



Pleasant News

Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church

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WORSHIP TIMES

- 8:45am Bible Study Groups
- 10:00am Worship in the Sanctuary

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From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

During the time of the Prophet Ezekiel, the people of Israel had turned away from God and God's promise of blessing and abundant life (Ezekiel 37:1-14). By focusing on themselves, their possessions and their power, God's people found themselves looking at an uncertain and desolate future. Transported within a spiritual vision, Ezekiel found himself looking out across a vast wasteland of bones, wondering if life could ever return to them. In a divine moment of clarity, Ezekiel begins to see new life beginning to take shape as God's spirit once again breathed new possibilities for the future.

Within the many uncertainties of living within a post-Covid world, a splintering United Methodist Church, and lots of social and political division in our country, life can feel a bit like a Stephen King novel, a Marvel movie, or even some weird zombie TV show. So, maybe envisioning dry bones might not be such a stretch. So many of our conversations seem centered around how life is changing in ways that most of us never expected nor envisioned.

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Perhaps we all have something in common with the people of Israel and their prophet Ezekiel, who looked out over an uncertain and foreboding landscape. Maybe we too might need to trust and allow God’s spirit to take the lead in our lives and in our world. For even though we might not have a clue about how things are going to come together, God never stops creating new opportunities for new life.

Perhaps that is what resurrection is all about; trusting in God means trusting in new opportunities for encountering and sharing God’s love. When we and our church allow God’s spirit to blow through our current challenges, dry bones begin reconnecting in ways we never imagined, and peace, love, and harmony start to look increasingly possible.

Thank you all for welcoming me into your church family this year! As I move to my home in Salisbury and begin an interim-position at two churches in Denton, I joyously depart knowing that Rev. John Yeager and his family will also be blessed by the wonderful, loving and spirit-filled folks at Pleasant Grove UMC.

*Grace and Peace,
Rev. Sam Lewis*



THE FOLLOWING GIFTS WERE MADE TO THE CHURCH IN MEMORY OR IN HONOR OF:

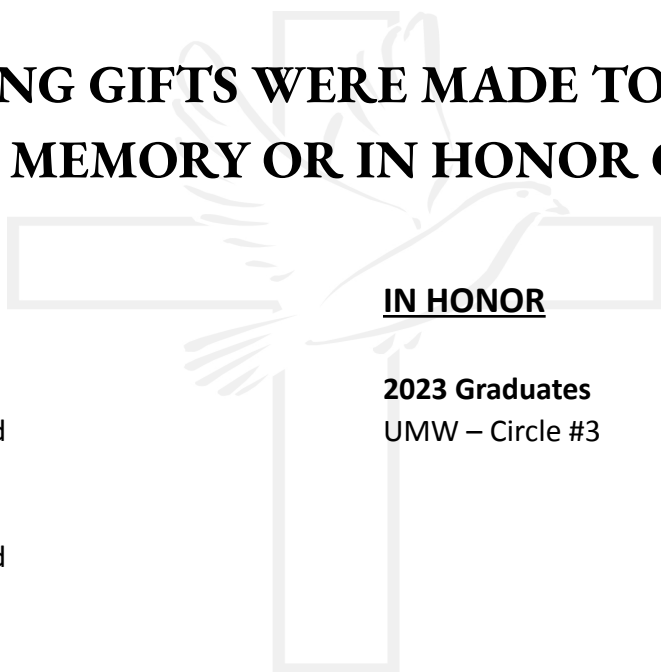
IN MEMORY

Pina Nance
Anonymous – Parsonage Fund

Don Upton
Anonymous – Parsonage Fund
Jean and Terry Oates

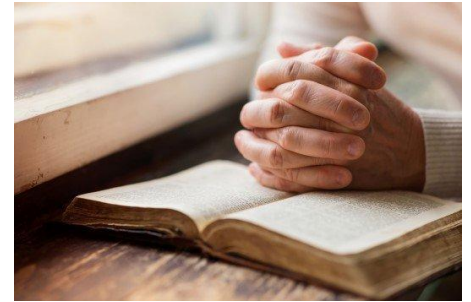
IN HONOR

2023 Graduates
UMW – Circle #3



Inspiration Point

All Preachers have a large Library of Books. That is just the way it is! Every week you will teach your congregation some very important Spiritual Lessons and you need to be up to it for yourself. As for me, Before I am allowed to preach on a new thing, God makes me walk through it. How can you teach folks a New Spiritual Lesson if you have never lived it? Well, as I looked through my library, I came across a book from 1972 named "Don't Fake It, Say It With Love" by Howard G. Hendricks. It has been there for years, I probably have read over 400 books in my Spiritual lifetime, and each one was especially chosen to shape my Christian walk. Well, this one is like finding an old friend! It talks about walking out your Christian life in your everyday situations.



From Romans 5:6 –8, God showed us love through Jesus! We deserved to die for the sins that broke our covenant with God, but God loved us enough to send His only begotten Son (Jesus) to die for us even though we did not deserve it! Most of us were lost as a goose before we got saved! We took a look at all the things that a Christians did not do and decided we wanted no part of that! We liked to go out and get drunk and party! We looked forward to it! But God had a plan! One day He brought all that to a head and our world came crashing down on us and we had nowhere else to turn! But because of His great love for us, God was already there for us! Jesus had died on the cross for the payment of our sins! We did not have to bear the consequences of those great sins! But we have to believe what the Gospel says! We have to believe it and receive it

for ourselves! When we have, God sends His Holy Spirit to live in us and we become God conscious! We are aware of His presence! With His help, we can study our Bibles and pray to Him enough that we can become intimate with God! Your Christian life will really take off at that point! As Josh Turner says, "Me and God!" You can do all things when it is just you and God! You bring the faith and He brings the power! Many times some people just read someone else's little short write up in a devotion book, read the prayer written there and walk away believing they have done their duty for the day. Well, they have read someone else's words, read someone else's prayer but have not made contact with God at all! The idea here is to become intimate with God on a personal level! This is where the true Christian life is found!

God will change the way you view things and then change the way you talk and act everywhere in your life, at home, at church, at work, wherever you are! You will never have to worry whether you are saved or not! God's presence will always be with you! Then, just follow the peace!

What I have shared here is just from the first chapter of the book! It is a good read and easy. Maybe it is carried by Amazon, I do not know! But you will be happy you read it!

May God bless you special this month and I will be talking to you later!

Brother Phil



The church office recently received these notes of thanks:

Dear Church Family,

Thanks to everyone for their prayers, texts, and cards that I received before my surgery and during my recovery. Pleasant Grove is truly a wonderful community of loving people.

—Steve Dellinger

Dear Church Family,

What a blessing to be a part of such a great Christian family. Thank you for remembering me during teacher appreciation week with a gift card to Dunkin Donuts. Our children are our future. I try everyday to enlighten each one of these precious children of my (our) Lord's love and forgiveness, concentrating on "loving one another." Once again, thanks to a wonderful church.

—In Christian Love,
Terry Todd (a member of our After School Care Staff)

Dear Church Family,

We are so thankful for all the cards, love, and support we received while starting our next chapter at Salem UMC. Though there will be physical distance between us, the spirit of the Lord connects and binds us and we will see each other again. Pleasant Grove will always hold a special place in our hearts.

—Colin and Becca Winslette



The church family extends our deepest sympathies to:

Janice and Wes Williams on the recent passing of Janice's father, Mr. John Bateman.



The Recipe Box

When vegetables come to mind as an addition to an entrée, cauliflower is sometimes the last one to consider. But it is a versatile and healthy vegetable to include in your meal planning! This casserole is easy to make and quite tasty when all is said and done!

Three-Cheese Keto Cauliflower Casserole

- 1 medium to large head of cauliflower, cut into ½ inch pieces
- 4 TBSP butter (or margarine), divided
- 1 TBSP canola oil
- 4 ounces cream cheese, cubed
- 3 ½ cups shredded cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 ½ cups shredded mozzarella cheese, divided
- 1 cup 2% milk

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place cut up cauliflower on a rimmed 15 x 10-inch baking sheet. Melt 1 TBSP butter and drizzle over the cauliflower. Then add the oil and toss to coat. Roast until lightly brown and tender, about 20-25 minutes.



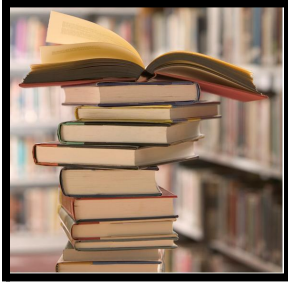
To prepare sauce, melt cream cheese and 3 TBSP butter over medium heat in a saucepan. Add 2 cups cheddar cheese, 1 cup mozzarella, and milk. Cook and stir until sauce begins to thicken. Gently fold in cauliflower. Then, transfer to an 8-inch square baking dish that has been prepared with cooking spray. Sprinkle with remaining cheddar and mozzarella cheese.

Bake at 425 degrees, uncovered, until bubbly and cheese is melted, about 20 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

(This recipe comes from the March issue of Taste of Home magazine.)

---submitted by Peggy Green

Recommended Reading



This month's suggested read is the true story of a unique friendship between two people who had nothing --- and ultimately everything --- in common. Mister Owita's Guide to Gardening, by Carol Wall, is subtitled, "How I Learned the Unexpected Joy of a Green Thumb and an Open Heart," and is a memoir that touches upon everything that is important in life. Wall creates an extraordinary tribute to an exceptional man in this heartbreaking and heartwarming ode to the joys of friendship and gardening. She knew less than nothing about gardening. In fact, she didn't even like getting her hands dirty! He knew everything and gained so much joy from every minute spent in the

garden. She was a well-positioned, white woman. He was an immigrant from Kenya, struggling to provide for his family, as he was denied the position that his education should have secured. But, in the garden he created for her from the neglected wasteland that was her yard, Owita and Wall found common ground in the tragic and triumphant circumstances of life that they share.

As this beautiful story begins Carol is living in Middle America, is a teacher, is a wife and a mother of grown children. She has overcome her own illness, but her beloved parents are getting older and are facing health challenges of their own. One day, pulling into her driveway, she realizes that her yard has become **that** yard...the one that all the neighbors whisper about and the one that shames the entire neighborhood. She also notices that her neighbor has someone tending their garden. After some inquiry, she learns that this dark-skinned man from Africa is Giles Owita. He is highly thought of, he has a wife and children, he also bags groceries at the local supermarket, and he is very good at gardening.

So, Carol engages the services of Mister Owita to bring about change in her yard. After some protest and reluctance, Carol begins to view her interactions with Mister Owita as a student-teacher relationship. She picks up a marbled composition notebook and begins to take notes on what he does in the garden. She writes down his suggestions for what plants should go where, how much sun or shade a specimen requires, when to prune things, and which plants live well beside one another. But even as Mister Owita is teaching Carol about the transformation that is taking place in her garden, he is also showing her how to find grace in the midst of heartbreak and to accept the fact that beauty exists *because* it is fleeting, both in her garden and in her life. Mister Owita's impact didn't stop with the boundaries of her yard...in fact, his influence transformed her life. As the pages of the calendar change and the years fleetingly pass, a caring friendship grows between them. And when they each trust one another with their long-buried secrets, their bond is forever cemented.



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Mister Owita's Guide to Gardening is the perfect read for this time of year, as the earth is awakened and vibrant. But really, it is a perfect read for any time of the year! This book is easy to read and will touch your heart in so many ways. We think you will thoroughly enjoy Carol Wall's story and we encourage you to pick it up soon. You can find it in your local public library, from any online bookseller, and even in our own Lending Library at Pleasant Grove. Happy Reading!!!

"I considered what might have been Giles's greatest lesson to me—his example of the gracious acceptance of the handicaps and afflictions life had brought him. He had shown me that the earth is full of hidden treasures."

---Carol Wall



After School Care Post

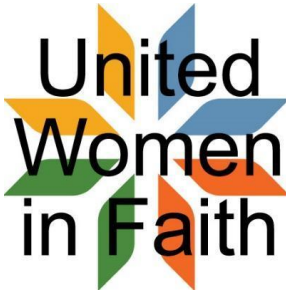
The staff at After School Care hopes that everyone is doing well as we barrel on ahead to summer! It's been busy at After School Care. The students have had End of Grade tests, with Mountain Island Charter School finishing up a couple weeks ahead of Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. They are excited about testing being over and are really looking forward to the beginning of summer break.

Most of our summer field trips have been scheduled. We still have a few dates to work out. But we are definitely planning on pool time, putt-putt, and bowling. We will do our best to keep our children busy and having fun! We are also doing some projects to decorate our building. We want it to feel bright and welcoming to our new friends and the friends we haven't seen since last summer.

We have been so lucky to have such great groups of children over the years. We are sure that this summer will be no exception. We look forward to another smooth and enjoyable summer. If you know of anyone in need of summer care for their school-age children, please have them call Sherrie Cannon at 704.393.7895. We do have a few spots left in our summer program.



News from United Women in Faith



The monthly meetings of United Women in Faith at Pleasant Grove will be on Tuesday, June 13th. Circle #3 will be meeting at 2:00 PM in the fellowship hall with Julia Grey having our devotional. Circle #6 will be visiting some of our shut in and homebound members and Karen Dellinger will be sending out an email with those plans.

Our July meeting will be a covered dish dinner in the fellowship hall with both Circles meeting together at about 5:30 PM. We will have guests from the district level of our organization, so we want to have many of our own members present. Go ahead and mark your calendars now for this fun evening of fellowship!

The conference Spiritual Growth Retreat is coming up on June 8th – 10th at Lake Junaluska. Pleasant Grove has two members attending and it's not too late to sign up. You can speak with Mary Usher or Sherri Brown about the registration process. Catherine Ritch and Mark Barden will be leading the music and Rev. Jan Brittain will be the speaker.

Our next Metro District event is our annual meeting on Saturday, August 26th at Matthews United Methodist Church. More information will be available soon.

As always, our Circle meetings are open to all ladies of the church as well as friends and community members. We would love to have a couple of new faces at either of our meetings. Contact Jeannie Upton or Karen Dellinger to get plugged in!!!



Thanks to Our Volunteers!!!

Thanks to our dedicated band of volunteers for setting up our annual observance of Memorial Day! These men worked diligently to place an American flag on the grave of each of our deceased veterans. They also set a Memorial wreath alongside the Memorial stone in the church cemetery. It is so very important that we, as a people, never forget the sacrifices that many have made to ensure that we continue to enjoy the freedoms and liberties that have been a part of the fabric of our country since our beginnings. We encourage our church family to take the time to stop by the cemetery, take in the sight of those American flags, and give thanks for the blessings we so often take for granted. As the saying goes, we are "The land of the free because of the brave." God Bless our volunteers and our veterans, and God Bless America!



Volunteers Steve McClure, Sid Hoopengardner, Doug Elliott, Donnie Adams, David Zimmerman, Rick Elliott, and Jeff McCallum gathered at the flagpole as they place the Memorial wreath in the church cemetery.

Meeting Minutes

Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church Council



The Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church Council held the first quarter council meeting on March 26th following the 10 AM worship service. Council chair, Buck Green, called the meeting to order and Rev. Phil Turner offered the opening prayer.

Rev. Sam Lewis was recognized to make opening remarks. He spoke of the role of the church council and the importance of leadership in the church. Rev. Lewis informed the group that he and Colin Winslette had recently met with a newly formed Christian congregation seeking worship space.

Rev. Lewis stated that there would need to be considerable discussion within the church council and congregation before a decision could be rendered on this matter. Volunteers to serve on an oversight committee for this possible partnership would be greatly appreciated.

A number of committee reports were presented highlighting the ongoing work of the church. Finance chair, Scott Brown, and Trustee chair, Steve McClure, discussed strategies to improve church finances including current rental agreements.

The work of all our committees is vital to our church growth and mission. Apologies for not having a more complete description of committee activities. The church council needs a secretary who can provide minutes of each meeting to the council and congregation. Anyone willing to consider this responsibility is asked to contact Rev. Sam Lewis or Buck Green. We are also in need of a vice chair for the council.

One report of note is that the parsonage committee recently met to discuss improvements to our parsonage. Committee chair, Margaret Parker reported that there are plans for painting and flooring replacement. Thanks to the generosity of church members this work can be accomplished without impacting the church budget.

There being no further business to discuss, Rev. Lewis offered a closing prayer, and the meeting was adjourned.

All church members are welcome to attend any and all church council meetings.



Our Lending Library is Here for You!!!



Don't forget that Pleasant Grove has its own lending library! If you are looking for a good read...something that will inspire, inform, entertain, or help you along on your walk with the Lord...then we just may have what you need. We are located in the Gathering Room of the Family Life Center. Simply choose your title, take it home, enjoy it, and return it for others. Simple, isn't it? The books await. Let's get reading!!!

Grad Sunday at The Grove

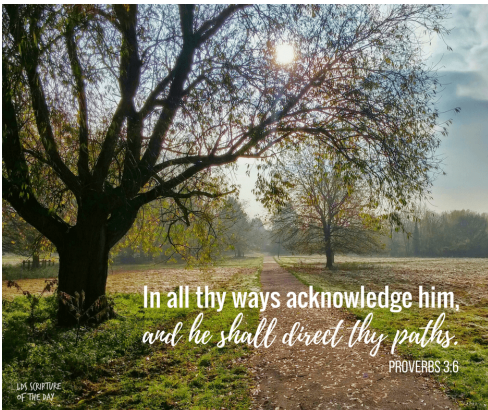
On Sunday, May 28th, the church family at Pleasant Grove honored the Class of 2023. This year we had one high school graduate and two college graduates. And, as usual, these graduates make us proud! Pleasant Grove always unleashes the most amazing young adults into the world, each and every year. And, as you will see below, this year was no exception.



Erin Grace Holcomb --- Erin is the daughter of Todd and Windy Holcomb and is a graduate of Mountain Island Charter School, where she was a student from first grade through her senior year. While in high school, Erin enjoyed being a part of Student Government, was Secretary of the National Honor Society, and enjoyed planning fun events like prom and school spirit days. One of her proudest moments was representing her class as a Junior Marshall. Erin finished her senior year as number five in her graduating class. She will be attending UNC Charlotte and has been accepted into the Belk College of Business and plans to major in Marketing. Erin's favorite quote is, "Life is a climb, but the view is great!" A Bible verse that is very special to Erin is 1 John 3:18: "Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

Samantha Leigh Tadlock --- Samantha is the daughter of Rob and Lynne Tadlock and has graduated this year from Central Piedmont Community College with an Associates Degree of Applied Science in Physical Therapy. While working her way through this program, Sam was nominated to give a speech at the CPCC Pinning Ceremony. She graduated Magna Cum Laude, with an overall GPA of 3.95 and was on the school's President's List three out of four semesters. Sam will be taking her board exam in July to become a licensed Physical Therapy Assistant. She hopes to work in an outpatient setting with either the geriatric or pediatric population. Sam's favorite Bible verse is John 13:7: "Jesus replied, 'You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.'"

Sydney Nicole Tadlock --- Sydney is the daughter of Rob and Lynne Tadlock too! Sydney has graduated once again from East Carolina University with a Masters of Science degree in Kinesiology. While in grad school, she was named Campus Recreation and Wellness' Graduate Assistant of the Year. She also received her Exercise Physiologist certification from the American College of Sports Medicine. Sydney plans to work as an Exercise Physiologist with a cardiac rehabilitation program. Her favorite quote is, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."



And here's the thing...because you are a member of this church family, you have had an impact on these young lives! Please continue to hold them in your prayers as they step into this next chapter of their lives. For sure, the world is a better place because of these three young ladies! (Kind of makes you want to put your thumbs under your suspenders, rock back and forth on your feet, and say, "Yep! She's one of us!")

Happy Father's Day!!!



The volunteers at Pleasant News want to wish all the fathers in our church family a very *Happy Father's Day!* On Sunday, June 18th, we will once again give cards to our fathers, prepare a special meal for them, and maybe even spoil them with a round of golf. But these traditions shouldn't be limited to just one sort of "dad." As we look to that one day out of the year when we honor the dads among us, we can all surely remember a "father" who has had a positive influence in our lives. That may be our biological father or a revered grandfather. It might be the fun uncle or that very special big brother. It could surely be that Sunday school teacher from our

childhood who so easily shared his faith with us. But it could just as easily be the neighbor down the street who has been so generous with his time, his wisdom, and his compassion. There are many ways to be a father...and we are thankful for all who have been exactly that to us!

On this Father's Day, be sure to think of all the "Dads" in your life and let them know of your remembrance of them. And, to all the fathers out there...thanks for loving us, laughing with us, caring about us, guiding us, and building us up in our faith. We wouldn't be who we are today if it weren't for your presence in our lives. *Happy Father's Day to you all!!!*



Let's Get Moving Again!!!



We are very happy to announce that our gym is open once again for walking! On Monday and Wednesday mornings, from 9-11 AM, you can come on in, exercise for a while, enjoy the fellowship with other walkers, and know that you can do all of this under a roof and in a climate-controlled environment. So, if it's raining, come on and walk! If it's too hot, come on and walk! If it's sticky and humid, come on and walk! If it's cool and breezy (HA!), come on and walk!

Rose Poston is our lead for this ministry. If you are willing and able to be a sub for Rose, or to be a second volunteer with her, please let her know. She would love to have you join her and will need to have a sub from time to time. We are so appreciative of Rose stepping up and providing this ministry to our church family and community!

Be sure to tell your friends and neighbors about this opportunity. All are welcome! Wouldn't it be awesome to see folks making laps around the gym, getting some exercise, sharing smiles, and living life side by side? So, what do you say...See you in the gym for a good, brisk walk??? We sure do hope so!!!

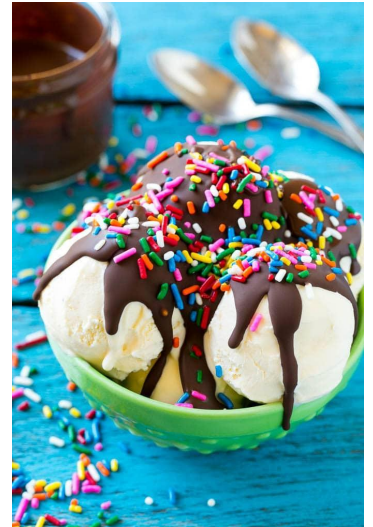
Pleasant Grove Thanks Pastor Sam



Since January, Pleasant Grove has been honored to serve alongside Pastor Sam Lewis, as he filled our interim senior pastor position. Sam came to us just after the Christmas and New Year's holidays, and he hit the ground running. While at Pleasant Grove, he has engaged with us in worship, through his gift of music, in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread together. It has been quite evident that Sam wanted us to look to our future, and the plans that God has for the coming years for our sweet church. He wanted to help us ready ourselves for our incoming senior pastor, fine tuning our worship services, resurrecting some of our outreach, preparing our buildings

for future ministries, and aligning our volunteer opportunities with church discipline. Sam had the best interests of Pleasant Grove at the heart of all that he did! And he did all this with his signature wit and humor!

Sunday, June 25th, will be Sam's last Sunday with us. We want to thank Pastor Sam for all that he has done for us, as a church. We want to thank him for standing in the gap with us. We want him to know that he will be missed and that we wish him well in ministry and in life. As a way of thanking Sam, we will gather as a church family on Sunday, June 25th, at 3:00 PM for an ice cream social. Please make plans now to come to the family life center to enjoy ice cream with all the toppings and to let Sam know just how much we appreciate him and his ministry with us. As another way of saying thanks, we will be receiving a love offering to present to Sam on the afternoon of the 25th. If you would like to be a part of this "thank you," simply turn in your gift to the church office and mark it for "Sam's Gift."



Pleasant Grove has certainly been blessed by some extraordinary men and women in ministry. It is safe to say that we would not be the church that we are today had it not been for the example and influence of our ministers. And now we count Sam among those who have made a difference. We pray God's blessing upon Pastor Sam as he continues in service for the Kingdom of God.



LUNCH TIME

PG Prayer Lunch

The PG Prayer Lunch meets every Thursday at 11:30 a.m. at The Stockyard Restaurant. Everyone...men and women, church members and friends, are welcome to join us. We would love to have you with us for this time of food, fellowship, and prayer as we come together seeking God's power and presence in our lives and in the world around us.

Thursdays - 11:30 AM - The Stockyard

Are You Plugged In?

Coming to church on Sunday mornings is probably something you've done for most of your life. It's just a part of your week, and without it your week just isn't complete. Some might say it's written into your DNA! And that's a good thing. We aren't saying it's a meaningless habit or just a routine occurrence. Church attendance is a good habit for you and your family. It's sacred. It's impactful. It's important.

But did you know that there's a way to further plug in to the life of the church here at Pleasant Grove? On Sunday mornings you can find three different small groups to be a part of. These are gatherings of adults who are studying the scriptures together, figuring out life together, and supporting one another along the way. The Madeline Tyson Covenant Class meets in the office building, in between the chapel and the office. The Disciples Class and the Genesis Class meet upstairs in the family life center. Each of these classes meets at 9:00 on Sunday morning, for about 45 minutes just before worship. Any of these groups would love to have you come and be a part of their fellowship.



In addition to studying together and applying God's Word to their lives, these groups also share meals together, celebrate holidays together, and serve the church together. In many cases they provide the leadership for church-wide fellowship meals, fundraising efforts, and ministry and outreach opportunities. In short, getting involved with one of these groups on Sunday morning can lead to a deeper and richer church family experience for you.

If you aren't already engaged with one of these groups, make plans to try one out real soon. Plugging in can give you a stronger connection to God, and the church family at Pleasant Grove, through this one simple step! We look forward to seeing you soon!



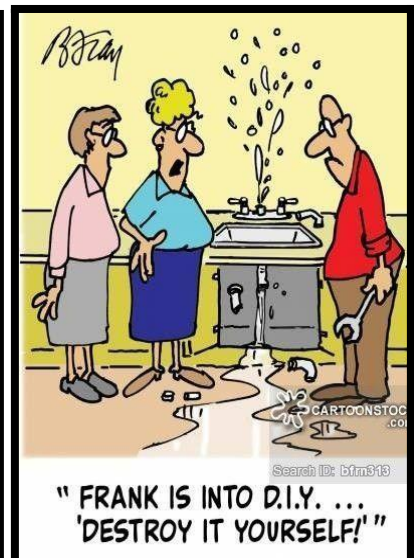
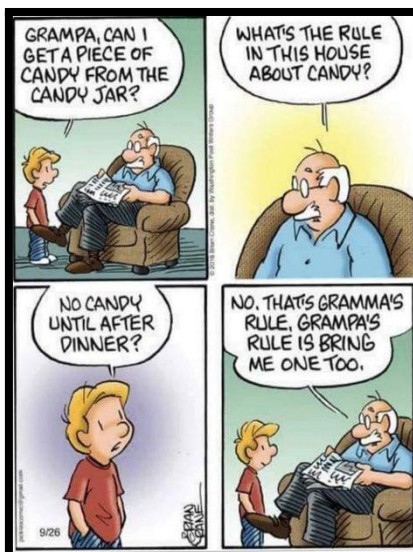
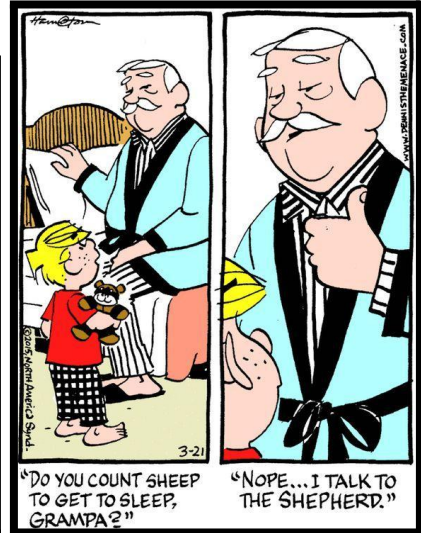
Heartsaver First Aid, CPR, and AED Certification Class at Pleasant Grove UMC



The American Heart Association is the leading research and education organization of the world in the science of life support and resuscitation. They provide Heartsaver First Aid, CPR, and AED Certification, which is valid for two years. On Saturday, June 3rd, Pleasant Grove will host a certification class in our Family Life Center, 8:00 AM – 12:00 Noon. The class will be led by a professional paramedic and is limited to 12 students. The cost for the class is at the reduced rate of \$45 per person (and usually costs \$60 per person). We believe this is such a small price

to pay to be equipped to save someone's life! To register and pay for your class, please contact Jeff McCallum. Together, through so many different avenues, we can make a difference in the lives of others!!!

Just For Giggles!!!





WORD LIST				
BEACH	FISHING	ICE CREAM	OUTDOOR	SUNGLASSES
CAMP	FLIP FLOPS	LEMONADE	POOL	SUNSCREEN
CARNIVAL	HEAT	MOVIES	RELAX	SWIMMING