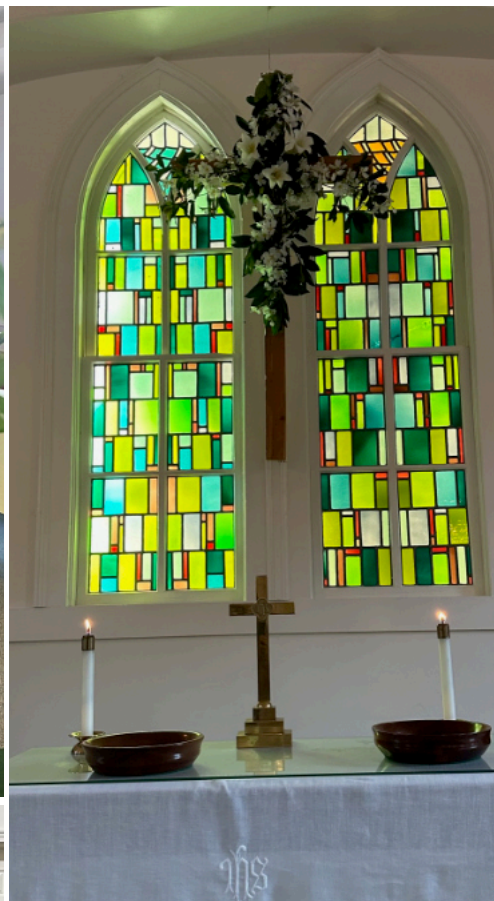


# ROOTS & BRANCHES

MAY 2023



## WE'RE HIRING!

*Pleasant Green UMC is hiring a part-time Children and Family Ministries Coordinator. We are seeking an individual who is passionate about helping children and families experience God's love and make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. To apply, please send a cover letter and resume to Rev. Laura Thompson; [lthompson@nccumc.org](mailto:lthompson@nccumc.org).*

## STICKY FAITH: WHAT MAKES FAITH "STICK" WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH?

About this time every year, Pleasant Green experiences transition. Duke Interns graduate and move on and for our church that means – a change in leadership with our children and youth. And anytime there is a transition, we are invited into a season of reflection and visioning. For us at PG, it happens each year – around April, May, and June. Emily has been serving alongside our young people for the past two years and now we will bless her as she returns to her home Conference in Western NC and lead a two-point charge as a solo pastor. Meanwhile, we will turn our attentions to “what’s next” for our children and youth?

As we have sought to answer that question, other conversations always seem to surface: Who do we hire? What would a job description look like? Where is there energy? Why aren’t youth in worship? While there may be a time and place for these questions, I wonder what it would look like to ask better questions: How do we live into our baptism vows to nurture one another in faith? And how to we form the faith of our youth in such a way that sticks after they graduate? How do we engage in faith formation that is effective and lasting beyond the years they are entrusted in our care?

The Fuller Youth Institute conducted research (which is perhaps a bit outdated, but I’m sure the numbers aren’t better today than they were ten years ago) and found that 40-50% of kids who are part of a youth group in high school faith to stick with their faith in college. They proceeded to spend the next six years (2004-2010) to conduct studies, research and interviews to find out why. The result of those findings are found in the book Sticky Faith: Practical Ideas to Nurture Long-Term Faith in Teenagers.

In their book, they define sticky faith as faith that is “part of a student’s inner thoughts and emotions and is also externalized in choices and actions that reflect this faith commitment.” The authors (Kara Powell, Brad Griffin, and Cheryl Crawford) wrote an entire book on this topic, but are there a few key findings that may help us in this season of transition? Yes, I think there are! Ministries that foster sticky faith...

### 1. are Intergenerational

Young faith grows best in a web of support (including parents!). It is crucial for anyone seeking maturity in a faith journey to be surrounded by people who are more mature in the faith, which leads us to #3.

### 2. Invert the Ratio

Typically in youth/children ministry, we say we need one adult to every 5 children (or 2 adults total to meet Safe Sanctuary). Instead of 1:5, it is important for kids to be able to identify 5 adults invested in their life (ratio 5:1).

### 3. Include Worship

In worship, people encounter the living God. They are immersed in liturgy, hearing the language of faith and they are surrounded by intergenerational relationships. Research found a deep connection between regular church-wide worship and sticky faith. (Note: the goal is not church membership. The goal is making disciples of Jesus who seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God).

### 4. Decentralize Leadership

There has been a tendency in the last few decades to leave youth ministry to the “hired professional.” Congregations, not gifted youth pastors, are key to effectiveness and sustainability.

### 5. Most importantly, are centered on Christ.

In attempts to make ministry “cool” and “entertaining” and to compete with other community offerings, we have too often failed at faith formation. In attempts to be “relevant” and talk about topics like friendships, sex and alcohol, we have rarely focused on Jesus. In hopes of getting kids to live a particularly kind of lifestyle, we have failed to cultivate a lifelong relationship with God. Sticky faith is centered on Christ.

While this list is certainly not exhaustive or all-inclusive, it is a start to helping us consider how to foster the young ones in our midst. Disciples make disciples who make disciples. May we embrace our calling to make disciples of all ages right here at Pleasant Green UMC.

Pastor Laura

## SUNDAYS

### Worship Service

10:30 am, In Person or [LIVE STREAM](#)

### Children’s Church

During Worship, Old Sanctuary

### Clyde Walker Sunday School

9:15 am, The Parlor or [ZOOM](#)

### Hearts & Hands Sunday School

9:30 am, Seekers room #217

## VBS

### Important dates:



May 21 (Sunday)

VBS Team meeting @ 11:45 am

Youth VBS meeting @ 3 pm

June 17 or 18 (Sat. or Sun.)

VBS Orientation 3-4 pm

VBS Decorating 4-6 pm

(One day of orientation is required for VBS volunteers.)

June 19 - 23: VBS WEEK

June 19 (Mon.)

Arrive at 8 am for devotion.

June 20-23 (Tues. - Fri.)

Arrive at 8:30am for devotion.

June 25: VBS Sunday

Arrive by 9:50 am to welcome children as they arrive!

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

2023 Unified Budget	<b>350,139.70</b>
YTD Total Income to Operating Fund	<b>74,057.92</b>
TTD Operating Expenses	<b>108,811.91</b>
YTD Operating Fund Balance	<b>-34,753.99</b>
2022 Operating Fund Balance Forward	<b>14,533.53</b>
2023 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance	<b>-20,220.46</b>
Current Building Mortgage Balance	<b>121,242.42</b>

## WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY IS BACK!

We began the year reading and studying together "The Good and Beautiful God." Our conversation and time together was so rich and engaging, we have decided to continue our gathering with book two in the series, "The Good and Beautiful Life." Our first study examined the character of God and now we will turn our attention to putting on the character of Christ. Feel free to grab a copy of the book at church (in the hallway) and join us beginning Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30am.

## FIREFLY FARM U-PICK FLOWERS

Our opening day is Saturday, May 13, 2023 from 9 am till 5 pm. We will have special events on this day as well as vendors. The unicorn will make a special appearance on this day too. After this Saturday, we will be open for U-pick flowers Wednesdays through Saturdays 9 am till 5 pm. Questions? Contact Farmer Cindy at [fireflyfarm2015@gmail.com](mailto:fireflyfarm2015@gmail.com).

\*If you won FireFly Farm’s U-pick flowers in last year’s online PGUMC auction– here’s your chance to get them!

## JOIN US FOR AN AFTERNOON OF SEWING

# Sew Together

Bring your sewing machine and your current project.  
Or use our space to spread out for cutting patterns  
or to enjoy the company of other sewists while you  
catch up on some hand-stitching.

Sunday June 11

1-4 p.m.

Register at

[orangecountync.librarycalendar.com/event/sew-together](http://orangecountync.librarycalendar.com/event/sew-together)

or

919.245.2525

We’ll also have instructions for making a library book tote.  
(A supply list will be provided.)



Hosted by Terri Leonard! While it's not a class, this is an opportunity for folks to work on projects together and learn from each other. Register online at <https://orangecountync.librarycalendar.com/event/sew-together>.

## IT BEGAN IN A CORNFIELD – EL SALVADOR MISSION TRIP

For the past 15 + years, Pleasant Green has had a fruitful partnership with the Methodist Church in El Salvador. Our work began in the small village of La Providencia, just outside of Ahuachapan, where our first mission was to provide medical care to that community and building a home for Angelita (an elderly woman in the community).

During that first trip, a vision was cast that a Methodist church was needed for the community. A small parcel of land, nothing but a field of corn at a dirt crossroad, was identified as the perfect spot for the church. Over the course of the following year, Pleasant Green raised the funds for the purchase of that field of corn and now, years later, that parcel holds a thriving church, a parsonage, an education hall and a medical clinic! It thrills this writer's soul to see how a simple vision can become a possibility and then a vital reality for a community a world away. And it is all because of your faithful generosity.

In the ensuing years our mission teams have helped to build schools, churches and homes. We've delivered countless meal packages to hungry homes and taught hundreds of children about the love of Jesus. We've taken youth and adults on an experience that is life changing and life fulfilling. And it is all because of your faithful generosity!

While the work we do is of vital importance, the relationships we've forged over the years are even more so. With this in mind, we plan to return this summer! And again we ask for your help. Without

packing a bag, YOU are a vital part of our collective missional experience. Your financial gifts help to offset the cost of our Mission Journey. Please consider making a gift to the El Salvador Mission Fund. Without your generosity, it would be nearly impossible to continue our vitally important work of sharing the love of Jesus with our neighbors in El Salvador.

We are planning several fund raisers. You may have noticed the bag of food in our Narthex. It symbolizes the Food Ministry that we joyfully share. That small bag of staples can feed a family of four for a week. Many of these families get by on \$2 a day, so this bag not only supplies them with nourishment...but with hope.

We are also offering our services to you! If you have minor home repairs, for a donation to the El Salvador Mission Fund, we would be happy to help you! You may contact Brian Wingo at 919-949-4388 to schedule!

Also, we are planning an after church meal as a fund-raiser. Please stay tuned for more details!

Finally, we encourage you to pray for our team! Our trip is scheduled for July 18-25, 2023.

And it is all because of your faithful generosity! May God bless you.

Brian

Register to walk and donate to NAMI North Carolina to support the education, outreach, and advocacy for people with mental illnesses and their families. <https://www.namiwalks.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=donorDrive.event&eventID=1325>

- Go to donate at top left corner of screen
- Type in NAMI by Nature in the Team search window. This team represents the staff of NAMI NC. If you know of another team that is walking, please donate to them by typing in the team name.
- Complete the remaining windows.
- Questions? Gail Pruet at [pruettg4mh@gmail.com](mailto:pruettg4mh@gmail.com) While Gail retired from NAMI NC in November 2022, she still supports their efforts.

## MENTAL HEALTH CORNER:

### 2023 NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL WALK!!

Saturday, May 20<sup>th</sup> 9 am-1 pm at Perimeter Park, Morrisville



## A PRAYER FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT AS WE CELEBRATE PENTECOST

**“I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever.”**

*John 14:16*

As we approach Pentecost Sunday on May 28th, seven Sundays after Easter, we have a lot to be thankful for. While the Holy Spirit was part of the Holy Trinity (God, Jesus, Holy Spirit) from the beginning of time and through the time Jesus was on earth; Pentecost is the day when Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to dwell within the Disciples, and consequently, dwell within us. The Spirit provided strength, direction, support, and comfort to the Disciples after Jesus ascended into heaven; giving them powerful insight into the mysteries of Jesus' teachings, allowing the disciples to preach Jesus' Word with confidence. It is through The Holy Spirit that the Christian Church was started, as described in the Book of ACTS. All of that is a gift to us as well, as we are God's children and Jesus' followers.

The first Pentecost took place so long ago! How does that apply to us today? The Holy Spirit is alive and active, speaking to us in different ways. My personal experience is that the Holy Spirit talks to me a lot, in a thought, a shift in mood or attention, a creative idea, in silence; the silence indicating that I do not have God's blessing to start a new project or do something I wondered about doing. It is the Spirit that guides me on what to write for this column, what ministries to volunteer for, who to reach out to with a card or email, who and what to pray for. It is the Spirit who helps me remember that Jesus is always with me, even during tough times. And it is the Spirit who directs me on changes God is molding within me, from an angry, sarcastic person to one who strives to be gentle and kind; from a fearful, anxious person to one who is peaceful and calm; from an impatient person to one who can wait on God's answers.

It took years of practice and intention to listen to the Holy Spirit, discerning the Spirits' will above my own. Our Clyde Walker Sunday School Class had talked about being discerning of God's will through the Holy Spirit many times. Through those discussions and God's Word, I finally came to this in my own life: if the idea or message from the Holy Spirit advanced God's kingdom on earth, helped to do

something good for someone, or gave me direction on some project the Spirit wants me to do, it was a message from God. Then, when I used what the Spirit was telling me, such as calling a church member, suggesting a new ministry, or speaking to a stranger, and there was a positive reaction, I began to trust that it was the Holy Spirit who had guided me. I don't always get it right. The important thing is to begin; especially begin by praying the Holy Spirit will guide you, and that you will listen! I always thank the Holy Spirit for any guidance, comfort; whatever the Spirit provides.

Let us pray: Holy Spirit, You are God. I praise you because you are holy, and I thank you for dwelling in my heart. Thank you for working in my life. You guided me into salvation, renewed my dead spirit, and you opened my eyes to the Truth. Thank you.

Help me to see you more clearly – to recognize your movement in my life. Make me more sensitive to you so I can follow you more closely. Still, I know that I am selfish and rebellious. I need you to help me be obedient when I recognize your leading. I need you.

I ask you for your help and comfort today. You know my pain and anxieties very well. Thank you for praying over me. Help me to rest in your comfort today.

Help me to walk in you, the Spirit of God. Grow good fruit in my life. You are the one who produces these in me: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. I cannot live out these things on my own; I need you. Amen <https://www.christianity.com/wiki/holidays/prayer-for-pentecost-sunday.html>

*The Prayer Ministry meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm in person or by free telephone conference. The next meeting is Wednesday, May 17th at 6:30 pm. You may also contact Gail at [pruettg4mh@gmail.com](mailto:pruettg4mh@gmail.com). Please join us! We would love to share God's love with you as we pray for people and situations in need of God's healing grace.*





# Pleasant Green

*United Methodist Church*

3005 Pleasant Green Road  
Durham, NC 27705

PleasantGreenUMC.org  
pgumc@ncrrbiz.com  
919.383.5764

### Pastor

*Rev. Laura Thompson*  
lthompson@nccumc.org

### Director of Family Ministries

*Emily Robbian*  
emily.robbian@duke.edu

### Duke Intern

*Trevor Warren*  
trevor.warren@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*

**Pleasant Green United Methodist Church**  
**2023 SUMMER CAMP**

3005 Pleasant Green Road  
Durham, NC 27705  
919-383-5764

Online Registration: <https://bit.ly/PGsummercamp>  
Email: [pleasantgreenafterschool@gmail.com](mailto:pleasantgreenafterschool@gmail.com)  
Church Website: [www.pleasantgreenumc.org](http://www.pleasantgreenumc.org)

**Inviting rising 1st - 6th graders**  
**to 4 weeks of Summer Fun!**

June 19-July 21  
7:30 a.m - 5:45 p.m.  
-Closed Week of July 4th-

**Arts & Crafts**  
**FIELD TRIPS**  
**LEARN & GAMES**






**Week 1: June 19-23**  
**Vacation Bible School**

**HERO HOTLINE**  
Called Together to Serve God!

9:00am-12:30pm  
Lunch on Friday!

If only attending VBS (not camp), register at <https://bit.ly/pgvbs23>



**Week 2: June 26-30**

**Chestnut Ridge**  
**TRAVELING DAY CAMP**

Traveling Day Camp at Pleasant Green  
with the staff of Camp Chestnut Ridge

**Lunch provided all week!**



**Week 3:**  
**JULY 10-14**

Pleasant Green's  
Got Talent  
**PGGT**  
Music, Theatre, Arts & Crafts

Camp Talent Show 7/13/23 @ 5:00pm



**Week 4:**  
**JULY 17-21**

Let's Get  
**COOKING**

- © Kitchen safety
- © Cooking skills
- © Following recipes
- © Restaurant trips

Camp Cookbook