

# ROOTS & BRANCHES

WINTER 2025

*Did you know that the different colors of the paraments (the cloths and tapestries that adorn the sanctuary) are in keeping with the liturgical calendar?*

Remember, the Church tells time differently based around the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We have been in the season after the epiphany and you may have noticed that I wear a green stole and that the paraments have been green in the sanctuary. This is to symbolize growth and new life. Transfiguration Sunday is March 2nd and that day the sanctuary will be adorned with white paraments (*ref. Luke 9:28-36*). Ash Wednesday (March 5th) will begin the season of Lent and we will use the color purple until Easter as a color that represents penitence in this preparatory season leading up to Easter.

## **What is Lent?**

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on Ash Wednesday and ends on Holy Saturday. The season of Lent is a time of repentance and preparation before celebrating Easter. Historically, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by converts and then became a time for penance by all Christians. Because Sundays are always *little Easters*, the penitential spirit of Lent should be tempered with joyful expectation of the Resurrection.

In modern times, Lent is commonly observed by the practice of giving something up. However, I want to encourage us not to reduce Lent to some type of health kick or weight loss program (there are secular programs for that). Lent is more about being drawn closer to the Lord. In one parish setting that I served as a Duke Divinity School intern, we did a program called **Give up a Meal, Give a Meal** in which we encouraged each family in the congregation to give up the cost of eating out during the season and instead give that money to the Church.

My encouragement for us is to really ask the question, "where might God be challenging me to grow as a disciple?" Don't lose the forest for the trees, but consider that God may be calling you deeper into more intentional Scripture reading, Bible study, prayer time, financial giving, or something else. Whatever the practice, my hope is that you will experience the presence of God in a felt way during this season.

During Holy Week (beginning on Palm Sunday), we will take the journey with Christ from his triumphal entry into Jerusalem and to his subsequent passion and death. May your own self-examination strengthen your relationship with God and your relationships with others. This is a time for putting aside the sins and failures of the past in the light of who we are yet to become by the grace of God.

~ Pastor Alex

## **JOIN US DURING LENT**



Wednesday March 5

**Pancake Dinner 6:00 pm**

**Ash Wednesday Service 7:00 pm**

Sunday April 13

**Palm Sunday Service 10:30 am**

**Easter Egg Hunt 3:00 pm**

Thursday April 17

**Maundy Thursday Service & Meal 6:30 pm**

Friday April 18

**Good Friday Tenebrae Service 6:30 pm**

Sunday April 20

**Sunrise Service 6:30 am**

**Breakfast immediately following**

**Easter Sunday Services 10:30 am**

## **FINANCIAL UPDATE FOR 2024**

2024 Unified Budget	\$308,015.49
2024 Total Income to Operating Fund	\$304,817.83
2024 Total Operating Expenses	\$297,776.11
2023 Operating Fund Balance Forward	\$28,046.11
2024 Operating Fund Ending Balance	\$35,087.83

# SUNDAYS

**Worship Service**  
10:30 am, In Person / [LIVE STREAM](#)

**Children's Church**  
During Worship,  
1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays

**Clyde Walker Sunday School**  
9:15 am, Rm. 215 (The Parlor) or [ZOOM](#)

**Hearts & Hands Sunday School**  
9:30 am, Rm. 221

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED ON SUNDAY MORNINGS

There are many ways that you can serve on Sunday mornings:

- \* GREETER
- \* CHILDREN'S CHURCH
- \* ACOLYTE
- \* NURSERY

Use the link below to sign up now!

<https://bit.ly/pgsundayvols>

To volunteer with any of our Children's Ministries (Nursery, Children's Church, Kids Connect, VBS, ESL, Afterschool, or Summer Camp) you are required to complete a **background check** and **Safe Sanctuaries training**.

Visit the Children's Ministry page on our website to access the forms: <http://www.pleasantgreenumc.org/childrens-ministry.html>

## ACOLYTE TRAINING



**March 2 at 11:45 am**  
after worship in the sanctuary  
2<sup>nd</sup> graders and up are invited

Questions?  
Contact Ceil Matthews  
[ceilmatt79@gmail.com](mailto:ceilmatt79@gmail.com)

## MID-WEEK BIBLE STUDY

### Methodism 101: Wesley and the People Called Methodist

**Instructor:**  
Jongho Yoon (Duke Intern)

**Goal:**  
To develop a Methodist identity as a Methodist.

**Location and Time:**  
Every Tuesday at 10 AM in the Parlor  
(January 28 - April 1, total of 10 sessions)

**Textbook and Handouts:**  
(no textbook needed for the first class)  
- Wesley and the People Called Methodist (Second Edition)  
- John Wesley's Sermons An Anthology



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16<sup>TH</sup> AT 12PM**

### LIVE PREVIEW

Sneak preview of auction items in the Fellowship Hall following the Worship Service

**SATURDAY, FEB. 15 - SATURDAY, FEB 24**

**AUCTION IS LIVE FOR BIDDING**

Stay tuned for the link to [32auctions!](#)



## Join Us For Breakfast

United Methodist Men's  
Breakfast  
Sunday, February 23 at 8:00 am

*All MEN of Pleasant Green are invited!*

**Administrative Council Meeting**  
**Tuesday, February 25**  
**7 PM in the Parlor (Rm. 215)**

*All are invited!*

## UPCOMING...

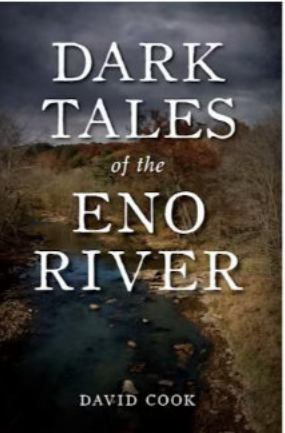
PLEASANT GREEN UMC PRESENTS

# Kids Connect with Camp Chestnut Ridge

SUN 9 MARCH  
3:30PM - 5:30PM

**Parents & Kids**  
Join us for an afternoon of learning & fun!  
Learn ways to observe Lent at home & enjoy the church grounds.  
Camp Chestnut Ridge will be onsite to guide us through activities,  
giving us a taste of camp at PGUMC.  
Please join us for pizza after!

Scan here to register →   
or visit <https://bit.ly/KidsConnectLent>



**5th Sunday Brunch Church**  
March 30th at 10:30 am

Dave Cook will present his new book, *Dark Tales of the Eno River*, featuring 67 true tales of mystery, murder, and mayhem on the river. Several PGUMC members make appearances in the book.

*Don't rush to buy the book yet!*  
Dave will have discounted, signed copies of his book available including 17 additional stories which were not published. This is an exclusive offer for PGUMC for supporting Dave and his family through the years.

**Saturday May 3rd**  
**8 am - 3 pm**



Pleasant Green will host a **CPR & First Aid Training** class with a working lunch.

Volunteers who work with children are encouraged to participate and anyone is welcome to attend.

Cost is \$65 per person.

Questions contact Wendy Anderson 919-630-1939

Register: <https://bit.ly/pgcprclass>



Wednesday, March 5th  
**ASH WEDNESDAY**  
6:00pm Pancake Dinner  
7:00pm Service of Ashes



**El Salvador Mission Trip Interest Meeting**  
March 9th @ 11:45 am  
Parlor (Rm. 215)  
*All are invited to attend!*

## Save the Date!

**Children's Easter Egg Hunt**  
**Palm Sunday, April 13**  
3:00-5:00pm  
Fellowship Hall & Outside



**Vacation Bible School**  
June 23 - 27, 2025  
9 am - 12:30 pm  
Registration: <https://bit.ly/pgvbs25>

**ROAD TRIP**  
ON THE GO WITH GOD

VBS Website: [pleasantgreenumc.mycokesburyvbs.com](http://pleasantgreenumc.mycokesburyvbs.com)

REGISTER TO VOLUNTEER FOR VBS  
<https://bit.ly/pgvbsvol25>

# FALL & ADVENT FESTIVITIES



# CENTRAL ELEMENTARY CHRISTMAS GIFTS



# NOVEMBER & JANUARY BLOOD



**Save the Date!**  
*Next Blood Drive*  
**Monday, April 14<sup>th</sup>**  
 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

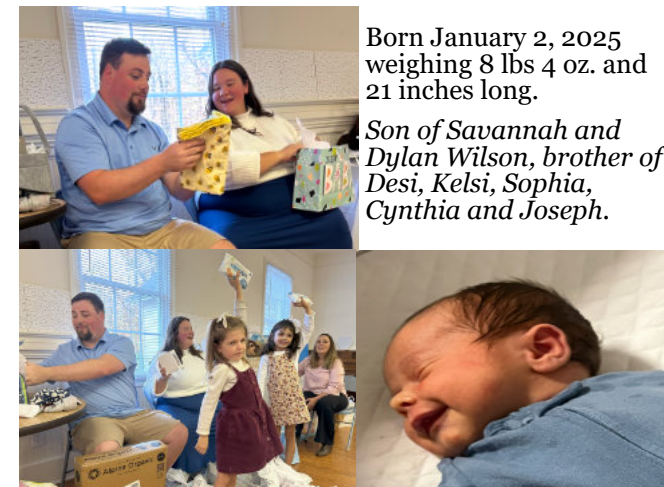
# MARK WEEMS & PRAISE BAND



# AFTERSCHOOL SAMARITAN'S PURSE



# WELCOME Everett Henry Garner Wilson



Born January 2, 2025  
 weighing 8 lbs 4 oz. and  
 21 inches long.  
*Son of Savannah and  
 Dylan Wilson, brother of  
 Desi, Kelsi, Sophia,  
 Cynthia and Joseph.*

# GIRL SCOUT COOKIES!



**Happy  
 Birthday  
 Pastor  
 Alex!**

# NEW CHILDREN'S MINISTRY SPACE

*The new children's space is starting to come together. The wall is down, and old lighting has been removed. Painting has started, carpet is coming soon and A/V equipment is ready to be installed.*



*Thanks to all who  
 have contributed  
 time & funds to this  
 exciting project!*

From the Prayer Ministry...

## JESUS WAS AN IMMIGRANT

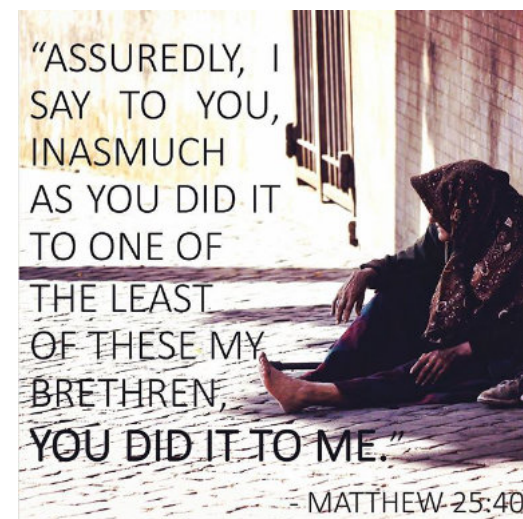
*“Now when they [the wisemen] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him. And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, out of Egypt I called my son.” ~ Matthew 2: 13-15*

When reviewing the story of Jesus’ birth for advent in our Sunday School class, the above passage stood out for me. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus traveled from Bethlehem in the Roman province of Judah to Egypt. They were there for two to four years until it was safe to return to Nazareth. Then it struck me! Jesus and his family were immigrants! Many questions flooded my mind: How were they treated in Egypt? Were they welcomed or scorned? How did they survive? Did Joseph start a carpentry business? Were the foods the same or different from their home country? How hard was it for Joseph and his family to adapt to a different culture? Did they have to learn a new language? We do not know the answers to these questions, but Jesus’ situation as a child applies to us today.

Matthew 25: 25-30 reminds us: *35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ 40 And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, [a] you did it to me.’*

It is truly a joy when I think of our ESL (English-as-a-Second Language) Program and how we strive to welcome immigrants. Many of us, in our communities, go beyond ESL and OCIM (Orange Congregations in Mission) to serve migrants and immigrants in other ways. As we remember that it is Jesus we follow, let us take every opportunity to feed, clothe, and give drink to those who are vulnerable and displaced from their usual cultures. We just may be serving Jesus in ways we did not recognize!

**Let us Pray:** Heavenly Father, the Father of all the people you and Jesus created around the globe, we thank you for the opportunity to serve you. Help us remember that your son and earthly family were immigrants who needed care, just as we would in a foreign place. Help us remember that you are a God of abundance, and will always provide what is needed, if we but ask. You are a God of grace and mercy; help us to be like you through your son. Amen.



*Join the Prayer Ministry on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 3:00 pm. We usually meet for an hour in person or by zoom. For more information, contact Gail at pruettg4mh@gmail.com or text at 919-696-7283. You will not be expected to pray aloud, unless you want to! Your presence and silent prayers are valued and needed.*

## HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR BY VOLUNTEERING WITH THE ESL PROGRAM

Luke 10:27-37: *“Love your neighbor as yourself.”*

Philippians 2:4: *“Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others.”*

As many verses in the Old and New Testaments teach us, we are to love our neighbors as ourselves and to look at the interests of others. Many of our ESL students and families come to us because of hardship in their own countries. For our current students, many from Afghanistan, a member of their family helped our soldiers during the war in their country. Now, their lives are in danger, if they return.



We would like to expand the ESL program, but additional volunteers, especially drivers, are needed. Driving involves picking up a family, often with one or two preschool children (church provides the required car seats) on Friday between 9:30 and 10:00 am, then getting the family to the church by 10:30, when class starts. Then, around 12:25 pm, taking the family home. Being your friendly, smiling selves is all that is needed! And, while driving or volunteering in other ways may mean going outside your comfort zone, in the words of one volunteer, *“I learned that these are people just like you and me; with the same needs as we have. They are safe.”* Drivers will receive some reimbursement for gasoline at the end of the semester, depending on how many times during the semester you drive.

**We can only teach as many students as we can get to the church. We have the capacity in the classrooms, through hospitality and childcare to reach more families - we just need more volunteers drivers!**

If you are interested, please complete the ESL volunteer interest form and Gail Pruettt (pruettg4mh@gmail.com) will get back to you. [ESL Volunteer Interest Form \(https://bit.ly/GFESLvol\)](https://bit.ly/GFESLvol)

## MENTAL HEALTH CORNER....

When you or someone you know is experiencing mental health symptoms or crisis, there are a number of helpful resources you can reach out to for support.

**But which one is the best for your situation?**

**Hotlines/Crisis Lines** like 988 are designed to provide immediate and confidential support during a mental health crisis. They are staffed with individuals trained in crisis intervention and can help you find providers and resources to assist you with depression, anxiety, thoughts of suicide, substance use issues, and more.

**Warmlines** like the NAMI NC Helpline are designed to provide support for individuals who are not in immediate danger, but are looking for additional guidance, support, or just someone to talk to. They can point you in the direction of helpful local resources while offering a compassionate ear.

No matter which type of helpline you contact, the people you call are ready to listen. Visit our website for more information on available helplines and crisis intervention resources: <https://naminc.org>

CRISIS LINES		NAMI NC HELPLINE	
Crisis hotlines are designed to provide immediate and confidential support to individuals experiencing a crisis.		The NAMI NC Helpline is known as a warmline. It provides support for individuals who are not in immediate danger, but who are in need of emotional support and resources.	
<b>Resources:</b>		The NAMI NC Helpline has a dedicated team of trained staff who listen to callers, provide resources and support, and continually update their resources to suit their callers' needs.	
Suicide Hotline 988	National Domestic Violence Hotline (800) 799-7233	<b>Contact Us:</b>	
National Child Abuse Hotline (800) 422-4453	TREVOR Hotline (LGBTQ+) 866-4-U-TREVOR	Monday-Friday: 8:30am-5:00pm * Thursday: Until 8:30pm	helpline@naminc.org call: 800-451-9100 text: 919-999-6327



# Pleasant Green United Methodist Church

3005 Pleasant Green Road, Durham, NC 27705

PleasantGreenUMC.org / pgumc@ncrrbiz.com / 919.383.5764

## PASTOR

Rev. Alex Parker  
alex.parker@nccumc.org

## DUKE INTERN

Jongho Yoon  
jongho.yoon@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** <http://www.pleasantgreenumc.org/give.html>

**Smartphone** Text "PleasantGreen" To: 77977

**Envelope** Mail or slip under office door

# PLEASANT GREEN ANNUAL ONLINE AUCTION

SATURDAY, FEB 15 -

SATURDAY, FEB 22



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH

### LIVE PREVIEW

Sneak preview of auction items in the Fellowship Hall following the Worship Service

AUCTION WILL BE LIVE FOR BIDDING  
SATURDAY, FEB 15 - SATURDAY, FEB 22

[www.32auctions.com/pgumc2025](http://www.32auctions.com/pgumc2025)



## Pleasant Green United Methodist Church 2025 SUMMER CAMP

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

Online Registration: <https://bit.ly/PGCamp25>  
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 16-July 18  
7:30 a.m - 5:45 p.m.  
-Closed Week of July 4th-

Arts & Crafts FIELD TRIPS FUN GAMES

## 2025 SUMMER CAMP OVERVIEW

### WEEK 1: JUNE 16-20



Traveling Day Camp AT Pleasant Green with  
the staff of Camp Chestnut Ridge  
Lunch provided all week!

### WEEK 3: JULY 7 - 11

Summer Camp Musical



Camp Musical 7/11/24  
@ 5:00pm

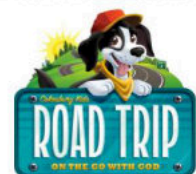
### WEEK 4: JULY 14-18

Mission Project Week



### WEEK 2: JUNE 23-27

Vacation Bible School



VBS -9:00am-12:30pm  
(Camp - 7:30-5:45)  
Lunch on Friday!

\*If only attending VBS (not camp),  
register at <https://bit.ly/pgvbs25>