



PleasantGreenUMC.org

Roots & Branches

December 2019

I came across a piece of art that portraved well this winter season that is quickly approaching. The setting takes the viewers eye below the earth where the roots of the tree dwell. The painting (by Jessica Boehman) is of a woman nestled

into a cove reading a book by a small light, alongside a bear snuggled under a blanket and a fox curled up, too. The painting portrays the winter solstice as "a period of descent and rest, of going within our homes, within ourselves and taking in all that we have been through, all that has passed in this full year which is coming to a close... like nature and the animal kingdom around us, this time of hibernation is so necessary for our tired limbs, our burdened minds."

We often speak of winter as being "harsh" – and no doubt, it can be. I certainly find myself wanting to "turn in early" and enter into my own kind of hibernation. It can also be harsh for people feeling lonely or isolated, with no warm fire burning or bustling family during the holiday season. While there is a harshness to winter, there is also a kindness to winter, which is the invitation to go within. This is also the invitation of Advent.

December is typically not a month we would describe as a period of descent and rest, and yet I cannot help but embrace the wonder of creation for those of us here in the Northern Hemisphere. For us, Christmas falls in the dead of winter, and only a few days before Christmas we experience the longest and darkest night of the year. It's a season when the dark triumphs in so many ways. And it's also a turning point -- a moment when we are still in the darkness, knowing the light will come, knowing that something is on the horizon.

Jack Boozer says that "in this season when we are suspended between realization and expectation, may we be found honest about the darkness, more perceptive of the light." I wonder why so many people spend so much time suppressing and hiding our own darkness? We don't like negative emotions – I suppose we find them inconvenient and uncomfortable. And yet I believe these are the very places where growth and power and transformation can happen. In Latin, the word solstice is made from "sol" - meaning "the sun" and "sistere" - meaning, to make stand. Winter Solstice is powerful moment in our world when the axis of the earth pauses, shifts, moves, and prepares for the light of the sun.

In this season of preparation, we will have numerous opportunities to pause, to acknowledge the darkness in our lives and world and to also hold fast to the promise that God's light will break forth like the dawn. In particular, on December 21 at 7:00pm, we will gather in the chapel for a brief Service of the Longest Night. This is a worship service typically scheduled around the winter solstice and as Dan Benedict notes, "it is also the traditional feast day for Saint Thomas the Apostle. This linkage invites making some connections between Thomas' struggle to believe the tale of Jesus' resurrection, the long nights just before Christmas, and the struggle with darkness and grief faced by those living with loss." This service serves to bear witness that the church can be a place for all people, a place where we can uphold all members of our community, whatever season of life we might find ourselves in. May it be a witness to us that the Christ child comes as a sign of hope even in the face of despair.

My hope for you this season is that in the midst of the hustle and bustle of this time of year, you may welcome the invitation of Advent (and winter) to rest, to watch, to wait, to go within. I trust that God will meet you there. I offer this prayer written by Jan Richardson, "Move over the face of my deep, my darkness, my endless restless chaos, and create, O God; trouble me, comfort me, stir me up, and calm me, but do not cease to breathe your Spirit into my wakening soul."

Abundant Advent blessings on you and your family, Pastor Laura

We have been working hard over the past 6 months to make sure that you can stay connected with Pleasant Green whenever and wherever you are. We know that the church is not a building - it's the people! That being said, a few months ago, we introduced a new way to give - with an online option (including an automatic draft function) or through text message. Now, we are excited to announce that we have added a podcast feature to our website. If you miss a Sunday, simply go to <u>pleasantgreenumc.org</u> and you will find each week's sermon under the "Worship" tab or download our podcasts on the podbean app on your phone. And finally, we are also excited to announce the new Pleasant Green UMC app! How to get it on your phone: Text "pleasantgreenapp" to 77977 and you'll receive a link to download.

ADVENT at PLEASANT GREEN

December Worship Schedule
No 8:30am Service
11:00am Worship ONLY

Early Service resumes on Sunday, January 12

Adventicipation!

Saturday, November 30

Advent Decorating

begins at 9:00am

Come and bring family & friends!

Breakfast provided!



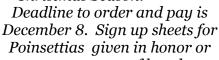
Christmas
Caroling to our
shut-ins

Sunday, December 8 at 3:00pm

Join us as we spread the joy of the season!

Order Poinsettias

to be placed in the Sanctuary during the Christmas Season.



memory of loved ones, are in the Narthex. Cost is \$8.00 each.

Make checks with Poinsettia on the memo line to PGUMW and place in the offering plate.

UMW Christmas Dinner ~ December 9 at 6:30 p.m.

ALL women of the church are invited!

Please bring a dessert.

Sign up in the Narthex by Sunday, December 1



Landle Burning for Missions

Give a donation to burn a candle in memory or honor.

Pleasant Green Mission Market

Saturday, December 14 - Fellowship Hall at 9 am Come early for best selection!

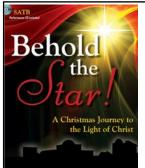


Please sign up to bring your favorite homemade cookies or baked goods. We will have a wonderful variety of cookies, cakes, pies, breads, and candies as well as handcrafted items—jewelry, ornaments, knitting, Salvadoran items, stocking stuffers and other gifts.

Bags, boxes & bows will be available.

It is a fun time —so tell your friends!

Come take care of your holiday baking needs!



Chancel Choir presents

<u>Behold the</u> <u>Star!</u>

A Christmas Journey to the Light of Christ.

Sunday, December 22 at 11:00 am Worship

The story of faith is often reflected as a journey from darkness to light.

"Behold the Star!" is an inspirational reminder that Jesus, the light of the world, has indeed come! It is a blend of original and familiar carols.

> Come be a part of this Christmas Journey worship experience.



CHILDREN'S NATIVITY PRACTICE

IN THE CHAPEL ~ K & up SUNDAYS, DEC. 1 & 8

9:45am - 10:15am

SATURDAY, DEC. 7

2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Children's Nativity

11:00 am Worship December 8



Children not yet in school are also invited to take part in the Christmas Nativity.

Mission Market Craft Sundays 10:15 am December 1 & 8

All children & youth NEEDED!



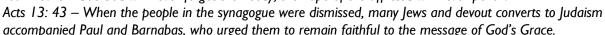
Please bring gifts of food for OCIM on Christmas Eve, the Sunday after Christmas and Epiphany Sunday.

<u>Christmas Eve Worship</u> Communion Candlelight Service 5:00 pm



Disaster Relief Ministry at the Time of Advent







This month, the article was to be about the Membership Ministry; but God had other plans. He revealed them through a discussion in the Clyde Walker class about God's Grace being the only thing that distinguishes Christians from other religions and peoples. He also revealed His plans for this article through the NC Conference Disaster Ministries Update publication, Restoring Hope, which focused on the efforts of the United Methodist Church, in partnership with many other individuals and groups, to inspire hope and a realization of God's Grace. With these nudges, the focus for this month needs to be on the Disaster Relief Ministry initiated by Jim Perry.

How are all of these concepts related: Advent, Disaster Relief, Hope, and God's Grace? As we Christians anticipate the coming of Christ during Advent, we are actually waiting for the second coming of Christ. We are instructed to keep our lamps lit and our oil ready in the parable of the ten young bridesmaids (Matthew 25: I-I3). Does this literally mean preparing our oil lamps? Maybe, but, more importantly, it means being ready for Jesus by following His example of serving the vulnerable and sharing His Word by example. In doing these things, we are preparing our hearts and souls to receive Him, as well as sharing God's Grace with others. Jesus' birth, death to cover our sins, resurrection, and the Holy Spirit continue to be God's gifts of Grace to us. We also receive Grace when we ask Him for forgiveness and repent of our Sins. Another way we receive Grace is by volunteering to help others, such as through disaster relief. God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit provide all that we need (Grace!) to step out in faith. We do not need to worry or have fear because God is with us in the form of Emmanuel, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

This outreach of helping others recover from disaster generates Hope and shows that God cares for the people in distress (Grace!). He is more than words in a Book; He is a living, breathing being that works through us to accomplish His will. Let us keep our lamps ready by working with Jim Perry in the new ministry of Disaster Relief. Plans are to start early in January 2020. As we join him, we are shining God's light, putting His Light on a lampstand, for all to see (Matthew 5: 14-16).

Let us pray for this ministry and the people who make it happen:

Loving God who is abundant in Grace, move us to share your Grace with others. You have given us so much. Let us praise you and thank you for that abundance by sharing ourselves, our time, and our resources to generate hope for the people who have lost hope. We praise you and thank you for putting the serving spirit in Jim's heart; and for opening his heart to receive your Spirit. We ask that you do the same for others, so that many workers will come from Pleasant Green to help the vulnerable recover from the multiple hurricanes that have struck over the years. We want to follow your Son's example and to be prepared for His coming. We ask for your strength, compassion, motivation, and joyful obedience as we wait for Him. Amen.

Come pray with us! We meet the third Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm in the Clyde Walker Classroom (Parlor). We thank God for listening to our prayers, for all of His blessings; and, we pray for ministries in our church; for local, state, national, and global needs; as well as the people you have entrusted to us. Join us on Wednesday, December 18 at 6:30 pm.

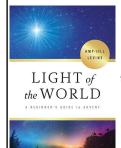
Things We Can Do to Help Care for the Earth

While you are making lists of holidays events and people for whom to buy gifts, also consider what new habits you can establish to care for the earth. Here are some suggestions from the World Wildlife Fund:

- Last year Americans used and discarded about 50 million plastic water bottles. Fill up a reusable water bottle at home and take it with you. There are many attractive water bottles that would make great gifts.
- Take your own reusable bags to the grocery store. The average American uses 350 bags per year, many of which end up in streams, rivers, and ocean where they lead to the death of wildlife.
- Put your cans and bottles in a recycling bin but also think of ways to use things a second or third time. A padded envelope you got in the mail might be reused again by putting a label over the address and tearing off the stamps.
- Be careful when throwing away things like batteries, ink cartridges, and lightbulbs. Some of them contain substances that an contaminate the soil and water for thousands of years. Most recycling centers have separate areas for possibly dangerous items.
- Wear a sweater or a warm robe and keep your thermostat at a lower temperature. Most furnaces burn fossil fuel so using less heat conserve resources and reduces global warning.
- Is your mail box overflowing with unsolicited catalogs that fill up your trash can? Before discarding the ones you never use, call the company and ask them to remove your name from their mailing list. And your mail carrier will thank you!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



Dive deep into the history of the birth of Christ.

Advent is not only the perfect time to read the story of the birth of Jesus; it's also a great time to dive deeper into the biblical texts that surround the event. In *Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent*, author, professor, and biblical scholar Amy-

Jill Levine shows how the Gospel narratives connect to the Old Testament; highlights the role of women in first-century Jewish culture; and emphasizes the importance of Mary's visitation, the census, the stable, the star of Bethlehem, and the flight to Egypt. A rich and challenging learning experience for the individual reader, the book also makes a wonderful, four-week Advent group study with the additional DVD.

Join the Wednesday morning Bible Study or Sunday 10am Fellowship Hall Class.



Dream Weavers Círcle Sunday, December 1 at 12:15 pm

Circle of Faith meet at church 6:00 pm - Thursday, December 5



The Mebane Community Choir's
51st presentation of the Messiah
Sunday, December 8 - 3:00pm
Mebane Presbyterian Church on 402 S Fifth St.



5:30 pm ~ Thursday, December 12

Join us for a chili supper & to make chocolate covered cherries for the Mission Market!





Prayer Team Meeting 6:30pm Wednesday, December 18

11:00 am Worship Sunday, December 29



OCIM: Personal Care Items - powder laundry detergent, toilet paper, deodorant, toothpaste, bar soap, feminine products, diapers or "pull-ups" "For Max's Kids" - toothbrush & toothpaste



Sunday, January 5 8:30 am - Hearts & Hands Class will join Jim & Gene Perry to volunteer at the Murdoch Center. *All are invited to join them!*

Moravían Love Feast on Epíphany Sunday at 6:00 p.m.

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Sunday, January 12 8:30 am Worship Services resume

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MUSICAL SERVICE WITH TRUTH BE TOLD

On Praise Band Sunday, January 26, we will have a guest band and special service of music and inspiration. To describe their music take folks like Arlo Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Cat Stevens, and James Taylor, fill them with the Holy Spirit and you have Truth BeTold from King, NC. Everyone is invited for brunch at 9:45 am followed by one special service that day for the whole church at 10:30am.

Please invite family & friends!

<u>CONCERT FOR EL SALVADOR</u> at Pleasant Green Community Center

To celebrate Dave Cook's 60th birthday <u>The Thursday Night</u> <u>Band</u> will be hosting a dinner concert for the benefit of the Pleasant Green El Salvador mission team on Friday, January 31st. We want everyone of you to turn out for a baked spaghetti supper provided by the mission team, listen to great music, and open your heart and make donations to the amazing work Pleasant Green is doing to make lives better in Central America. Dinner starts at 6:30 and music from 7-8:30. Yes – there will be cake!

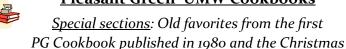
Great Christmas Gift Ideas!

PGUMC Commemorative Plates



Celebrate our 187th year with a beautiful plate featuring the Old Sanctuary ~ \$25

Pleasant Green UMW Cookbooks



Cookie Sale recipes! The cookbook includes 433 recipes and pages on PG Church, as well as UMW history. (\$16)

Purchase cookbooks & support UMW missions!



Request from Farmer Cindy... Firefly Farm would like any unwanted vases, Mason jars, or other glass jars/objects to put flower arrangements in to sell at the Farmers market. Please leave any donations in the Narthex.

We're Hiring!

Pleasant Green United Methodist Church is seeking a Church Administrative Assistant. This position will be part-time (16 hrs/wk), hourly pay and year-round. The Administrative Assistant reports directly to the Pastor and will primarily focus on assisting the church in carrying out its mission by planning and implementing effective organizational processes to achieve its goals.

Qualified applicants will have the following skill sets: computer literacy (proficiency in Word, Excel, Publisher, Access); organizational skills; strong interpersonal relations including oral, written and electronic communications skills; ability to update and maintain website and web-based ministry; the ability to maintain a high level of confidentiality; and knowledge or experience with general administrative office procedures.

To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to Pastor Laura Thompson at Ithompson@nccumc.org.

For more information and a complete job description, please contact Pastor Laura.

Summer Browning Scholarships

In memory of Summer Browning, a scholarship fund was established in 1993 by her parents, family & friends.

Applications are available from the church office.



Eleanor Walker Circle's Back Pack Ministry at Central Elementary

Food Donations are needed!

The Back Pack Ministry provides for a mother with 8 children, 5 are students at Central Elementary.

*In addition to food please bring paper bags with handles to help with the food delivery.

WAYS TO GIVE AT PLEASANT GREEN UMC

We know and believe that part of being a follower of Christ is also about being generous with our money. We also recognize that the world is changing, the church is changing, and giving trends are changing with new generations. Therefore, we want to help you find a way of giving that is convenient and meets your needs. Listed below you will find three ways you may give to Pleasant Green UMC: the traditional gifts we receive in the offering plate on Sundays, online, or through text message. Thank you in advance for your generosity!



ONLINE www.pleasantgreenumc.org





To: 77977



ENVELOPE Cash & Check

From the PGUMC Hurricane Relief Team...

UMCOR We will travel to locations assigned by UMCOR to help with different phases of hurricane relief - tarping, mucking out, painting, trash removal, installing sheet rock or any work that needs to be completed. The travel will be to Eastern NC locations within a two hour drive. Our first Saturday work detail will be January 18, 2020, plans are to volunteer one Saturday of each month.

We are also looking at working with Habitat for Humanity. This will be for projects in the Triangle area. If anyone wishes to join the team please contact Jim Perry at: perryjames@twc.com.

Dear Pleasant Green Family,

Perhaps you sent a card, brought a meal, or said a prayer. Al and I are thankful for each act of love and caring extended to us during my recent health issues. We love and appreciate our Pleasant Green UMC family. Love, Al and Wanda Edens

Thank you to ...



Mike Martin & Gretchen Hutt for supplying the hot dogs & buns for the Halloween Carnival!

Laura Bullock Finley for providing storage at Bullocks BBQ for our Brunswick Stew chicken.





James & Mary Ann Hamm for the purchase of a beautiful new kitchen range with a convection oven.

DO YOU LOVE TO READ? Sign up in the Narthex!

Forming now: a small group that loves reading with Goal: to get people together who love to read, discussing books and just spending time together in each other's homes once a month

Books: to be chosen by the group members with only **Requirements:** a love of reading!!

Meeting time: to be determined - please suggest days/times that work for you!

Questions: Contact Cindy Stubbs at fireflyfarm2015@gmail.com





The Orange County pastors and lay people gathered for a final dinner on Monday, November 18th at Eno House in Hillsborough with facilitator Kylie Foley from NC State's Emerging Institute. This was our third dinner together this fall, with each gathering building on previous conversations around Asset Based Community Development

(ABCD) and recognizing our need to connect more deeply with our neighbors and each other.

As we look ahead to the new year, our hope is to build upon the foundation that has been laid throughout this year through our meetings, dinners, youth gatherings, and various projects we have begun together. Our biggest project in the new year will be to focused on "the Good Neighbor Experiment," a project that was started by the Missional Wisdom Foundation (google for more info). The basic program is for pastors and four lay people to be trained together at three "lab" sessions over the next year and then to bring the material back to their churches to learn together in small groups. There will be a curriculum, and a local moderator will lead us. The dates we have for these "labs" are: January 11 (from 9–5), May 2 (from 9–5), and August 29 (a half-day celebration plus dinner). While I know that adding "one more thing" to our calendar does not always make sense and might not be the next faithful step for you/us, we are trusting that God's spirit is at work and, in a culture that tends to build walls and divide, we are committed to building trust and connections so we can better live Jesus's greatest commandment – right here, in our own neighborhoods. If you are interested in being a part of these trainings, or simply want to hear/learn more, feel free to reach out for more information. *Pastor Laura*

PGUMC's mission outreach keeps on going...

Pleasant Green Family News

The first weekend in October, nearly 250 Scouts, leaders, and parents spent a weekend at Camp Durant in Moore County. Most of the participants were from Orange County but at least three other counties were represented. Registrants includes six girl Webelos den Scouts and a Webelos den of Muslims from Cary.

The focus of the weekend was preparing Webelos Scouts to become full-fledged Scouts. They learned basic first aid, prepared a meal and a cobbler in Dutch ovens, had introductions by Boy Scout Troops into Boy Scouting, and shared in a worship service that focused on "Care of Creation." The fun part was a rain dance celebrated Friday evening by the Order of the Arrow which brought on real (highly unexpected) rain about 2:00am Saturday morning lasting until 7:00am at which the program started the day's activities.

And what does this have to do with Pleasant Green? Even though PGUMC no longer has a boy scout troop, when we did have one, Dennis Nicholson, a 45 year veteran scout leader, was the representative to the Orange County Shakori District Scout Committee. When the troop disbanded, he continued participating with a group of leaders he had come to know and respect even though he lives in Durham County. He has served the past two years as Event Director for what is called Webelos Woods (fourth and fifth graders) at which youngsters earn activity badges and interact with Bot Scout instructors. After this year's Highly successful event,, he was asked to once again serve as Event Director for next year's event in October 2020.

News from Chanequa...

We have been praying for Dr. Chanequa Walker-Barnes, a former Duke Divinity school intern at PGUMC. Even as she struggles with a recurrence of cancer, she has continued to serve as assistant professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling in the McAfee School of Theology at Mercer University and is a candidate for ordination in the NC Georgia Conference. In October, her latest book "I Bring the Voices of My People: A Womanist Vision for Racial Reconciliation" was published.

CONGRATULATIONS on the birth of:

Brooks Ryan Nicholson,

son of Emily & Kevin Nicholson, brother of Sawyer and grandson of Evelyn & Larry Morris, born on October 4 weighing 8 pounds 7 ounces.



Forrest lames Best.

son of Bailey Allison & James Best, grandson of Sheri & Mike Allison and great-grandson of Elaine Flannery, born on October 15 weighing 8 pounds 3 ounces.



pleasant green wouth group

December Youth Calendar

December 8: 3:00 pm - Christmas Caroling December 15: 11:00 am Worship - Youth 4:45 pm - Youth Christmas Party with Hillsborough UMC Youth Meet at church ride in the church van.















Thanks to all the first-time stew workers!









Martha Walker wins quilt!



Acolytes & Cross Bearers were honored. Ava Leamer is presented with an acolyte pin.



Laity Sunday ~ October 27





Pleasant Green United Methodist Church 3005 Pleasant Green Road Durham, NC 27705 (919) 383-5764

Durham, NC 27705 Permit No. 5

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Pastor - Rev. Laura Thompson (919) 383-2339

Ithompson@nccumc.org

Church E-mail: pgumc@ncrrbiz.com



Please recycle this newsletter.



The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide is provided free of charge to the Pleasant Green congregation by the United Methodist Women. You may pick up a copy in the Narthex.

Last Sunday Band Christmas Video

The Last Sunday Praise Band has a video on YouTube of their original Christmas song Christmas Eve With You Folks. Pleasant Green UMC is the star of the video and you may see yourself in it. You can find it by searching YouTube by the song name or entering https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ssPG1A9neOA



9am - 11am Saturday, December 14 **Featuring** HOMEMADE BAKED GOODS

Cookies, cakes, candies, breads, canned goods, chocolate covered cherries and more

HANDCRAFTED ITEMS

Jewelry, ornaments, knitting, Salvadoran items, stocking stuffers, and other gifts Cookies and Candies - \$9.00 per lb. Decorative gift boxes, bags, and ribbon available Sponsored by Pleasant Green Mission Teams

Moravían Love Feast on Epíphany Sunday, January 5, 2020 ~ 6:00 p.m.



Join us in the old sanctuary for this traditional Moravian Candlelight Service with coffee and sweet bread.

Giving Tuesday - December 3

This is a day of generosity and thanksgiving for all the good and healing work of United Methodist mission projects and missionaries. This day is a response to the hyperconsumerism surrounding the holidays by supporting organizations that are transforming the world.

Pleasant Green Summer Camp Announces 2020 Schedule

Week #1: June 22 - 26 VBS 9:00 - 12:30

~ Closed June 29 - July 3 ~

Week #2: July 6 - 10

Week #3: July 13 - 17

at PGUMC



Week #4: July 20 - 24



RONALD McDONALD FAMILY ROOM & PEDIATRIC UNIT AT DUKE HOSPITAL

Help family members & their children **FAMILY NEEDS:**

while at the hospital!

CHILDREN NEEDS: Travel toiletries New clothing only Shower caps

Sizes (Preemie – 18 yrs.) Men: deodorant, T-shirts, Comfy pants shaving cream Socks, Underwear

Women: feminine

Any Boy outfits/Girl dresses products Onesise(Snap front / bottom) Individual snacks