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# ROOTS & BRANCHES

*PleasantGreenUMC.org*

**DECEMBER 2020**

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# Four weeks

Advent. Is that something we really need in 2020, of all years? A season of waiting? We've been waiting for 9 months. Waiting to re-gather. Waiting for our social lives to return. Waiting for the day when we don't have to wrestle over the tiniest decisions. Waiting to sing together again. Waiting for a vaccine. Waiting to go to a sporting event. Waiting to go back to school. Waiting for a sense of normalcy to return. If Advent is about waiting, then we might be readier than we have ever been to celebrate this season! We are getting to be experts.

What makes these four weeks different than the past 40 weeks? And do we really want to light candles of peace, love, joy, and hope? Peace, after that election season? Joy, when we are told not to gather with family at the holidays? Love, when cities are burning and protests are all over the country? Hope, when the entire world is suffering and we are facing the biggest economic crisis since WWII? Hope, now?

Yes, now. Peace. Love. Joy. Hope. Especially now. Maybe this time around the words of the prophets will resonate even more deeply in our spirits, "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down!" and the words of the Psalmist, "Give ear. Stir up your might, and come to save us! Restore us, O God..." Madeleine L'Engle wrote a great poem about Jesus' coming: "That was not time for a child to be born, with the earth betrayed by war and hate...In a land in the crushing grip of Rome; honor and truth were trampled by scorn – yet here did the Savior make his home. When is the time for love to be born? The inn is full on planet earth, and by a comet the sky is torn – Yet Love still takes the risk of birth."

The Christian year begins with this season of Advent. I suppose we could begin in a lot of different ways – with the trumpets on Easter or the fire of Pentecost. But perhaps this way of beginning is significant. We begin in the shadows, with sorrow, with longing, knowing despair, hearing the cries of the suffering. As a church, we begin our year

here. Because this is precisely where God's presence and grace comes to us in our world. And it is here, in the darkness of a long year, in the shadows of our world where we, the church, light candles of peace, hope, joy, and love. We enter the darkness and pray, sing, and wait for the light.

Most of my December newsletters would probably include some kind of gentle encouragement to accept the invitation of Advent in the midst of the hustle and bustle of the season. Most years – our lives and calendars are a lot like that inn – full, with little room for much else in our lives. No doubt, this year feels different.

It makes me wonder what difference these four weeks will make? What sort of assurance and new hope might this time bring? The invitation of Advent is still the invitation of Advent: to watch, to wait, to go within. And to trust that God will meet you there. Maybe this year, we can be a little more honest with God and join Mary in her pondering: What is the invitation of this season for me? How is God breaking into my life and world right now? What is God revealing? What do I really hope for? Wait for?

We always begin our season with a disorienting text – this year from Mark's gospel. Roman armies were attempting to destroy and desecrate the temple. It seemed that all hope was lost. But in worship and in our scripture, we will eventually move to Mary's Magnificat. This move is not without significance. I pray that our lives will reflect our worship: that even when we find ourselves disoriented and looking for hope, that we will move toward the wonder, awe and praise because we trust the deep wisdom of God's acts in history. We know that Christ has come and Christ will come again. Keep awake, dear friends. And may God Advent into our lives to stir us up, comfort us, challenge us and awaken our souls again and again.

Abundant Advent blessings on you and your home,  
*Pastor Laura*

# Staying Connected



## **\*Changes During Covid-19**

### **Worship**

Saturdays at 6pm, Sundays at 9am or 11am with the Orange Cooperative Parish.

### **Spiritual Care Packages**

Emailed to members weekly each Sunday afternoon.

### **Sunday School**

Several classes are meeting via Zoom on Sundays - contact your Sunday school teacher for information.

### **Prayer Team**

Our team is continuing to pray diligently for those on our prayer list and to 'meet' monthly to update each other.

### **Youth**

Weekly Zoom calls for Middle and High Schoolers with Carsten.

### **Correspondence**

Handwritten letters, phone calls, and emails to members.

### **Discussion**

Small group studies offered throughout the month.

## **PGUMC Directory Update**

Please send any changes or additions from the 2018 directory to [pgumc@ncrrbiz.com](mailto:pgumc@ncrrbiz.com)

## **Financial Update**

<i>2020 Unified Budget</i>	<b>348,460.49</b>
<i>YTD Total Income to Operating Fund</i>	<b>245,817.81</b>
<i>YTD Operating Expenses</i>	<b>269,421.12</b>
<i>YTD Operating Fund Balance</i>	<b>-23,603.31</b>
<i>2019 Operating Fund Balance Forward</i>	<b>17,640.33</b>
<i>2020 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance</i>	<b>-5,962.98</b>
<i>Current Building Mortgage Balance</i>	<b>243,787.48</b>

Thank you for purchasing through [SmileAmazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com). Contributions to PGUMC this quarter~ \$28.78




## **Pleasant Green United Methodist Women**

We want to give a huge thanks to Martha Walker for leading the UMW as President for the past two years.

Congratulations to our 2021 President, Andrea Harris, and Vice President, Julie McCay. Also, Kathy DuLaney as Secretary and Evelyn Morris will continue as our Treasurer.

We will not be having our annual Christmas dinner this December but will all look forward to grand celebrations and opportunities for fellowship next year!

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- 1** *Giving Tuesday*  
umcmmission.org/givelove
  - 2** *Blood Drive*  
10am-3pm
  - 3** *The Ever-Flowing Eno*  
1pm, Virtual Event with Dave Cook
  - The Read & Seed Patch*  
6:30pm, Contact: Cindy - pmfcjs@aol.com
  - 4** *Mission Market Online Auction Begins*  
12pm-12pm December 11<sup>th</sup>
  - 8** *Food For All*
  - 11** *Mission Market Online Auction Ends*  
12pm
  - 12** *Mission Market at PGUMC*  
9am-12pm
  - 16** *Prayer Ministry*  
6:30pm, Contact: Gail - pruettg4mh@gmail.com
  - 20** *The Longest Night Worship Service*  
3pm, Camp Chestnut Ridge
  - 24** *Christmas Eve Service*  
Online and in-person, details to come.
  - 25** *Christmas Day*
  - 31** *New Years Eve*

**1/10** *Next Month*  
*District-led Church Leadership Training*  
Sunday, Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>, 3:00-4:30pm  
Save the Date-Details to come

# December

		<b>1</b> Giving Tuesday  <i>Bode Lee</i>	<b>2</b> Bible Study 10:30am  Blood Drive 10am-3pm	<b>3</b> The Ever-Flowing Eno-1pm  Read & Seed Patch-6:30pm  <i>Katelynn Seeberg David Ward</i>	<b>4</b> Mission Market Online Auction Begins-12pm	<b>5</b>   <i>Kathy Woody Lisa Nichols</i>
<b>6</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent  <i>Mike Ostoyich</i>	<b>7</b> Small Group Advent Study 7pm  <i>John Micol Ashley Riley</i>	<b>8</b> FOOD FOR ALL  <i>Billy Totten Millie Hunter</i>	<b>9</b> Bible Study 10:30am  <i>Terri Leonard Jason Poe</i>	<b>10</b>   <i>Michelle Rittenhouse George Snowden III Mark Stocking Matt Matthews Judy Riley</i>	<b>11</b> Mission Market Online Auction Ends-12pm  <i>Lisa Hunt Black Terri Godwin</i>	<b>12</b> Mission Market at PGUMC 9am-12pm  <i>Mindy Vukmer Wayne Walker Clark Riley</i>
<b>13</b> 3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent  <i>Lonna Robinson</i>	<b>14</b> Small Group Advent Study 7pm  <i>Wayne Stranger</i>	<b>15</b>   <i>Beth Woody Billy Watkins</i>	<b>16</b> Bible Study 10:30am  Prayer Ministry 6:30pm  <i>Rosemary O'Briant Ed Punt</i>	<b>17</b>   <i>Madison Chapmon</i>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>   <i>Laura Crawford Fisher Michael Brogden Mary Umstead</i>
<b>20</b> 4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent  The Longest Night Worship Service-3pm	<b>21</b> Small Group Advent Study 7pm	<b>22</b>   <i>Norah Link</i>	<b>23</b> Bible Study 10:30am  <i>Andrea Harris</i>	<b>24</b> Christmas Eve  <i>Lloyd Freeman</i>	<b>25</b> Christmas Day	<b>26</b>   <i>Sarah Bell</i>
<b>27</b>   <i>Ed Casker</i>	<b>28</b>   <i>Heather Daugherty</i>	<b>29</b>   <i>Tricia Lipton Callie Totten</i>	<b>30</b> Bible Study 10:30am  <i>Gwynn Morris</i>	<b>31</b> New Year's Eve		

# Journey to Bethlehem!

### *A 6,000 mile challenge*

Join the Orange Cooperative Parish on their 6,000 mile journey - Hillsborough, NC to Bethlehem, Israel. Let's travel these miles together and raise money to help The Compass Center for Women and Families (located in Chapel Hill). Whether you walk, bike, run or skip we hope you will go with us and track your mileage on the Challenge Hound. Our goal is to raise \$1/mile. Links to join and donate are on the front page of our website: [pleasantgreenumc.org](http://pleasantgreenumc.org)

*"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." -African proverb*

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### ***Worship this month***

The churches of the Orange Cooperative Parish will worship together throughout the four weeks of Advent, exploring the theme "Those Who Dream."

#### *Worship times for the Season of Advent:*

- Saturday evenings at 6:00pm
- Sunday mornings at 9:00am
- Sunday mornings at 11:00am

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### **SMALL GROUP STUDIES**

- Women's Sunday School class:  
*"The Uncluttered Heart: Making Room for God During Advent and Christmas."*  
Sundays at 9:30am on Zoom. Contact: Wanda Edens
- Clyde Walker Sunday school class:  
*"The Characters of Christmas: The Unlikely People Caught Up in the Story of Jesus."*  
Sundays at 9:30am on Zoom. Contacts: Gail Pruett or DJ Martin
- Small Group Advent Study:  
*"A Weary World"*  
Monday nights 7-8pm OR Wednesday mornings at 10:30am on Zoom.

*Advent related studies and books are available on the Clyde Walker table at church for extra reading this season.*

## ***Holiday Food Collection- Circle of Faith's Project for Christmas***

Help Feed Hungry Families in our Community this Christmas. PGUMC is working with the Orange County School Social Workers to help meet their goal of feeding 325 Families of children in the OCS system.

We are collecting donations of food, gift cards and money through December 14.

Money and Gift Cards (Grocery store/Wal-mart) can be left in the Stocking hanging outside the Church office door- or slide under the door while we're out. For checks, please make out to Pleasant Green UMC with a memo note of "stocking fund." Mailed checks and donations are welcome.

Please see the list below. These items can be left in the Narthex.

### **CANNED GOODS**

corn  
sweet peas  
green beans  
cranberry sauce  
tuna  
chicken

### **DRY GOODS**

boxed mac & cheese  
cereal  
oatmeal  
breakfast bars  
muffin mix  
cookie mix  
cake mix  
cake frosting  
bagged bread stuffing  
spaghetti noodles & jar sauce  
ramen noodles  
white potatoes

### **CHILDREN**

pop tarts  
microwaveable mac & cheese  
pudding  
fruit cups  
crackers  
granola bars  
chips  
snack cakes  
pop-top meals for kids  
peanut butter  
jelly

### **SUPPLIES**

plastic wrap  
aluminum foil  
cooking oil  
aluminum roasting pan

## ***Mission Market***

The Market will be held outside on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 9am - 12pm. Masks and gloves are required and can be provided.

The Online Auction will run from 12pm on December 4th to 12pm on December 11th.

The Mission Team appreciates your help with the Mission Market and the Online Auction. Please consider donating! Donated items for the auction need to be in the PG Fellowship Hall by noon on December 2nd.

***Do you have a favorite plant, bush or flower growing in your garden? Or A special plant that has been passed down in your family?***

We would like donations of plants or bulbs that mean something to you to plant around the church property. Please consider potting up this plant or digging up the bulbs for donation.

Fall is a good time to plant, so we can take donations now or in the Spring - whenever you have the plant(s) ready.

Please contact Cindy Stubbs at pmfcs@aol.com or Van McCay at vmccay@nc.rr.com with donations or questions!



## ***The Ever Flowing Eno***

Virtual Event: Dec. 3, 1:00 pm

Join us to hear former Eno River State Park Superintendent, Dave Cook, entertain and educate the audience with the Eno River Story from its origin to the present. Q&A will follow.

Register here:

<https://events.durhamcountylibrary.org/event/4637452>

# Billy Walker's 80th Birthday Drive-By





GIVE  
DONATE  
HELP  
SHARE  
VOLUNTEER  
PRAY



**Habitat for Humanity.**

Helping build strength, stability & self reliance. Habitat for Humanity in Orange County remains hard at work constructing four houses on Odie St. in Hillsborough. Volunteers are needed! Please contact Jim Perry at perryjames@twc.com.

**The United Methodist Women's "Christmas in July" Mission Project**

Thank you to those who have donated "Back to School" classroom items for Orange County Schools! We have many items collected and ready to be given away.



**United Methodist Committee on Relief**

Please consider donating to the U.S. Disaster Response and enable UMCOR to serve people impacted by the catastrophic wind, rain and fire events of this season. Help to provide the tangible items necessary for relief work including personal protective equipment that our volunteers will need to stay healthy.



**Orange Congregations in Missions**

Thank you for keeping our cart in the Narthex full! Please continue to donate to the food pantry for those who are food insecure in our community. Other items such as hand sanitizer, Clorox wipes, and other cleaning supplies are needed! Volunteers at OCIM are welcome, and financial donations can be made via check or paypal at [www.ocimnc.org](http://www.ocimnc.org).



**FMF Donations Needed!**

- Diapers sizes 1,2,3,4
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Bath towels
- Small bottles of dish soap
- Toothpaste
- Brooms/Dust pans
- Clorox disinfectant wipes
- Bleach
- Low-sugar juice boxes
- Vitamin Water zero
- Gatorade zero
- Sugar-free water bottle packs
- New sheets/comforters/pillows (twin/full)

“

But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how terrible that darkness will be!

*Matthew 6:23*

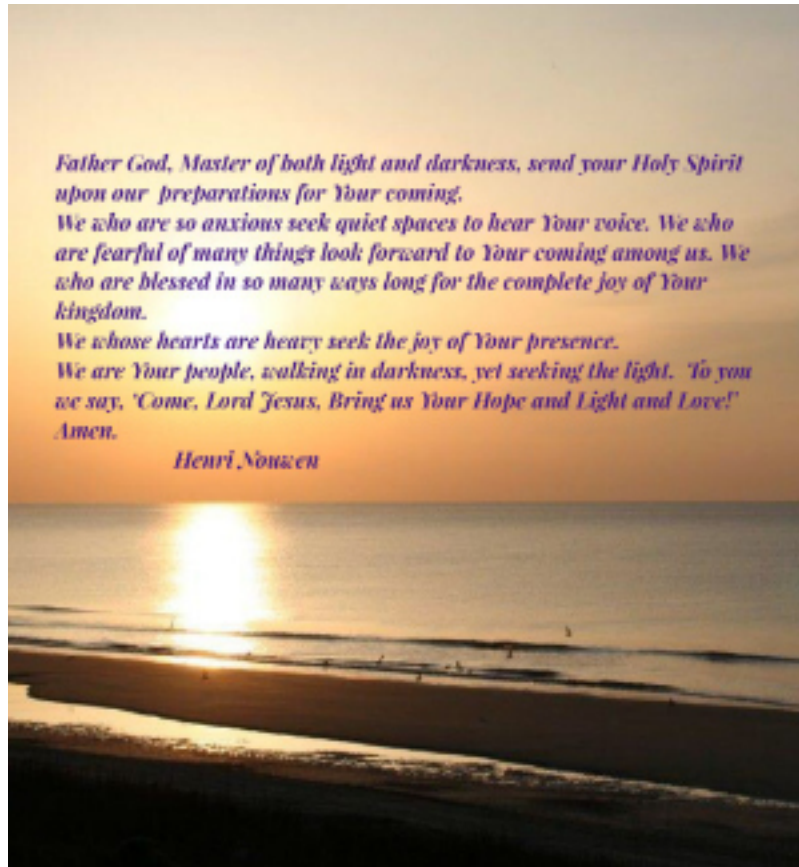
When God began to create the heavens and the earth – the earth was without shape or form, it was dark over the deep sea, and God’s wind swept over the waters – God said, “Let there be light.” And so light appeared. God saw how good the light was. God separated the light from the darkness. God names the light Day and the darkness Night.

*Genesis 1: 1-5*

Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me won’t walk in darkness but will have the light of life.

*John 8:1*

”



*Father God, Master of both light and darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparations for Your coming.*

*We who are so anxious seek quiet spaces to hear Your voice. We who are fearful of many things look forward to Your coming among us. We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of Your kingdom.*

*We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of Your presence.*

*We are Your people, walking in darkness, yet seeking the light. To you we say, 'Come, Lord Jesus, Bring us Your Hope and Light and Love!' Amen.*

*Henri Nouwen*

## From Darkness to Light...a Prayer for Advent

*This collage was contributed by Marti Bennett, who is on our prayer list. She combines photographs she has taken with inspirational words, prayers, and poems.*



Pleasant Green  
*United Methodist Church*

**PGUMC**  
**3005 Pleasant Green Road**  
**Durham, NC 27705**

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pgumc@ncrrbiz.com  
(919) 383-5764

Pastor: Rev. Laura Thompson  
lthompson@nccumc.org  
(919) 383-2339

Youth Parish Coordinator:  
Carsten Bryant  
carsten.bryant@duke.edu

### WAYS TO GIVE

**ONLINE:** www.PleasantGreenUMC.org

**SMARTPHONE:** Text "PleasantGreen" To: 77977

**ENVELOPE:** Mail or slip under office door

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 in advance for your generosity!



Support PGUMC when you purchase through amazon smile. They will donate 0.5% of your purchase price on eligible products to the "Pleasant Green United Methodist Church" charitable organization. We hope you'll consider this as we continue to find creative & generous ways to share resources together. Already have an Amazon Prime account? Go to smile.amazon.com and use your existing Amazon Prime account login. Pleasant Green's unique charity link: <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/56-1152936>

### DOWNLOAD THE PGUMC APP!

**APP STORE:** Search "Pleasant Green UMC"

**SMARTPHONE:** Text "PleasantGreenapp" To: 77977

Download and Explore! It's free! One of the features we're excited to share through this app is a "Daily Prayer." A place where you can click for a Bible verse, prayer, and thought of the day. A daily gift and inspiration for the whole family right at your fingertips.



### BLOOD DRIVE AT PGUMC

Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 10am-3pm  
Held in the Fellowship Hall. Contact the Church office at pgumc@ncrrbiz.com / 919-383-5764 or redcrossblood.org (sponsor code: Pleasant Green)  
Please give the gift of life!

**PLEASE  
RECYCLE**

