PleasantGreenUMC.org

September 2020

Dear United Methodist friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Thank you for your leadership in this season of our lives. During this pandemic, we have been led to think again about the way we celebrate the Lord's Supper. For many of us, this season has been a time of fasting from the Holy Meal.

As the pandemic continues, I invite you to embrace the means of grace offered expansively in our Wesleyan heritage and more specifically to fast from Holy Communion in a spirit of lament and reflection.

I am a lover of the Holy Meal, and until the pandemic, a frequent guest and presider at the Table. I have led congregations and leadership teams toward regular celebration of the Lord's Supper. I was summoned by God to ordained ministry through the rhythmic beauty of the Great Thanksgiving. Early on, I anticipated using often these powerful words. I chose to write them upon my heart. An open hymnal was nearby so I could rehearse the words and the flow, committing the Great Thanksgiving to memory. The Great Thanksgiving is the great prayer of my life.

In this season of constraint, properly so, in order to do no harm, I would like to share the way in which I would engage the means of grace if I were a pastor in a local church. I offer these thoughts with conviction and humility, not claiming perfect wisdom of the mysteries of God and confessing my own onward journey as a Christ-follower and clergy leader.

First, our life in Christ is deeply centered in the Holy Meal. The Lord's Supper is a gift. We cherish the Holy Feast. As we take, bless, break and eat in our homes, even a solitary meal has a sacramental character because we experience Christ in the breaking of the bread. Fasting from the Lord's Supper in this season is a sacrifice, a loss, a grief. Might that sense of sacrifice, loss and grief connect us in profound ways to the people around us in the world at this time? Political prisoners gave thanks for the life and love of Jesus Christ with them through the cup and the loaf they could not see or hold. Lay missionaries crossing boundaries and cultures drew strength from communion memory and spiritual imagination. How might you and your community cultivate a deeper sense of oneness with the world in this moment of social distancing?

Second, we Wesleyans have the rich theology of the "means of grace." Plural. More than one. The means of grace are the ways that God loves us, summons us, strengthens us, and perfects us in love. The means of grace include baptism, the Lord's Supper, fasting, study of scripture, spiritual reading, prayer, gathering in community, holy conversation, engagement with the poor. We all witness to other ways we have experienced God, for as Wesley noted, God can summon us any way God chooses. Now is a good time to talk about the expansiveness of the means of grace. What means of grace

might you and your community have opportunity to explore in this moment?

Third, we Wesleyans intertwine community and communion in a deep theological way. The cup and the loaf are beautiful to behold, to hold and to share. Those in community approach the table and in doing so confess, seek, give testimony and ask for accountability. The constraints of this season lead us to a season of fasting and longing in anticipation of the day when we can again gather face to face and share in the Holy Meal. How might God be stirring up a desire for deeper community during this time, and how might those stirrings be woven together into a shared prayer?

Fourth, we recognize the tension between the commitment to "do no harm" and the corporal beauty of the sacrament. Several years ago, a German friend commented that in the United States, the third element of communion was hand sanitizer. We laughed a bit, but his point is well taken. How do we do no harm while honoring the tangible glory of the Holy Meal?

Fifth, the Love Feast comes to us with a rich history in scripture, the early church and the founding days of the Methodist movement. Eating together with prayer, witness, conversation and singing is powerfully sacramental. Sharing simple food with these actions is a beautiful pathway of grace. How can your community share common table practices from house to house?

Sixth, there is a great desire for stability and comfort in this difficult time. This desire resonates with the pastoral sensibility of clergy and laity. Yet the call of Christ is into the present circumstance and into the future. Fasting from the Holy Meal in this season can be a counter-intuitive way to lead our churches to deep mourning and robust hope as we move into a future not like the past. What do you hope will be different for you and your community when this season of social distancing ends?

I offer you these wonderings and convictions as I share that I will not preside or feast at the Lord's Table in the continuing pandemic. I ponder the cup and the loaf regularly, gazing upon the chalice and paten with a grateful heart, while engaging the other means of grace available to us all. You are invited to join me in these practices in this season.

We give thanks for the Holy Meal and the Eucharistic dimension of all our meals as we regularly take, bless, break and share bread in order to live and love and serve. In this time of constraint, make us brave and wise to embrace mystery, to receive God's latest gifts and to grow in grace. Through the Triune God, we pray. Amen.

With gratitude for the ministry of Christ we share, Hope Morgan Ward

ring Connected

In This Issue

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- 2. Staving Connected Calendar **Financial Update**
- Birthdays 6. Donations **Projects**

5. Events

- 3. Connectional Table Re-Cap 7. Member News
- 4. Prayer Ministry Youth/kids

Calendar

9/3-The Read & Seed Patch

Thursday @ 6:30pm via Zoom See page 5 for details

9/9-"Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation"

Wednesday @ 7pm via Zoom Discussing part 1 with Pastor Laura

9/14, 9/21, 9/28- Lighting the Way

Mondays @ 7pm via Zoom Small Group discussions with Pastor Laura

9/16-Prayer Ministry

Wednesday @ 6:30pm via zoom Contact Gail: pruettg4mh@gmail.com

9/30-PGUMC Blood Drive

Wednesday @10am-3pm in the Fellowship Hall Sign up! (919)383-5764/pgumc@ncrrbiz.com

10/11-PGUMC Charge Conference

Sunday @ 1:00pm

The Bishop announced this year's meeting will be virtual via Zoom and done as individual churches with District Superintendent Mike Frese and Assistant DS Sarah Carter.

10/17-10/24-UMW Online Silent Auction

Satrday-Sunday @ 32uactions See page 5 for details

Changes during COVID-19

- •Worship on Sundays at 10:30am link sent out via email each Saturday and can be found on the church
- •Sunday worship is posted on Vimeo each week after worship
- •DVD's of worship prepared weekly for shut-ins and others who are not plugged in electronically
- •Daily Prayer updated each week in the PGUMC app
- •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
- •Tuesday evening small group at 7:30pm
- •Weekly Zoom calls for High Schoolers and Middle Schoolers with Carsten
- •Monday night small group beginning in September
- •Fall book group "Being the Bridge" starting in September and meeting once a month

*PGUMC FALL STEW is yet another causality of COVID-19. With input from the Orange County Health Department and guidance from other public health experts, we will not make Stew in November 2020.

PGUMC Update

2020 Unified Budget Y-T-D Total Income to Operating Fund Y-T-D Operating Expenses Financial Y-T-D Operating Fund Balance 2019 Operating Fund Balance Forward 2020 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance Current Building Mortgage Balance

\$348,460.49 \$179,774.92 \$192,619.27 -\$12,844.35 \$17,640,33 \$4,795.98 \$253,039.40



Re-cap of Connectional Table/Admin Council Meeting

We began our meeting on August 10th with a short exercise and reflection followed by a brief reading from the essay "Dialogue" by Elizabeth O'Conner and covered four topics:

1 The July Survey Responses:

What type of Worship do you prefer?

82.3% (65 people) content with online worship 10% (8 people) prefer outdoor worship 6% (5 people) prefer indoor worship

When would consider returning?

6.3% (5 people) August 11.4% (9 people) September 27.8% (22 people) upon biological answer to virus 54.4% (43 people) are not sure at this time

Based on the survey responses, we will focus on the following:

Engaging and Preaching the book of the Exodus in depth for 9 weeks & encouraging personal reading between Sundays – Let's read Exodus together over the course of the Fall!

"Be the Bridge: Pursuing God's Heart for Racial Reconciliation" by Latasha Morrison

Engaging a social issue (race) through the lens of faith, will read the book and discuss each part over 3 monthly gatherings.

Wednesday nights at 7pm via Zoom Sept. 9 (Part 1), Oct. 7 (Part 2), Nov. 4 (Part 3)

Lighting the Way—Seeking Wholeness in a Divided World. Formation and Soul-tending through small groups and reflection.

Monday nights at 7pm via Zoom Sept. (14, 21, 28), Oct. (12, 19, 26), Nov. (9, 16, 23)



"You are the light of the world. A city on top of a hill can't be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a basket. Instead, they put it on top of a lampstand, and it shines on all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise your Father who is in heaven."

Jesus tells his disciples to live as a light, not covering the light but living so that others can see the good and praise the God who fills us with light and life.

And while we say that Christians have certain values that we are committed to, we so often fail to embody those values in everyday life. What are the Christ-centered values we say we believe in, and how do we live according to those values in our everyday lives?

Join Pastor Laura (Pleasant Green UMC) and Pastor Cameron (Hillsborough UMC) for a series of conversations this fall on living faithful, whole lives as disciples of Jesus Christ for the sake of the world.

2 PGUMC will be a remote learning site for Orange County Schools starting Sept. 14:

- Smaller sites are needed to provide learning space and guidance for children that cannot be left alone in the home/single-family households/parents who cannot work from home/special needs children/etc.
- The school system will provide a staff person for every 10 kids, masks, cleaning supplies and clean the space as well as follow guidelines of social-distancing.
- PGUMC will offer two rooms (downstairs youth room and afterschool room) for two small groups of children (10 or less). The hours will be from 7:45am-3:30pm and possibly after school care as well.

3 Charge Conference Committees are to begin work on their reports for our September meeting:

Pastors:

Safe Sanctuaries Report Camping/Retreat Ministries Current High School Seniors/College Students Report of Pastoral Ministry

Nominations (this is all of us):

Nominations for any new ministry position – submitted to Council for approval (if you wish to be removed from leadership, please let Laura know by the end of September)

SPRC:

State of the Church Report Review Report of Pastoral Ministry

Finance:

Complete the Annual Report of the Finance Committee for the current year

Pastoral compensation package for 2021 recommended by the SPRC

Review Apportionment calculations for 2021

Trustees:

Fill out Annual Report of the Trustees (2020) Complete Parsonage Checklist-review

4 Conversations about possibility of hiring a 4-5 hr/week position to help with AV/Tech needs:

Within a year we have shifted from our norm to completely virtual. The future of our church is hybrid – we cannot go back to being completely in-person without having an online presence. The next step will likely be a virtual gathered community that will begin to offer some in-person gatherings.

The questions are:

- -How can we begin preparing now for that future?
- -How can we begin to have an infrastructure that makes this kind of community (in person & online) possible?

3

pleasant green youth group

Middle schoolers Zoom Mondays at 7pm High schoolers Zoom Tuesdays at 7pm https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85769219943



Schedule your driveway visit with Carsten! https://calendly.com/ocpyouth/driveway-visit?month=2020-08

Pilgrimage '20 will be virtual! We hope to find a way to watch it together safely and distanced!

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for thinking of me as I graduate from high school. Your Bible means so much to me. Thank you, Parker Bourlon

Thank you very much for the graduation present. It was nice to be recognized.

Thank you again, Jace Jordan-Cornell

Homeschool: Week 1

























Well it's quite the struggle over here to be honest. Very hard trying to teach 20 students I haven't met in person, using technology that I haven't been trained in and supporting my own kids with their learning in our tiny little house with internet issues.

I can share a song though that we've been listening to every morning and attempting to bring some peace and light into our days.

Peace Be Still ~Hope Darst

We definitely miss church!



Donated to our congregation by the United Methodist Women.
Available in the Narthex.

Back to School YOU RULE! Prayers for your childrens Mind : Imagination (2 Cosinthians, 10:5), Purity (Phil. 4:8), perspective (Col. 3:2), Humble and have the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:3-8) Eyes: Turn away from worthless things (Pealmy 119:37) Mouth: Ears: Kindness Hear Heart: (Eph. 4:29) and obey Truth Love God (games 1:22, (Deut. 11:13) (1-Peter 3:10) Deut. 6:4) undivided Hands: (-Paalon 84:11) Work Seeks God hard Knees (Paglon, 119:10) for the Boneg prayer (Eph Lord Salvation (Colossiano (2 Timothy 3:23) 2:10) eet: Direct their paths (Pealow 119:35), (1con. 16 God's Word to guide (Paalmo 119:105). Carry the Gospel (-Romans 10:15). Walk with the wise (freverby

The Prayer Ministry meets the 3rd Wednesday each month at 6:30pm. We pray for children, teachers, parents, and many other things. Join us 9/16 at 6:30pm via Zoom. Everyone is welcome! Contact Gail:pruettg4mh@gmail.com

The Read & Seed Patch

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

Meeting Thursday, September 3rd @ 6:30pm via Zoom and discussing "The Invention of Wings" by Sue Monk Kidd

Zoom link: https://uso4web.zoom.usj2512512973?pwd= THJ3NWNYTGxSSoNqMolwNEFoLolaUTo9

Meeting ID: 251 251 2973 / Passcode: 019043

October 17-24 UMW Online Silent Auction!

Due to COVID-19, it is likely that we will not be able to have our regular in-person auction in October. However, we are excited to announce that this year's auction will be online! The Eleanor Walker Circle will continue to sponsor the auction with help from the Dream Weavers Circle.

The auction will go live **Saturday**, **October 17th** and will run through Saturday, October 24th on 32uactions. Stay tuned for the link to the website.

Donations! Please start thinking about items you may have to donate or that you may be able to secure as donations. Examples could be gift cards, vacation stays, handmade goods, baked goods, art, etc.

Please send a description of your donated items to Julie McCav at juliepmccay@gmail.com or (919) 949-5831. Include at least one picture and the value of your items. Prior to the auction going live on 10/17, items need to be dropped off at the church in the Fellowship Hall. For help with photos or pickup, please contact Julie.

Spread the word! We are hoping to reach so many more people with the auction being online! With many fantastic donations, there is something for everyone and every budget!

Please join us in raising funds for missions supported by UMW during this challenging time and help relieve any stress COVID-19 has caused.

Thank you for your support,

UMW of Pleasant Green United Methodist Church

FIREFLY Open all Saturdays in October from 1-5pm

The Witch's Haunted Barn

4911 Hunt Rd., Hillsborough, NC / (770)722-1107

\$15/family -A whimsical look at Halloween and fun for kids of all ages. The barn will be filled with a variety of spooks (pirates, ghosts, aliens, mad doctor, witches, vampires to name a few). Music and many details will delight all who enter the barn. After working your way through the barn, there will be pre-bagged candy for the children. Other fun activities open to victims who visit the farm are petting the miniature donkeys and horses, visiting the chickens, and walking the pasture trail to the sunflower field which is expected to bloom in October. A perfect way to spend a Fall afternoon!

To keep everyone safe in this time of COVID-19, the number of people in the barn will be limited. We encourage everyone to reserve their time slot by purchasing tickets to the event in our online store at https://fire-fly-farm-nc.square.site/ at \$15/family. Tickets reflect the time you will enter the barn, and we invite victims to spend time outside that time slot visiting the rest of the farm. Holders of online tickets will be allowed to go through the barn again. For more details, please visit our website at https://www.fireflyfarmnc.com/ or check us out on Facebook @farmfirefly. The witch has been waiting for this spooky occasion. Come and stay awhile-we are dying to see you!

September Birthdays

Heather Snowden Hackler

Jason Bennett Lois Rittenhouse

James Hamm

Michael Walker

6

Matt McCay

10

Sybil Totten Clayton Carolyn Bass

11

Taylor McCay Doris Turner Jim Perry

12

Lydia Mis **Patrick Bracey**

13

Madilyn Keatts

14

Christa Poe

15

Leah Parrish Kristian Kankelfritz

16

Becky Crawford Alex Witt

18

Evelvn Morris Jovce Duncan Hannah Barnard

19

Spencer Alley

20

Emma Bass Robbie Bryant Jimmy Gooch Marilvn Guthrie Pat Walker Waldo Wright

21

Hunter Brown Ryan Montgomery

23

Sarah Fisher Tim Riley

24

Phillip Totten

25

Rosemary Fowler

26

Maya Lee

28

Bunny Wheeler Nell Andrews

Kelly Jo Lee Lynn Foushee

30

David Ball Kathy DuLaney Sheila Witt Billy O'Briant



Matthew 22:39



Please continue to donate for those who are food insecure in our community!

~From OCIM

"We have received an anonymous gift in honor of PGUMC, for the 'blessings received.' We are honored to be a recipient of this gift and thank you for serving your neighbors.

The Samaritan Relief Ministry continues to provide food as well as financial assistance for people who find themselves in a crisis situation.

Through June, we have assisted 6,259 individuals, an increase of 1,253 individuals during the same period in 2019."

Donations needed!

- bleach
- toilet paper
- paper towels
- bath towels
- tooth paste
- brooms & dust pans
- clorox disinfectant wipes
- small bottles of dish soap
- low sugar juice boxes
- vitamin water zero
- gatorade zero
- sugar free water bottle packs

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

"Back to School" classroom items needed! The School supplies are donated to Orange County Elementary, Middle & High Schools. Please leave in the Narthex.



Habitat in Hillsborough remains hard at work for the most vulnerable people and communities in Orange County and needs volunteers. Please contact Jim Perry if you can help! Perviames@twc.com.

WALK, RUN, BIKE the PGUMC TRAIL!

We're still blazing a trail around our 18-acre property and invite you to come help or just enjoy! Signs are up at every entrance and exit thanks to Van! Continued help is also welcome on the rest of our Church grounds! Please contact Van: 919-259-2721/vmccav@nc.rr.com.



The rose garden at Pleasant Green is a great resource to bring beauty and a remembrance of our Church to the sick, shut-ins or your own home!

Come cut your roses! ~Bring a container of water. ~Cut the roses at a 45 degree angle just above a leaf on a 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;)



Cookie delivery to our local Sheriff & Fire Departments!



Thank you to everyone who made cookies for our First Responders and the OC Sheriff's Dept. on Monday, August 17th in appreciation of their efforts to keep us safe each day. We delivered a mountain of delicious homemade cookies to Eno. Hillsborough, New Hope Fire Departments, three Durham Fire Departments, and Orange County Sheriff's Departments. They were so pleased and said "THANK YOU, PLEASANT GREEN!"







Station 6

~From Orange County Medic 7

"We received the wonderful care package of goodies from you guys and just wanted to express our gratitude for your thoughtfulness. It is things like this that make these difficult times much, much easier. Thank you for this, but not for the 5 pounds we have already put on from it. LOL"

Congratulations to Richard Cassidy on his New Book~ "Greatest Of These Is Always Love"

Paving been in Centennial Park during the 1996 Atlanta Olympics bombing and on Boylston Street during the 2013 Boston Marathon bombing, these near-death experiences typically come to mind for Richard Cassidy when he reflects on

major events in his life. But on his 49th birthday, the sound of George Floyd gasping "I can't breathe" dominated his thoughts. Self-reflection was stating, "you have never done anything during your first 49 years to help rid our society of racism," leaving him feeling ashamed and insignificant. Stemming from these feelings, inspiration for his new book was born... *Greatest Of These Is Always Love*.

Book Review by Terri Leonard~

No matter how much we might wish to see things from the other person's point of view, we are all influenced by our own perspectives, our own backgrounds, our own biases, simply by virtue of who we are. Richard Cassidy starts out *Greatest of These is Always Love* by proclaiming that he doesn't know anything. And he's not the only one.

The events of this year -- COVID-19, quarantine, the death of George Floyd and resulting protests -- have left him feeling that he must respond, but as we said, he doesn't know anything. He doesn't know what to do.

Richard's book takes us with him through his journey of searching, researching, and self-examination. He's hyper-aware of both his position of privilege and the need to address an epidemic of injustice. As easy as it is to lose focus on these issues because we are not directly affected, he determines that doing nothing isn't an option. And not knowing what to do isn't an excuse.

It turns out the answer is simple. Love.

Simple, but not easy. Love is what we're told to do. But how often in our daily life do we lose sight of that commandment? I read this book after an evening spent reading way too many ugly comments -- by people we

know -- on social media, a pastime that regularly causes me to lose hope. But the message of this book not only reinforces the commandment that we love one another, it reassures us that we have the capacity to love. It's easy to fall into the trap of thinking we are each only one person and couldn't possibly make an impact, but Richard points out that just the opposite is true: "No act of kindness is ever too small. No good deed is ever insignificant. No demonstration of love is unworthy. Every time you do what is right, every time you show compassion, every time you treat people with dignity and respect you are making a difference.'

Greatest Of The Is Always Love

Richard concludes with "At the end of the day," (can't you just hear him?) "you cannot truly be Christian and not love all neighbors of every race, creed or color equally." He leaves us with the following charge: "You also cannot truly be American and not uphold the principles of our declaration and our pledge. There is no room for interpretation. The words are clear. The principles are clear. The requirements are clear. And once again, we are all created equal with inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If our country's practices, policies, and standards fail to uphold these words and principles, then we must change."

Welcome baby girl



Born August 11th, 6.1lbs 19 in. Parents~Dakota & Caroline Draper & big sister Hampton Great grandparents~Jim & Gloria Perry

Married June 13th at Smith Mountain Lake **Hannah Barnard & Jake Burton**





Grey & Breanna Cook Married July 25th in Asheville, NC

Dear Church Family,

Back in March, Steven recorded and shared with you Delbert McClinton's "He Keeps Sending Me Angels." Little did we know that God would in fact "keep sending (us) angels" through this journey. Thank you to each of you as you have been God's angels and rallied around us. Your prayers, cards and many kindnesses have kept us supplied with hope when we found it scarce. Thank you also for those who donated blood. Steven has relied on donors such as you. We trust in our faith as we know not what tomorrow brings and we are grateful for your continued prayers.

Yours in Christ, Debbie and Steven Collins



Pleasant Green United Methodist Church 3005 Pleasant Green Road **Durham. NC 27705**

PleasantGreenUMC.org pgumc@ncrrbiz.com (919) 383-2339

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

Youth Parish Coordinator: Carsten Bryant

carsten.bryant@duke.edu



amazonsmile

Pleasant Green's unique charity link: https://smile.amazon.com/ch/56-1152936

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.

DOWNLOAD THE PGUMC APP!

APP STORE: Search "Pleasant Green UMC" **SMARTPHONE:** Text "PleasantGreenapp" to 77977

Then 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.



Wednesday, September 30th 10am-3pm Held in the Fellowship Hall. Contact the Church office at pgumc@ncrrbiz.com / 919-383-5764 or redcrossblood.org (sponser code: Pleasant Green) Please give the gift of life!

WAYS TO GIVE AT PLEASANT GREEN UMC

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!

Please Recycle!

