



Pleasant Green  
*United Methodist Church*

PleasantGreenUMC.org

## ***Roots & Branches***

July 2020



Crises reveal things that have always been there. And we know long before COVID entered our lives that there have been things present in our lives and culture that have now been brought to light. The pandemic is highlighting many things, bringing much to the surface. One such pandemic that was here long before COVID, was – loneliness. The current global context has brought that to light, while simultaneously disrupting the few connections and networks that many people relied on in order to live healthy and thriving lives. For many who live alone, coping has been a challenge. For others, there has been a lack of meaningful connection with coworkers on a daily basis, friends at school, and loved ones we are used to seeing on a regular basis. In essence, that is the definition of loneliness: lack of meaningful connection.

Brené Brown, in an interview with Dr. Vivek Murthy, talks about 3 dimensions of loneliness to reflect the particular types of relationships that are missing in each other's lives: 1) intimate or emotional loneliness- the longing for a close confidant or partner; sharing a deep mutual bond of affection and trust (this does not have to be a romantic partner). 2) Relational/Social loneliness- the yearning for quality friendships, social companions and support. 3) Collective loneliness- the hunger for a network or community of people who share your sense of purpose and interest. These three dimensions reflect the high quality of social connections that human beings need in order to thrive. The lack of relationships in any of these dimensions can make someone feel lonely, which is why someone may have a supportive marriage and still feel lonely for friends and community.

Chances are, we can all think back on moments in our lives where we have felt alone in our work, in our home, or simply in the world; and without a doubt, it affects our mental and physical health. The question is, in this strange season, are there things within our power to combat some of those feelings? I believe the answer is yes, and I'd like to offer some thoughts and suggestions to those who may feel lonely or know a friend/loved one who might be experiencing deep loneliness.

While this certainly isn't a strategy to "fix" all the hard feelings, there is one particular model that can offer some wisdom. As a guide, we can EASE into making stronger connections with one another:

### **E- Extend Yourself**

- Interact with strong and weak relationships in your life (this might mean the grocery store clerk or mailman!).
- Recognize who you interact with on a daily basis (daily/weekly/monthly)- there may be friendships there we haven't even acknowledged or named.

### **A- Action Plan**

- Recognize those places where you can invest your social energy (social media may not be the answer).

### **S- Selection**

- Create quality relationships with those in need or consider places where there is the potential for quality social relationships.
- Connect with people who have similar interests.

### **E – Expect the Best**

- Focus on positive interactions and recognize grateful moments throughout your day/week.
- Remember, one day at a time.

There are a multitude of studies, experiences, and stories that testify to the fact that communities actually grow stronger after challenging times. After a violent storm. After a flood. After of tornado has ripped through a neighborhood. After there has been a tragedy. People learn to come together in new ways. What if we could apply that to our lives? I hope that as we live our days, we might understand the value of this moment, discover the small things we can do, cultivate new skills and new ways to connect, and deal with our pain in a new way, too.

May we have the courage to show up to the pain of our experiences. May we have the grace to withhold judgement and extend gentleness to ourselves and others. May we have the strength to let our values guide us into a new way of being and living. Hold fast to this promise: that God is with us today and forevermore. We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

I love you. I miss you. I am praying for and with you.

Pastor Laura

### **The Faith Formation program continues at 7:30pm every Tuesday for the next 6 weeks!**

*Please see the theme for each week below:*

#### **Meeting Format & Content**

Catchup Time (15 minutes)

Share how we are each getting on in these times.

#### **1. Spiritual Food for Thought (15 minutes)**

- Week 1 (06/30): Prayer and Bible Study
- Week 2 (07/07): Meditation
- Week 3 (07/14): God's Guidance
- Week 4 (07/21): Fasting
- Week 5 (07/28): Solitude
- Week 6 (08/04): Celebration of Faith

#### **2. Share our Stories (30 minutes)**

- Focus on our experiences on the theme of the day.
- What can we learn from each other?
- Allow each person to speak in turn without interruptions.

#### **3. Share in Prayer (15 minutes)**

- Articulate prayer requests, and pray together: gratitude, joys, concerns, worries.
- Pray for each other.

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://duke.zoom.us/j/97310050489?](https://duke.zoom.us/j/97310050489?pwd=SUxLSmNSZzZWOTcyTW12WnJmSlU1dz09)

[pwd=SUxLSmNSZzZWOTcyTW12WnJmSlU1dz09](https://duke.zoom.us/j/97310050489?pwd=SUxLSmNSZzZWOTcyTW12WnJmSlU1dz09)

### **Pleasant Green 2020 Summer Camp**

**scheduled for the weeks of July 13 and July 20 has been cancelled !**

Camp Chestnut Ridge announced they will not sponsor any Traveling Camps due to the many COVID 19 changes that require additional staff. They were scheduled to be at PGUMC the week of July 13. After much discussion the Afterschool Committee and Church Council have decided to cancel Summer Camp this year.

We are disappointed to miss what would have been PG's 29th year, but the concerns for the safety of children and staff are our priority.





## A Prayer for Oppressors

**Isaiah 19:20** – *It will be a sign and a witness to the Lord of heavenly forces in the land of Egypt. When they cry out to the Lord because of oppressors, God will send them a savior and defender to rescue them.*

**Isaiah 3:12** – *As for my people, oppressors strip them and swindlers rule them. My people – your leaders mislead you and confuse your paths.*

With so much going on in our country and the world, many populations are feeling oppressed, whether by war, harsh laws, deprivation of adequate healthcare, voting privileges, or economic opportunity. Sometimes we feel oppressed by extreme changes and losses beyond our control; losing familiar lifestyles, traditions, freedom-of-movement, and values we cherish. While we often pray for those being persecuted, we may neglect to pray for those causing the problems. What? We should pray for them? Jesus makes it clear, as written in Matthew 5: 44-45, “*But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who harass you so that you will be acting as children of your Father who is in heaven. He makes the sun rise on both the evil and the good and sends rain on both the righteous and the unrighteous.*” Following Jesus’ teaching can be a challenge. Sometimes it is too overwhelming to even know where to start. We may begin by examining our own lives. Who are we oppressing? What is the consequence on other people? What are they feeling by our actions? What stones do we need to refrain from throwing?

### Let us pray...

Lord Jesus, in your mercy, come.

Soften my heart and unclench my fist from round this stone. Judgement is yours and I surrender it to you now. I recognize that your cross is higher and wider than I could ever imagine. I accept that your grace is so radical it offends the law of justice - so much so that it welcomes me - a sinner - into your very presence.

Lord Jesus, in your mercy, come.

Soften the hearts and unclench the fists of those I perceive as ‘tyrant’, ‘abuser’ and ‘oppressor’. Thank you that your mercy triumphs over your justice. I bless those that persecute. And I pray for a Damascus road conversion for them - that they might adopt your way, your truth and your life - that the oppressed may go free, and the oppressor may step into your best plan for their life.

Lord Jesus, in your mercy come.

Soften my heart to love your mercy, enlarge my view to see beyond my desire to label people, and increase my faith to see your transformative love reach out to those who are broken, and those who are breaking. Let your kingdom come, and your will be done, today, and forever.\*

<https://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/written-prayers-praying-for-oppressors.pdf>

\*This prayer comes from a blog from The Sanctuary Centre in April 2011 (Easter), when Libya and its people were being oppressed.

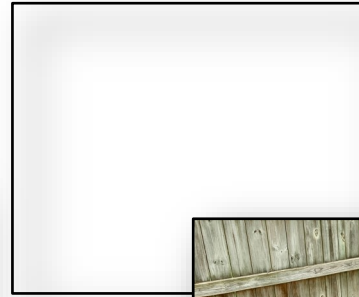
The Prayer Ministry meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm. If North Carolina and our United Methodist Church are still in a state of emergency due to COVID-19, we will meet by free conference call on July 15. Otherwise, we will meet in the parlor (Clyde Walker Classroom). Look for more information through the bulletin or the PGUMC emailed weekly news as we get closer to that date. You may also contact Gail at [pruettg4mh@gmail.com](mailto:pruettg4mh@gmail.com). Please join us! We would love to have you. The next meeting is Wednesday, July 15 at 6:30 pm.

# pleasant green » youth group

Charlotte, Sara, Millie & Chloe..... trying to make the best of a RAINY cold day at the beach!



Isaiah's Sketching with Michaels Free Class!



Isaiah helped build a garden bed!

## Driveway Visit:

I'd love to visit each and every youth family this month, so pick a time and let's make it happen!  
~ Carsten

## Zoom Updates:

Middle schoolers will meet at 7p on Mondays and high schoolers will meet Tuesdays at 7p.

## Save the date:

The youth will have an outdoor, socially-distanced, masked-up cookout & worship service on July 8 at 5:30pm on the basketball court/picnic shelter at Union Grove!

<https://mailchi.mp/5de5f1fe288d/youth-group-tonight-7pm-4459688?e=499c91eccc>

***We'd love to know what the youth are up to...Please send pictures for the next newsletter!***

## Summer Browning Scholarships

*In memory of Summer Browning, a scholarship fund was established in 1993 by her parents, family and friends. This years recipients received a small scholarship to help with textbooks and supplies. Congratulations to Rick Cassidy, Davis Whitfield, Will Witt & Ian Casker!*

Pleasant Green,

Thank You for awarding me this scholarship. I am truly thankful for your continued support of my academic and career pursuits. I have always felt love from my church family and I am grateful to belong to a tight-knit community like this. I hope to make the most of this award and work hard towards achieving my goals.

-Rick Cassidy

Dear PGUMC & Summer Browning Scholarship fund,

Thank you so much for the scholarship money & for all of your support! It will definitely help during my sophomore year at ECU!!

-Davis Whitfield



Congratulations!  
Sara Stephens & RJ Crumpler  
The couple was married on Saturday, June 20th  
at the Burwell School in Hillsborough.



## JULY BIRTHDAYS



### Our Rose Garden

***We are blessed with a beautiful Rose Garden, a great resource to bring beauty and a remembrance of Pleasant Green to the sick, shut-ins or for yourself!***



Feel free to cut roses but please remember the following:

- ~Take a container of water to the garden.
- ~Cut roses at a 45 degree angle just above a leaf on the stem that has five leaflets. It is important to cut roses correctly, as new growth forms at the place of cutting.
- ~Place any dead roses or leaves in the bucket beside the fence door
- ~Pull a few weeds while you're there ;)

*Help is always welcome to keep our roses looking beautiful. Please contact the church office if you would like to help. Thank you!*

***Thank you to everyone who is helping to make  
our Church look beautiful this summer!***

Please contact Van McCay if you're able to help out around the church grounds!  
919-259-2721 or [vmccay@nc.rr.com](mailto:vmccay@nc.rr.com).

1	Scott Bell
1	Isaiah Harris
2	David Bracey
2	Asher Nichols
3	Terry Perry
5	Jack McCurdy
5	David Totten
6	Joni Wilson Shelton
7	Mariah Umstead
9	Kathie Breweur
9	Linda Fonville
10	Caroline Bryant
10	Mike Dempsey
10	Kaitlyn Micol
10	Vic Witt
12	Nicholus Sutton
12	Samantha M. Gilbane
14	Anne Rice
15	Mary Westmoreland
15	James Rodgers
15	Crandall Anderson
16	Jane Umstead
16	Van McCay II
17	Jason Godwin
17	Lucas Best
17	Betsy Cassidy
17	Tom Sutton
19	Jim Boffey
19	Brook B. Shotwell
19	Jason Martin
19	Bryan Parrish
20	Ray Finley
21	Eloise King
22	Marcia Ferris
25	Gwen Snowden
25	Naomi Fister
27	Martha Ann Walker
27	Debbie Freeman
27	Laura Fister
28	Sandra Totten
28	Kelli O'Hara
29	Wayne Powers

### Support UMCOR's Coffee & Chocolate Project

**Coffee** - \$8 per bag ~Decaf & Regular Ground

**Chocolate Bars** - \$2.50 each

Dark Chocolate with Almonds ~ Caramel Crunch

Mint ~ Dark Chocolate—71%

Milk Chocolate ~ Milk Chocolate Caramel Crunch



*This fair trade economic model 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.*



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

*Please see the list below for items needed for classrooms for "Back to School". The school supplies are donated to Orange County Elementary, Middle & High Schools. Please leave in the Narthex.*

- Baby wipes
- Disinfecting wipes
- Antibacterial liquid hand soap
- Kleenex
- Ziploc sandwich size bags
- Ziploc gallon bags
- Band-aids
- Fiskars Kid size scissors
- Dry erase markers (thin and regular)
- Black sharpies (regular size)
- Crayons
- Highlighters
- #2 yellow pencils
- Pencil bags /boxes
- Large erasers/pencil top erasers
- Boxes of Crayola markers
- Boxes of washable Crayola markers
- Crayola watercolor paints (2 rows)
- Glue sticks (no rose art)
- Sticky notes (post-its)
- Multi-color packs of construction paper
- 2-pocket plastic folders
- Black & white Composition books
- Index cards 3x5
- Loose leaf notebook paper
- Clear contact paper
- 3-ring binders
- Book bags (no wheels)

**Donations Requested:**

*Please leave items in the Narthex.  
Thank you!*



**OCIM~**

- In desperate need of food so please continue to drop off food items for those who are food-insecure in our community.

***Families Moving Forward ~***



- paper towels, hand soaps, hand sanitizer
- new sheet sets & comforters (size full)
- new bath towels, hand towels, wash cloths
- body wash & deodorant (mostly women's/some men's)
- pine-sol, multipurpose spray, disinfecting wipes, bleach

*Dear Pleasant Green UMC,*

*Thank you for collecting much needed items on behalf of Families Moving Forward. We are so grateful for your support and partnership, especially during this ever-changing time. We hope you all are safe & well.*

*In community, Katy Lambert + FMF Staff*

## Staying Connected During COVID-19:

- Weekly worship is posted on Vimeo each week after worship
- DVD's of worship + hard copy devotionals prepared weekly for shut-ins and others who are not plugged in electronically
- "Daily Prayer" updated each week in the PGUMC app
- Worship on Sundays at 10:30 am with Pastor Laura leading. Each week, a link is sent out via email
- Weekly "Spiritual Care Package" via Email each Sunday afternoon
- Several Sunday school classes are meeting via Zoom on Sundays – contact your Sunday school teacher for information!
- Wednesdays at 10:30am: a book group/discussion/Bible study via Zoom
- Handwritten letters, phone calls, and emails
- The Prayer Team is continuing to pray diligently for those on our prayer list and to “meet” monthly to update each other

### PGUMC Financial Update

2020 Unified Budget	\$348,460.49
Y-T-D Total Income to Operating Fund	\$134,159.96
Y-T-D Operating Expenses	\$152,296.89
Y-T-D Operating Fund Balance	- \$18,136.93
2019 Operating Fund Balance Forward	\$17,640.33
2020 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance	-\$496.60
Current Building Mortgage Balance	\$259,151.73

If you would like a DVD of a Sunday Worship Service, you may pick one up on the table in the Parlor. If you need it delivered, please call the church office.



### Habitat for Humanity in Hillsborough

**Thank you to everyone at PGUMC that helped fulfill our financial commitment of \$2000 to Orange County Habitat.**

Habitat remains hard at work for some of the most vulnerable people and communities in Orange County. Habitat has started building again and needs volunteers starting in July. Volunteers can contact Jim Perry at [Perryjames@twc.com](mailto:Perryjames@twc.com). *Of course, we are planning hard to make this a safe experience through social-distancing, sanitation of tools and outdoor projects.*

All are invited to **The Read & Seed Patch** - *a place where we grow in our love of books*

R - relax, E - enjoy, A - attend, D - discuss & Seed

The next meeting of the Read & Seed group is Thursday, July 2, at 6:30 pm. We are discussing "A Gentleman in Moscow" by Amor Towles. Everyone is welcome whether or not you have read the book.

**Topic:** Cindy Stubbs' Zoom Meeting ~ **Time:** July 2, 2020 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

**Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/2512512973?pwd=THJ3NWNYTGxSS0NqM0lwNEFoL0laUT09>

**Meeting ID:** 251 251 2973 ~ **Password:** 019043

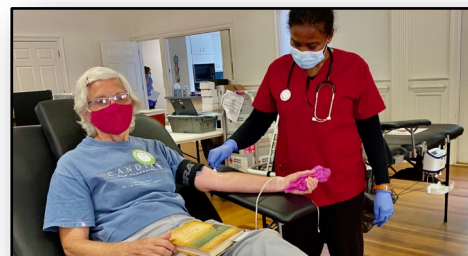


### JUNE Red Cross Blood Drive

**We collected 42 units of blood!**

Thank you to church members who gave blood and staffed the blood drive!

**Next blood drive is Tuesday, July 28th!**







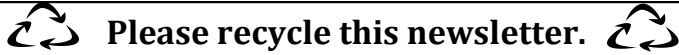
**Pleasant Green United Methodist Church**  
 3005 Pleasant Green Road  
 Durham, NC 27705  
 (919) 383-5764

**Website:** [PleasantGreenUMC.org](http://PleasantGreenUMC.org)

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

**Church E-mail:** [pgumc@ncrrbiz.com](mailto:pgumc@ncrrbiz.com)

Carsten Bryant, Youth Parish Coordinator:  
[Carsten.bryant@duke.edu](mailto:Carsten.bryant@duke.edu)



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.*



**American Red Cross**

## **Blood Drive**

**Tuesday, July 28th 10am — 3pm**

**All blood donations will be tested for COVID-19 antibodies!**

*Call the Church office to Sign up to give the gift of life!*



**Support Pleasant Green UMC when you make Amazon purchases!**

The AmazonSmile program will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. Now, you can choose "Pleasant Green United Methodist Church" as your 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](http://smile.amazon.com) and use your existing Amazon Prime account login.

**For easy access please click Pleasant Green's unique charity link:** <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/56-1152936>

## **From Pastor Laura...**

For the month of July, we will continue to worship online as Pleasant Green UMC. If you are willing and interested in helping read scripture and participate in worship, please let me know!

## **Download the PGUMC app!**

We are constantly finding new ways to stay connected, and beginning in June, our hope is to also utilize this way of reaching out and sharing some good news with you each day. For people with a smartphone, here's how to get it: you can either **search "Pleasant Green UMC" and download it in the app store** (it's free!) OR you can **text "pleasantgreenapp" to 77977** and you'll receive a link to download. Once it is downloaded, feel free to look around. One of the features we're excited to share through the app is a "Daily Prayer" feature -- a place where you can click for a Bible verse, prayer, and thought of the day Monday-Friday. It will be right there at your fingertips if you find yourself at the breakfast table or sitting in line at the bank. We hope this will be a daily gift and inspiration for you and your family.

## **WAYS TO GIVE AT PLEASANT GREEN UMC**

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. 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](http://www.pleasantgreenumc.org)



### **MOBILE**

**Text: "PLEASANTGREEN" To: 77977**



### **ENVELOPE**

**Check: mail or slip under the office door**