

ROOTS& BRANCHES

DECEMBER 2021

PleasantGreenUMC.org



'TIS THE SEASON

Why do we love this season so much? What really makes it the most wonderful time of year? I'm sure we could find sappy movies on the Hallmark channel any month. We can certainly eat goodies and treats during any season. It's a month when we typically spend too much money and our over-crowded calendars cause a little extra anxiety. Traffic is heavier than usual and our days are short. What's so wonderful about it all?

For starters, it's a season that truly speaks to the longing of our hearts. In Advent, we acknowledge that we do have expectations and yearnings and the season of waiting gives us permission to name those things even as we lean in to the mystery and magic of Christmas. The gift of this season is the thoughtfulness, the intention, the deliberate awareness – lest our spirituality become shallow and impoverished. It's a season that gives us hope, that though the world is weary, a weary world rejoices.

Another year is upon us – and with it brings the opportunity to watch and wait. To pay attention. To yearn and remember. To behold. How will we at Pleasant Green embrace this season with wonder and intention? Can we enter into this holy time with a little more presence and thoughtfulness? I'd like to answer that with a resounding “yes” and share some of what to expect in Advent.

First, we will continue to gather for weekly worship in our sanctuary at 10:30am. In Worship, we will center our four Sundays around the theme of “Close to Home.” You can read more about the theme on page two. We are also excited to have Children's Church re-start on the First Sunday of Advent.

Second, a small group study using the book “Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes.” The pandemic halted many of our Sunday School classes (with the exception of a couple), so perhaps these four weeks are a perfect time to re-engage. We know that reflecting together,

listening, and sharing our own life experiences grows us in our discipleship. Duke Intern, Emily, and myself will be co-leading a study in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings. We will begin gathering around 9:15, start our study around 9:30 and wrap up at 10:15 just in time for worship.

Third, a daily devotional for each day in Advent using the book “Pauses for Advent.” Hugh Prather writes in the introduction to the book, “life is lived in the pauses, not the events.” These daily reflections serve to help us pause each day, to meditate on a verse from scripture and allow these Advent themes to percolate in all aspects of our life. Books may be picked up on the table outside the sanctuary.

Fourth, a Longest Night Worship Service. While the Christmas season is often marked by expressions of joy, excitement, and happiness, it can also be a “blue” (yes, as in the blues) season for some people. This service is a meaningful way we companion with those who struggle during the holiday season while giving attention and reflection to those sorrows and pains we also carry while offering healing and hope. We will gather in the chapel on the Winter Solstice, the longest night of the year, at 7pm.

Lastly, ongoing opportunities for fellowship, community, and service. UMW circles continue to meet, the Mission Market is back in full swing, Youth Group is finding new rhythm and life, and we continue to practice generosity with our financial gifts and the sharing of food and goods to several families in our reach.

Without a doubt, it is the most wonderful time of the year. May we enter the mystery of incarnation with deep intention, devotion, and joy.

Advent blessings to you and yours,

Laura



Lighting of the first Advent Candle by the Harris Family.

The Second Sunday of Advent
Laying the Foundation (peace)
Luke 1:57-80¹ | Philippians 1:3-11

In the miraculous birth of John the Baptist, we see the foundation of what is to come. We see how interwoven his story is with Jesus' origin story. When Zechariah regains his voice, his imagination is also restored. He offers deep praise for God's tender mercy, and casts a hopeful vision for his own child. He sings blessings into John's being. This lays the foundation for John's life. In turn, John will go on to prepare the way for Jesus who will guide us all in the way of peace. In this week, we focus on making space—in our lives and our imaginations—for God's blessings to break through.

The Third Sunday of Advent
A Home for All (joy)
Luke 3:1-18² | Zephaniah 3:14-20

John the Baptist's good news sounds harsh, but he preaches a home for all—where inequities are banished, valleys are lifted up, and all have the resources they need for collective flourishing. Ultimately, John's message is one of joy. We are called to collectively build and repair the structures of our society; we are called to be kin-dom builders. Wherever we build, God is there. What we build should be a place with a large table and room for all.

The Fourth Sunday of Advent
seeking sanctuary (love)
Luke 1:39-55 | Luke 1:46b-55³

After receiving the angel's extraordinary news, Mary retreats to Elizabeth and Zechariah's home to digest her new calling. She seeks refuge—physical safety and emotional protection. She receives a safe haven, a home for her heart to soon sing praise. Sanctuary and safe space is so crucial for everyone, especially the mother of Christ while she prepares to become a home for God. Sanctuary is anywhere God's love dwells freely and abundantly.

CLOSE TO HOME

About our Worship theme

When something hits close to home, it affects us deeply. During the Advent and Christmas season, we journey through scriptures and rituals that are tender, heavy with emotion, and vulnerable. We carry the memories and truths of this season close to our hearts. Close to Home acknowledges the “already but not yet” tension of our faith: Emmanuel is with us, and yet, God's promised day—our everlasting home—is not fully realized. It names our deep longing for God to come close to us.

The Advent and Christmas scriptures are rich with home metaphors and imagery. John the Baptist prophesies about the One who is to come, but reminds us that we are still wandering far from God's promised day; his message hits close to home, especially for those experiencing inequity and oppression. After receiving the angel's news, Mary retreats to Elizabeth's home, seeking refuge and safety. Christ is born in the midst of a journey home, in a crowded dwelling space amidst livestock and shepherds alike. The Magi travel far from home to pay homage to Christ, and, having been warned in a dream, they avoid Herod by traveling home another way. In these scriptures, home is both physical and metaphorical, something we seek and something we are called to build. Ultimately, God is our home and resting place. God draws near and makes a home on earth—sacred ground is all around us.

Close to Home also names the pain many of us will carry into this season. The holidays can poke at our grief. Many will be missing loved ones lost to sickness and tragedy. The traumas of the pandemic will still be with us. Many will have lost homes—due to natural disasters, economic hardship, and unjust policies. Many do not feel safe in their own homes due to poor living conditions or harmful family dynamics. Many feel alone and isolated at home. Churches are discerning transitions with their physical buildings; many of our spiritual homes are changing.

This Advent, may we be comforted by the One who dwells intimately with us. May we expand safety and sanctuary for everyone wandering far from home. May we come home— wherever home is found—to live fully with joy, hope, and courage.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

2021 Unified Budget	327,037.42
YTD Total Income to Operating Fund	259,241.55
YTD Operating Expenses	259,085.15
YTD Operating Fund Balance	156.40
2020 Operating Fund Balance Forward	18,065.45
2021 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance	18,221.85
Current Building Mortgage Balance	195,281.80

WIFI CONNECTIONS

Upstairs:
TP-Link 2.4Ghz- 80BA40
TP-Link 2.4Ghz- 80BA39
more distance/slower connection

TP-Link 5Ghz – 80BA39
less distance/faster connection

Downstairs:
MySpectrumWifi76- 2G
MySpectrumWifi76- 5G

Password - unionepic548

UMM BBQ

Saturday, Dec 4th
Proceeds benefit Missions for Christmas Families.
\$10 per pound
Pickup at 4 pm, PGUMC
No pre-orders please.



Sunday 12/5 - Friday 12/10
Shop Online at 32auctions.com/MissionMarket
Saturday 12/11
9 - 11 am
Shop Outside at PGUMC!

Support our Mission Market and help raise funds for Missions at home and around the world!

For Sale...
Homemade Baked cookies, cakes, candies, breads, canned goods, chocolate covered cherries & more! \$9.00 per lb.
Handcrafted jewelry, ornaments, knitting, Salvadoran items, stocking stuffers & other gifts!

Donations welcome!
Please consider donating homemade food and handcrafted items as listed above! Contact Wendy@wen_a@nc.rr.com for questions.

*Please fill out the donation google sheet bit.ly/PGMM21 by 12/4
*Please have ALL donations in the Fellowship Hall by NOON 12/10
*For donated food, we ask that you provide a list of ingredients to avoid allergy issues.

Thank you,
The Mission Team of Pleasant Green.

SUMMER CAMP 2022
Pleasant Green Summer Camp Announces 2022 Schedule!

Week #1: June 20 - 24, VBS 9:00 - 12:30
Week #2: June 27 - 30 (Mon - Thurs)
Closed: July 4 - July 8
Week #3: July 11 - 15, Camp Chestnut Ridge Traveling Camp at PGUMC
Week #4: July 18 - 22

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP
Every Sunday @ 10:30am, in person
or on our live [YouTube](#) stream.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Our first Sunday of Children's Church was a success! If you're interested in teaching, please sign up [HERE!](#)



WELCOME BACK PGUMC YOUTH!

We had a great participation at our November Youth meetings and are looking forward to December. We were so excited to see you and your youth invested in this ministry.

December 12, Youth Christmas Party 4-7 pm
The Cassidy's, 3514 Iva Ada Drive, Hillsborough

Please bring a \$5-10 wrapped gift for a White Elephant exchange. Dress in your best holiday spirit for a chance to win a \$10 gift card.

December 19, Youth Meeting 4-6 pm
PGUMC

We will be participating in a nativity escape room led by Wendy Anderson. Dinner will be provided!

REMEMBERING OUR SAINTS
Ray Stilley, Mary Lou Mitchell,
Jane Umstead, Peggy Wilson, Sybil Baker,
Steven Collins, Kent Godwin, Wanda Edens
& Dennis Nichols



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

Worship service
10:30 am
Children's church
During Church, Old Sanctuary
Clyde Walker Sunday School
9:15 am, Zoom
<https://nccumc.zoom.us/j/95216612160>
Advent Sunday School Study
9:30 am, Fellowship Hall

- 1 Bode Lee
- Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm
- 3 David Ward, Katelynn Seeberg
- 4 UMM BBQ
\$10 per quart
Pick up 4pm at PGUMC, no pre-orders
- 5 ONLINE MISSION MARKET
12/5 - 12/10
32auctions.com/MissionMarket
- Traveling Worship
after 10:30 am service
- Baby Shower for Kayleigh, 2:30pm
Fellowship Hall
Jacob & Kayleigh McCoy's baby boy,
Jackson "Jack" Lloyd McCoy was born
on November 17th weighing 9lb 8oz.

- 6 Mike Ostoyich
- Circle of Faith, 6:30 pm
Angus Barn
Meet 5:45 pm at PGUMC to ride
together!
- 7 John Micol, Ashley Riley
- 8 Billy Totten, Millie Hunter
- Choir Rehearsal, 7:30 pm
- 9 Terri Leonard, Jason Poe
- Cherry Making, 5:30 pm
Fellowship Hall
Please wear a mask, no dinner this year
- 10 Matt Matthews, Judy Riley, Mark
Stocking, Michelle Rittenhouse, George
Snowden III
- 11 Lisa Hunt Black, Terri Godwin
- Outside Mission Market, 9-11 am
Come shop outside in the PGUMC
parking lot!
- 12 Mindy Walker Vukmer, Wayne Walker,
Clark Riley
- YOUTH Christmas Party, 4-7 pm
The Cassidy's
3514 Iva Ada Drive, Hillsborough
Please bring a \$5-10 wrapped gift for a
White Elephant exchange. A \$10 gift
card for the best dressed in holiday
spirit!



- 13 Lonna Robinson
- UMW Book Club, 6-7 pm
Zoom
"Dinner by Candlelight"
by Kevin Louise Schaner.
Book discussions will facilitated by
Jeanne Murray, a wonderful United
Methodist Woman, a Lay Speaker and
a retired English teacher. Email
NCCUMW.webmaster@gmail.com to
receive the ZOOM link for the
discussions.
- Eleanor Walker Circle, 7 pm
PGUMC
- Praise Band practice, 7 pm
- 14 Wayne Stranger
- Read & Seed Patch, 6:30 pm
Zoom
<https://nccumc.zoom.us/j/99801109814>
Discussing "A Boy Called Christmas"
by Matt Haig. Contact Cindy at
fireflyfarm2015@gmail.com
- 15 Beth Woody, Billy Watkins
- Prayer Ministry, 6:30pm
Clyde Walker room or Zoom
Gail at pruettg4mh@gmail.com
All are welcome!
- 16 Rosemary O'Briant,Ed Punt
- Choir Rehearsal, 7:30pm
- 17 Madison Chapmon

- 19 Laura Crawford Fisher, Mary Umstead,
Michael Brogden
- UMW Christmas Lunch, 12 pm
Fellowship Hall
Come enjoy lunch and fellowship with
the United Methodist Women. If you are
unable to stay, come say hello and take a
plate to go. After lunch we will visit shut-
ins and take lunch.
- YOUTH, 4-6 pm,
PGUMC
- 20 Praise Band practice, 7 pm
- 21 Longest Night Worship Service, 7pm
Sanctuary
We will gather together on the Winter
Solstice, the longest night of the year.
- 22 Norah Link
- Dream Weaver's Christmas Party, 7 pm
Kristin's House, 200 Pleasant Green Rd.
Wear your Tacky Christmas Sweater &
bring a \$10 white elephant gift.
- 23 Andrea Harris
- 24 Lloyd Freeman
- Christmas Eve Candlelight Service,
5 pm
Sanctuary
- 25 Christmas Day
- 26 Sarah Bell
- Praise Band Sunday
- 27 Ed Casker
- 28 Heather Daugherty
- 29 Tricia Lipton, Callie Totten
- 30 Gwynn Morris
- 31 New Year's Eve



Free use photo: Nubia Navarro (nubikini) from Pexels

“Again Jesus spoke to them saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.” John 8:12

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 14-16

Recently the words to One Little Candle, composed with lyrics by J. Maloy Roach and George Mysels, published by Leeds Music Corporation in 1951, came to mind. The first two verses go:

*It is better to light just one little candle,
Than to stumble in the dark!
Better far that you light just one little candle,
All you need is a tiny spark!*

*If we'd all say a prayer that the world would be free,
What a wonderful dawn of a new day we'll see!
And, if everyone lit just one little candle,
What a bright world this would be!*

You may hear the rest of the song here: J. Alvarez: [YouTube](#) May 8, 2013

What an apt song for Advent and Christmas! Jesus was born to be the light of the world; a beacon for us to follow. During this season of Advent, as we are waiting for His arrival, what if we each lit our own candle as a symbol of Christ’s light? His light may shine through us, radiating love, peace and kindness. Through Christ, we have a lot of power and influence by passing to others His perfect peace and hope for a better world. Let us share it!

Let us pray:
Father of perfect light and peace do not let your light be hidden. Let us shine the light of your Son to others. Help us to be kind to everyone you put in our path, even the people we disagree with. Help us be peaceful when others most need to see it. Help us be compassionate and generous with people in need. Help us be courageous and bold as we do your work this Advent season. Amen.



PAINTING OF STAINED GLASS WINDOW

By Jim Wood and donated to PGUMC by Kathy Wood Anderson.

James Allen Wood, Jr. grew up in Winston-Salem. In 1975, Jim and his wife, Kathy, moved to Rocky Mount where he joined Peoples Bank. He passed away on January 4, 2013 after a short and courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

Jim was a prolific self-taught artist. It was his passion and he painted every day. One of his great pleasures in life was giving paintings to friends and people in need, as well as donating to favorite non-profit organizations.

(Jim & Kathy Wood were Rocky Mount next door neighbors of Maria Buss Bowlin)

MENTAL HEALTH CORNER

Coping with Grief by Gail

Through my many personal experiences with grief and through my work as a psychiatric-mental health nurse, educator, and Clinical Specialist, I am aware of how much loss we have experienced in the past several years. Grief comes from many sources; the loss of a loved one, the loss of a loved one, although still living, through dementia or other physical and emotional changes, loss of familiar routines and surroundings. There is also anticipatory grief, where feelings of dread surface about what may happen in the future. Grief can even come through happy milestones, such as a child going off to kindergarten, college or starting a job in a new city. Often our grief is more intense during the holidays.

Grief shows itself in many ways: crying; feeling sad, angry, anxious, or irritable; wanting to withdraw from people, laughing uncontrollably, swearing; drinking, eating, or smoking too much; denying that you are still grieving, taking risks... all are common. While it is natural to want grief to go away, riding the wave of changing thoughts and feelings is more beneficial. One moment you may find yourself laughing at pleasant memories, another moment, crying at the loss, another moment angry because a loved one is gone.

How to cope with grief? Put up sticky notes around your home with reminders:

- Be gentle with myself.
- The intense feelings of grief are temporary.
- Crying does not last forever. It, too, is temporary.

- It is all right to cry as often as I need to.
- It is all right to feel whatever feelings rise to the top.
- Support other people who are lonely or sad.
- Surround myself with people who love life.
- If I have enough energy, donate time to my favorite charity.
- Ask others for support.
- Spend time outdoors in nature.
- Look for new ideas to cope with grief. The USA 87th Force Support Squadron’s Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) website has an excellent list of suggestions. The list is copyrighted so only the link is available here: <https://gomdl.com/wp-content/uploads/Coping-With-Grief-During-The-Holidays.pdf>
- Find professional help if grief is overwhelming: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/therapists/grief> or <https://www.opencounseling.com/north-carolina/durham>
- Reach out to a crisis service if I am in acute distress: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mental-health-developmental-disabilities-and-substance-abuse/crisis-services> or call the national suicide prevention hotline, opened 24/7: 1-800-273-8255
- These are all tried-and-true ways to cope with grief. You are not alone. Your experience is not unique even though it feels that way. The nature of grief is to isolate you. Sometimes it helps to sit by yourself and feel the pain; other times it helps to take action. Riding the wave of emotional changes and going with the flow will take you firmly to shore, as you are ready.

TRAVELING WORSHIP IN NOVEMBER

Visit to Sheila Cook.

On Sunday, November 7, we visited Sheila Cook. Gail Pruitt had organized a jar of encouraging notes to Sheila from members of PGUMC, which she presented to Sheila. We also took a copy of “The Upper Room” and a bulletin from that day’s service. We enjoyed a short visit, and Sheila and Dave gave us a tour of their new addition which will provide Sheila with accessible space to live in as her mobility challenges increase. When they move into the addition, they will need some moving help. Right now, Sheila has a request: casseroles just for her. She likes all kinds—but the casseroles do need to be thick, juicy, with small pieces for easy swallowing. We talked so much we forgot to take a photo! Sheila looks great, smiles a lot, and was in good spirits on our visit. Next date for Traveling Worship—Sunday, December 5, right after church.



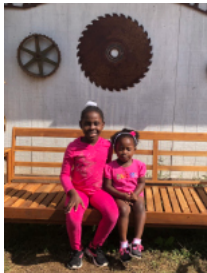
Al Edens, Brian Wingo, Van McCay and Nancy Maloney painting our rails green!



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
HILLSBOROUGH

Al Edens, Brian Wingo, Jim Perry
and Van McCay replacing a deck
on the back of a house.

If anyone is interested in working
on Habitat projects, please contact
Jim Perry @ perryjames@twc.com



Dear Fellow Sojourners:

I wanted to thank you for your generosity and signs of love for our two Haitian children that we are fostering. The gifts of food, money, gift cards, clothes, shoes, toys and art supplies have been immensely helpful. Being a first time mom at the age of 65 has brought unique challenges for me to overcome. Fortunately because of people like you all, having the necessities to feed, care for and foster these children hasn't been one of them. I am overwhelmed at how much you all have shown the love of Jesus to the girls and me through your generosity. Hadassa and Gaelle have adapted extremely well. Hadassa is in preschool at Aldersgate and Gaelle is in second grade at Little River-both thriving. We hope their dad will be able to be issued his visa renewal very soon so he can visit for the holidays. My heart is full at all if the help you have been. When I open a package of rice, a can of beans or a package of macaroni and cheese I breathe a prayer of gratitude and ask the Lord to bless you for your gifts.

Much love,
April Perry

SUPPORT UMCOR'S COFFEE &
CHOCOLATE PROJECT,
FOR SALE IN THE PARLOR

Fair trade provides opportunities for churches to support a system that nurtures rather than diminishes God's vision of abundant life. UMCOR's partner is the employee owned fair trade organization called Equal Exchange.

12 oz Ground Coffee Bags, \$8

Mind Body Soul Regular or Decaf

Organic Chocolate bars \$2.50

Dark Chocolate Almond & sea salt (55%)

Dark Chocolate Caramel Crunch & sea salt

Dark Chocolate Mint Crunch (67%)

Panama Extra Dark Chocolate (80%)

Dark Chocolate Orange (65%)

Very Dark Chocolate (71%)

Milk Chocolate

Milk Chocolate Caramel Crunch & sea salt

Chocolate with Coconut Milk (55%)



DONATIONS NEEDED!

Collected in the Narthex

- New twin and full comforters
- New pillows
- Pine sol
- Dish soap
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels

ORANGE CONGREGATIONS IN MISSION

Thank you for keeping our cart in the Narthex full and the OCIM pantry overflowing. Any monetary donations towards OCIM operating expenses or Meals On Wheels are also appreciated.

OCIM needs your help!

This time of year is when many donations come in and extra hands are needed to help unload and take the items to the OCIM thrift store. If you are able to help in any capacity (two-hour time spans preferred) as donations come in, this would be a tremendous help! Volunteers must be 16 and older. Volunteers are especially needed on Saturdays to unload donations and take them into the store. Saturdays left to serve are Dec. 4th, 11th, and 18th. If you are able to help during the week but not on Saturdays that is wonderful too. Please take the time to help out if you are able and bring a friend or family member! It's a great way to get into the Christmas spirit! For questions or to sign up call OCIM at - 919-732-6194.



Mary Umstead



Sheila Cook

NOVEMBER
BLOOD DRIVE

Thanks to all that donated
and volunteered! Save the
date for January 26th!

PleasantGreen

United Methodist Church



PleasantGreenUMC.org | pgumc@ncrrbiz.com | 919.383.5764

Pastor

Rev. Laura Thompson
lthompson@nccumc.org
919.383.2339

Duke Intern

Emily Robbian
emily.robbian@duke.edu

Ways to give

We know and believe that part of being a follower of Christ is 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. Thank you for your generosity!

Online *www.PleasantGreenUMC.org*

Smartphone *Text "PleasantGreen" To: 77977*

Envelope *Mail or slip under office door*

Amazon Smile Support PGUMC when you purchase through amazon smile. They donate 0.5% of your purchase price on eligible items to the "Pleasant Green United Methodist Church" charitable organization. We hope you'll consider this as we continue to find creative and generous ways to share resources together. Already have an Amazon Prime account?

Go to smile.amazon.com and use your existing login.
Pleasant Green's unique charity link:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/56-1152936>

Blood Drive

January 26th at PGUMC



To sign up, contact the Church office at 919.383.5764 or pgumc@ncrrbiz.com or go to redcrossblood.org (sponsor code: Pleasant Green)

PLEASE
RECYCLE