be illuminated by sunlight or artificial light while on display.
7. When flags are lowered on their poles, great care should be taken to keep them from coming into contact with the ground. The flag should always be kept aloft, meaning that rugs and carpets featuring the Stars and Stripes are prohibited by the Flag Code.
8. The Flag Code is quite clear on the fact that adding an insignia, drawing, or other markings to the American flag is strictly prohibited. Some politicians have been known to defy this regulation by signing flags for their supporters.

On Flag Day, June 14th, let’s all think about how blessed we are to live in this great nation and let’s remember all that it has taken to get us to this point. Let’s thank God for His blessings and ask His guidance as we continually strive to be a better people...His people!!!

# HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!!!

Father's Day will be celebrated this year on Sunday, June 20th. For us, here in the United States this special day has come to be a day of recognizing those who have served in fathering roles in our lives. We take the opportunity to pay respect to our biological fathers, our grandfathers, our fathers-in-law, our stepfathers, and those special men who have filled the "father" shoes when others have not. This observance can involve greeting cards, a special meal with the family, or a gathering of multiple generations to honor all the men in the family. Did you know though, that Father's Day isn't celebrated on the same day, or in the same manner, around the world?

May, June, and July are the most popular months for celebrating Father's Day. But many countries mark this day in August, September, October, and November. The reasons for the choice of dates can range from days of importance in national history or the observance of religious festivals. While we are accustomed to giving greeting cards, giving gifts specifically for Dad, and sharing a meal together, other countries celebrate in some most interesting ways. In Germany, Father's Day is also called Men's Day. It is always celebrated on the Thursday, forty days after Easter. The German tradition is for groups of males, young and old (but excluding preteen boys) to do a hiking tour with one or more small wagons (Bollerwagen) pulled by manpower. In the wagons are wine or beer and traditional regional foods. This day is a federal holiday, and most people take the following Friday off and some schools are even closed. In Haiti, Father's Day is celebrated on the last Sunday of June. Fathers are celebrated with cards, gifts, breakfast, lunch, brunch, or an early Sunday dinner. Whether enjoying the day at the beach or in the mountains, spending family time and engaging in favorite activities is the norm for the day.

Probably one of the most interesting tidbits associated with Father's Day comes from France. In France, lighter manufacturer "Flaminaire" introduced the idea of a Father's Day commemoration in 1949 for commercial reasons. They introduced "la Fete des Peres" which would take place on the third Sunday in June, following the American example. Their slogan was, as translated to English, "Our daddies told us, for Father's Day, they all want a Flaminaire." Later, in 1952, the holiday was officially decreed.

No matter how you choose to celebrate Father's Day, or with whom, we hope that your time with loved ones will be a special time together. And on this day of recognizing those who have fathered us well, let's be sure to thank our Father God for giving us His supreme example of fatherhood... unconditional love, never-ending compassion, a quickness to forgive, and a desire to bless. On Father's Day, we thank God for who He is in our lives and for blessing us with our fathers!!!!



## BACKPACK BUDDIES WRAPS UP ITS 11TH YEAR OF MINISTRY!!!



At the end of May, our Backpack Buddies Ministry closed out its 11th year of serving the students at Oakdale Elementary School. What began as a small but obedient effort to serve those in need, has persevered and maintained an attitude of service for more than a decade. We started out by gathering food items in one of the wings of our sanctuary, packing the backpacks there in that wing, and then walking the bags over to the school each and every Friday. We then moved up in the world and found our way to one of the mechanical closets in the newly opened family life center. With the installation of some shelving units, and an expansion of the number of students we could serve, we really felt like we had arrived! However, that small space had no air conditioning! So, we found ourselves spilling out into the hallway whenever we could! We ultimately landed in a small classroom space in the family life center. We purchased more shelving and upped the number that we could serve once again. Through the years, we have grown from serving eight students, to twelve students, to as many as twenty-two students at one time! We have moved from a “just buy something from the suggestion list” type of collection, to having monthly sponsors who provide a specific item each month of the school year. The monetary donations that we have received have been such a blessing as we sometimes need to purchase items to fill in the gaps. This cash support also allows us to give our families gift cards at the holidays. We have also been blessed with a partnership with Pleasant Grove Presbyterian Church! These brothers and sisters in Christ have donated food items, served as a delivery team, and most recently served as both a packing team and a delivery team. Their compassionate hearts and willing service have been invaluable to the success of this ministry. We were even the benefactor of an international professional convention in Charlotte, who reached out to provide support and community service through the gift of backpacks and a monetary donation!

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In March of 2020, as the pandemic made its way to the United States, the future of our ministry seemed uncertain. But, as is usually the case, when the people of God feel the call of God, there is always a way! We pivoted to a pick-up system of getting the food to the families. This truly was a blessing as we got to know the families who picked up each Friday! Their need and their gratitude were quite evident. We worked closely with the school to be sure that our families knew of the opportunity they had for support, and we checked in with those families whenever we felt it necessary. We applied for, and received, a grant from the United Methodist Foundation to help with our financial needs, as the uncertainty of our community health situation caused a dip in our usual donations. But, true to form, God provided for this ministry, and you were the willing participants in that provision! We have been able to continue serving, pivot back to a “deliver to the school” system as the students returned to the classroom, and finish strong, serving nine families and the sixteen elementary students within those families!

As we look forward to the next school year, we ask you to prayerfully consider how you might be a part of what God wants to do at Pleasant Grove through this ministry. We always welcome new volunteers, sponsors, and donors. But, in the coming year, we will also need a coordinator for the ministry. Sherri Brown plans to step down from this role. However, she will be available for advice and any help when needed. Examples of what we have done in the past will be available to the new coordinator, but we are never against taking a fresh look and taking a new direction! Backpack Buddies is one of the most important outreach efforts here at Pleasant Grove. We seek to serve those who find themselves in a food-insecure situation and struggle to put food on the table. We accomplish this by providing weekend food to students who qualify for assistance at Oakdale Elementary School. We do all of this with compassionate hearts, a willingness to reach beyond our church campus, an obedience to the call we have received to “love our neighbor,” and with no strings attached. It is simple service...and simple is sometimes the best and most Christlike approach.

So, celebrate with us, as we finish another successful year with Backpack Buddies! And consider how you might be a special part of this ministry in the coming school year!!!





# BEACH WORD SEARCH

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

Bathing Suit  
 Bikini  
 Boardwalk  
 Lifeguard

Pelican  
 Sailboat  
 Sandals  
 Sand Castle

Scuba  
 Seagull  
 Seashell  
 Sunglasses

Surfboard  
 Tropical  
 Vacation  
 Waves

