



# Pleasant News

Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church

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## WORSHIP TIMES

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

## CONTACT US

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## Inspiration Point

When you read through the Bible, especially the Old Testament, you find how God dealt with Israel and Judah. When they were good, God sent them prosperity. When they neglected to pay attention to God and His ways, the prosperity continued for a time, but soon their troubles would begin. Do you suppose that God has changed His ways? Did not God say, **"I am the Lord Your God, and I change not!"** Over in the Book of Jeremiah 18:1 – 11, God directs Jeremiah to go down to the Potter's house and observe. God had a message for the people there! Now, you may say, "That is the Old Testament and that is not relevant for today." And I would respond, "What part of **"I am the Lord your God, and I change not"** do you not understand?

So, Jeremiah goes straight down to the Potter's house and watches the Potter mess up a clay pot, destroy it, push the residue into a pile, and begin again. Then God gives Jeremiah His message, **"O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this Potter does? Like clay in the hand of the Potter, so are you in my hand, O House of Israel."**

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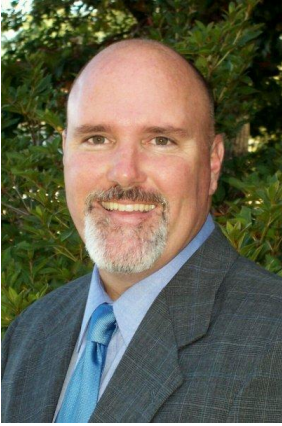
**If at any time I announce that a nation or a kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down or destroyed, and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey Me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it. Now therefore say to the people of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, 'This is what the Lord says: Look! I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So, turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions.'"**

This message of gloom and doom was not well received in Judah because of their good economy. They felt that a good economy was God's reward to them because they were doing right. But it was not! God always sends prosperity before He brings judgment! This is to remind the people of His goodness and mercy. It is given to cause the people to reflect on Him, and to show Him love and appreciation. Unfortunately, the people's hearts are hard, and they can only think about how much money they are making because the economy is good. They only think of God when times are tough and there is no one else they can turn to! That is why God makes the economy turn tough, to make the people turn their hearts back to Him! Now, God is not just talking to one individual, He is talking to a whole nation, a whole race of people, a nation with a government. Is it surprising that God deals with a whole nation of people just like He deals with one individual? Is it surprising that God has not changed, and He is the same way today as He was back then? God is dealing with the USA today and we have not been listening! We have our eyes on making as much money as we can in a good economy but are not paying attention to His ways as we have been taught in the Bible!

God is warning us today that we are a sinful nation! We neglect Him, and we ignore His prophets today, just as badly if not worse than they did in Jeremiah's day! In fact, we have been trying to outlaw His Name, His Words, His ways everywhere we can! If God is absent, then one can do pretty much anything they want to do! Shootings, robbery, rape, stealing, and misrepresenting things become the normal for people! The problem for us is that we stand back and do not want to get involved! As we look at our nation today, we are at least as bad as Israel and Judah were then! Yet we stand silently and watch as Satan moves in where God was and robs, steals, and destroys! Our silence shows that we approve of what the evil doers are doing! Can you look at what is going on here today and not see that God has taken His hand of protection away, and Satan is running around with a free hand to work his evil among us? The time for looking the other way and pretending everything will be ok is over! The Bible teaches us that when the enemy comes in like a flood, God raises up a standard against him! A standard is a flag! It is time to stand up and rally around the flag! It is time to take a stand for Jesus! It is Prayer Time!

*Brother Phil*

## From the Pastor's Desk



Our denomination (The United Methodist Church-UMC) is going through a transformation right now. It breaks my heart, but it is not surprising to me. This has been coming for many years. I first read about it in a book that Lyle E. Schaller wrote in 2004 titled: [“The Ice Cube Is Melting”](#). I am a traditional, orthodox pastor and I have found fulfillment as an ordained Elder in the UMC. I find my heart also having a kindred spirit with those who are part of the Global Methodist Church. You can learn more about them by going to this link: <https://globalmethodist.org/>.

As a church, we are at a crossroads! We need to pray and discern about our future as a local congregation and whether that future involves a change in denominational affiliation. Ultimately that decision is the church's to make, not mine. I came across an article that I liked, and I wanted to share it with you. Please be in prayer for our church as we go forward for Christ, so that we might have His wisdom in knowing the best path forward.

– Pastor Byron

**Standing at the Crossroads** by Rev. Dr. Scott Field (published 8/10/2022)



**This is what the Lord says:**

***“Stop at the crossroads and look around.  
Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it.  
Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls.***

***But you reply, ‘No, that’s not the road we want!’*** (Jeremiah 6:16 NLT)

These are serious times with serious choices. The most recent average of national polls about the current direction of the United States indicates that 20.4% of us believe the country is on the right track and 72.6% of us believe the country is on the wrong track. Which means there are 7% of us who are “undecided.”

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I don't know what the polling would indicate if we asked United Methodists the right track/wrong track question about our denomination. We would predictably find strong convictions on both sides.

In the middle, I suspect, however, is a segment of United Methodists, probably much larger than 7%, who are uncertain about the way forward for themselves and their local church in the current denominational unraveling. Many of us may be accustomed to "wait and see what happens". But the clock is ticking. Current provisions for disaffiliation expire in December 2023. That is when the window closes. It is a time for choosing, not drifting.

So which road will it be for you and your local church? Will you, as the Scripture entreats us, choose the "old, godly way, and walk in it"? Or will we take a pass? "No, that's not the road we want!" That may be the most serious choice we make in these serious times.

You might think most of the conflict behind the slow-motion schism of the United Methodist Church is confined to concerns about sexuality, gender identity, marriage, and ordination qualifications. Without doubt, those are serious concerns. As with so many other pressing matters, however, those concerns are actually secondary. The primary question is simple and profound: will you choose the "old, godly way, and walk in it" or not?

As much as we might prefer the proverbial Methodist muddling in the middle of the road, the Bible confronts us with a number of these either/or choices. The Bible goes eyeball-to-eyeball with us about our fundamental allegiances, devotions, worship, and desires.

Some Scriptures come to mind. They rinse the blinkers from our eyes and help us see the choice before us and our local church more clearly:

- ***"You must not have any other god but me."*** (Exodus 20:3 NLT)
- ***"So fear the Lord and serve him wholeheartedly. Put away forever the idols your ancestors worshiped when they lived beyond the Euphrates River and in Egypt. Serve the Lord alone. But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Would you prefer the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates? Or will it be the gods of the Amorites in whose land you now live? But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord."*** (Joshua 24:14-15 NLT)
- ***"The time promised by God has come at last!", (Jesus) announced. "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the gospel!"*** (Mark 1:15 NLT)
- ***"And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."*** (Romans 12:1-2 NLT)

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- ***“For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths. “But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don’t be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you.” (2 Timothy 4:3-5 NLT)***
- ***“Look, I (Lord Jesus) stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends.” (Revelation 3:20 NLT)***

Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor identifies two very different ways of thinking about our lives and the world in which we live. One view, called the mimetic view, regards the world as having a given order and a given meaning and thus sees human beings as required to discover that meaning and conform themselves to it. The other perspective, called poiesis, by way of contrast, sees the world as so much raw material out of which meaning and purpose can be created by the individual.

My abbreviated summary would be that one way is to align myself with God’s revelation of what is real, true, beautiful, just, and worthy. The other is that I determine myself what is real, true, beautiful, just, and worthy. There can be some significant overlap here, but the foundational difference is whether God is the author and judge of the world, including me, or whether I am the author and judge of the world, including whatever god I might imagine or invent. So, which will it be for you? For your local church? Is the God of the Bible angry, sexist, violent, narrow-minded, and bigoted?

Must the Christian faith be deconstructed because it is actually a patriarchal social paradigm used by the powerful, wealthy, and elite to suppress, exclude, and marginalize others? Or is the “faith once delivered to the saints” and handed along to us a precious gift and promise?

Should we substitute Hippocrates (“**First of all, do no harm**”) for Jesus or shall we confess, along with the Apostle Peter, “**Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.**” (John 6:68-69).

Is the church one among many voluntary associations that give time, money, and advocacy to any number of social causes and political agendas or is it uniquely created and called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit for the specific purpose of sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ — his life, his teaching, his death for our sins according to the Scriptures, his burial, his being raised from the dead, and his coming return to judge the living and the dead?

By the way, if either you or the church of which you are part seems a bit foggy on the purpose of the church, the next time you worship at a UM church take a look in the front section of the hymnal, Baptismal Covenant III, page 45, where you will find this bracing statement of mission:

***“The Church is of God, and will be preserved to the end of time, for the conduct of worship and the due administration of God’s word and Sacraments, the maintenance of Christian fellowship and discipline, the edification of believers, and the conversion of the world. All, of every age and station, stand in need of the means of grace which it alone supplies.”***

***Baptismal Covenant III, page 45***

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You may be aware of the waves of congregations in many parts of the US that are disaffiliating from the United Methodist Church. For some it is an amicable departure, others are being required by their Annual Conference to pay hefty “exit fees”, and in a growing number of places local churches are taking legal action against their annual conference as they seek to leave United Methodism behind.

But these situations, too, unsettling though they may be, are secondary concerns. The congregations seeking to disaffiliate, despite the costs and the legal processes, have realized they have come to a crossroads and have looked around. They have recognized the foundational nature of the choice before them. And they are no longer undecided about their desire or direction.

That same pointed entreaty from the Scriptures addresses each of us and our local churches:

**This is what the Lord says:**

*“Stop at the crossroads and look around.  
Ask for the old, godly way, and walk in it.  
Travel its path, and you will find rest for your souls. (Jeremiah 6:16 NLT)*

So, what is your reply? What is the reply of your local church?



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

### IN MEMORY

**Brad Baucom**

Robert and Coretha Ferrell  
Ron and Anna Robinson

**Billy Jones**

Tim and Terri Honeycutt – Family Life Center

### IN HONOR

**Hazel Sanders**

Double Ring Sunday School Class  
Covenant Sunday School Class

**Wayne Therrell**

Double Ring Sunday School Class  
Covenant Sunday School Class

**Troy Crisp**

Covenant Sunday School Class





## The Recipe Box

We are finally getting to that time of year when our cooking turns to those savory comfort foods that we so enjoy in the cool months of Autumn. Sometimes, though, we just want a slightly new twist on one of our old standards. That's exactly what we have for this month. Most of us have probably had *Sloppy Joes* as one of our quick, go-to items that we can turn to when we are short on time or short on ideas. It's nothing fancy but it sure seems to do the trick when you have a crowd over, when you are watching the game, or when you just need a little something to go along with a bowl of soup. *Texas Toast Sloppy Joes* is a recipe that makes the "Joe" filling from scratch. However, to save a little time, there would be nothing wrong with using a can of the seasoning sauce instead of these ingredients. The use of the Texas Toast just jazzes it up a bit and the fact that you serve this as an open-faced sandwich seems to elevate it above the hamburger bun, just a bit. Serve this sandwich with chips, cole slaw, pasta salad, or a tossed green salad, and you have a meal ready in minutes. We hope you will enjoy *Texas Toast Sloppy Joes*...and don't forget to ask us over to watch the game with you!!!

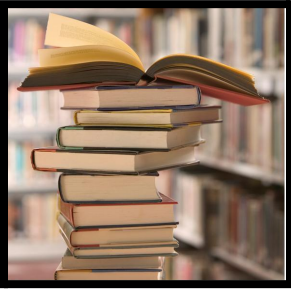


### Texas Toast Sloppy Joes

1 lb. lean ground beef  
 ¼ cup chopped onion  
 ½ teaspoon garlic powder  
 ¾ cup ketchup  
 2 teaspoons tomato paste  
 ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce  
 2 ½ teaspoons brown sugar  
 Salt and pepper to taste  
 4-6 slices of frozen Texas Toast  
 Shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven, following package directions, for the Texas Toast. On the stovetop, over medium heat, brown your ground beef and onion. Drain well. Add in ketchup, tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, brown sugar, salt, and pepper. Stir well to combine all ingredients. Cook over medium heat until mixture has thickened to your liking. While the filling is thickening, place Texas Toast into preheated oven on baking sheet. Bake toast according to package directions or until golden brown. Place your Sloppy Joe mixture on top of your golden-brown Texas Toast. Top each "Joe" with cheddar cheese. Enjoy!!!

## Recommended Reading



Sometimes you happen upon a book that you not only enjoy reading, but that also leaves a lasting impression upon your heart and mind. This month's recommendation does just that! Chasing Fireflies, by Charles Martin, is a great mystery wrapped in a beautiful story. It is an endearing tale with an amazing back story. As a reader, you are invited to have feelings for each character ranging from love, anger, sorrow, wonder, respect, and admiration. And you are free to express those emotions through your own laughter and tears.

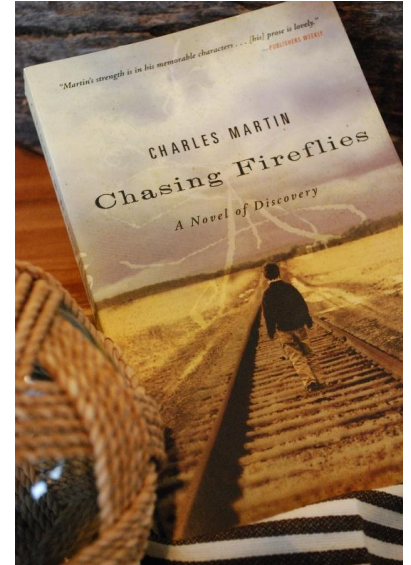
The tears spring out of the story in the current time... On a hot, humid summer day, an old Chevy Impala ignores the warning signals and is annihilated by the oncoming train. No one realizes until much later that the driver had paused just before settling on the tracks and kicked a young boy out of the car. The boy is small, has broken glasses, and is clutching a notebook with all his might. He is a boy who will not speak.

Chase Walker's story is the backstory. Chase was one of the lucky ones. He had been in foster care as a child, but he was ultimately blessed to be with a family who loved him and cared for him. Now, as a journalist for the local newspaper, he has moved on and has finally put the past behind him for good...or so he thinks. When he's assigned to cover the story of this young boy, questions about his own childhood begin to resurface.

"Never settle for less than the truth," was the advice offered to him as he struggled to piece together the boy's story. But, when you don't even know your real name, the truth gets a bit complicated. It can be as close as your next breath and can even take root inside a lie. And as Chase Walker discovers, learning the truth about who you are can be as elusive and as magical as chasing fireflies on a sultry summer night.

The laughter you will find welling up in you as you read comes from one of the most unforgettable characters in the book. "Unc," as he is affectionately known, uses hysterical metaphors and stories that are absolutely priceless. And as lighthearted and familiar as some of Unc's sayings are, there is also so much truth communicated through them. Unc carefully uses an illustration with a jar of fireflies to let Chase know that his existence did not happen by chance. He helps Chase to understand that just like the firefly's lantern and the stars in the sky, Chase was an intentional creation from God's own hand. Through this beautiful story Unc does what he does best...he takes Chase's pain and gives Chase his laughter.

Chasing Fireflies is a haunting story about fishing, baseball, home cooking, and other matters of life and death. And we think that you are sure to enjoy the time you spend with it. Find it in our Lending Library, your local public library, or from any bookseller. Happy Reading!!!





## Scripture of the Month

Happy September, church family!

Colin here bringing you both a Bible verse to think on as well as exciting news about a Bible Study coming this month! Starting September 11th we will meet on Sunday nights to study the book of James! If you are interested in deepening your Christian faith and, more importantly, your relationship with Jesus then I hope you'll join us! The book of James is a book that is in equal parts challenging the reader as well as encouraging. It was written understanding that the life of faith is a difficult one and we all could use some extra wisdom and support. This is made clear in our verse for the month, James 1:12:



***“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”***

While the book consistently challenges believers to live a life of faith and holiness it also wants to start out immediately providing encouragement, letting us know that we will not struggle for nothing. God knows our every struggle and need more intimately than even we ourselves do and He will not allow our strife to be unrewarded. Though it may never mean earthly wealth or success it will mean we have the abundant love of Christ and the peace He provides. So do not be discouraged, for we all may struggle but we don't have to struggle alone!

One great way to encourage each other through the struggles of this life is to get plugged into a community of believers. That's my goal through this upcoming Bible Study: to not only study God's Word but to also encourage and build up one another as a community. So I hope you'll consider joining us on Sunday nights at 6:00 PM in the FLC! With that said, I'll see you all out there and I look forward to facing trials with you all!

*~Colin Winslette*



## Upcoming Bible Study

Beginning September 22 at 6:00 PM in the Upper Room of the Family Life Center I will be starting a Prayer and Bible Study. We will call it, "Praying For Results!". There will be a Book and more about that will be forthcoming. Please call the Church office to Enroll!

Thanks,

*Brother Phil*

## News from United Women in Faith



United  
Women  
in Faith

The United Women in Faith will have a “Walk for Missions” on Saturday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 AM. The plan is to walk Pleasant Oaks Circle twice to get in two miles. Of course, walkers will walk only the distance they feel comfortable doing. This event is open to anyone who would like to participate. The purpose of the walk is to raise funds for the Metro District Mission Projects. If you can’t walk, please consider giving a contribution. Any amount will be gladly accepted and appreciated. Last year our unit had ten walkers and raised almost \$600! Let’s see if we can better both the number of walkers and the amount raised for our 2022 Walk!!! If you can walk, please contact Jeannie Upton or Karen Dellinger. Contributions can be given to Hazel Sanders, Nadine Williams, or Jeannie Upton. Checks should be made payable to Pleasant Grove UMW. If it is raining on the 24<sup>th</sup>, we will walk in our gym. Thanks for your help in making this event successful.

A reminder to the ladies of Pleasant Grove that the United Women in Faith are always ready to welcome anyone who would like to visit our meetings or join our organization. As individuals you really do have an opportunity to become more aware of the need for mission work within our church, our community, our region, and our world through participation in the United Women in Faith. And you also get to participate in that work! Our meetings are each month, on the second Tuesday. It would be wonderful to see several new faces in our midst!

We believe  
love in action  
can change  
the world.



## 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!!!

## Girl Scouts!!!



As the new school year swings into action, so do our Girl Scout Troops! We want the church family to know that we have two Girl Scout Troops meeting on our campus. Troop 3098 begins meeting again on Saturday, September 10th, at 10:00 AM. Troop 882 begins meeting again on Wednesday, September 14th, at 6:00 PM. Both troops will be meeting in the Family Life Center. Please keep these troops, their members, their families, and their leaders in your prayers as they seek to mold these

amazing young girls into strong, capable, and faith-filled women. We are so very glad to have them on our campus and look forward to the positive impact they will make on our world!!!



## Laity Service Award Nominations Are Open

It's that time of year again for Pleasant Grove United Methodist Church to recognize a Lay Person in our congregation to be the recipient of the Laity Service Award. This is a special annual award for a member of our sweet church who has gone beyond the norm in being a

Disciple of Jesus Christ. Our church family has been blessed to have so many dedicated and passionate individuals who truly know what it is to be the hands and feet of Jesus. This is just one way that we can acknowledge them and shine a light on what it means to live a life for Christ. Nomination forms will be in each Sunday School Class and in the church office.

Completed nomination forms must be submitted to the church office by Sunday, September 11th, 2022. If you have any questions, you may contact Hazel Sanders at 704.534.7436.



## Save the Date

The Pleasant Grove family has a very exciting evening coming up on Wednesday, September 28th! And we want you to be here with us!!! So, save the date!

We are calling this fun time together “Dinner with Andy” and that’s exactly what it is. We will have a catered dinner with Andy Lambert. Andy is a retired UMC pastor. He is an evangelist and a former stand-up comedian. Andy loves to re-tale Biblical stories with a humorous slant. The meal and entertainment will be provided by the church, but donations will be accepted at the door to help offset the cost. You are asked to call the church office to make your reservations as we need to make sure that we order enough food for everyone. This event is open to all...church members, their friends and family, and anyone from our community. Church members are asked to bring a dessert to share with the entire gathering.

This is one fun night that you do not want to miss. Go ahead and mark your calendar, invite your friends and family, and let us know that you are coming. We can’t wait to see you for “Dinner with Andy.”



**Dinner  
with  
Andy**



*Join us for a night of laughter  
and BBQ. Donations at the  
door.*

**Sept. 28th at 6 PM**

1915 Oakdale Rd.  
Charlotte, NC  
RSVP to: 704-392-2387





## Summer Camp Post

It's hard to believe but Summer Camp is almost over! Our last field trip was August 12th. Mt. Island Charter School returned to class on August 15th and Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools will do the same on August 29th. It seems like we just got started and the summer break is over!



We would like to thank everyone who worked this summer: Sherrie Cannon, Jeannie Upton, Lynda Elliott, Joanne Pierce, Terry Todd, and Mary Usher. Also, thanks to our assistants: Kenzie Haigler, Lainey Meadows, Kaylan Brown, and Erin Holcomb. Kenzie, Lainey, and Kaylan will all be heading off to college this fall, and Erin will be at Mountain Island Charter for her senior year. We are truly sad to lose them, but we are so glad that we got to work with them. Kenzie, Kaylan, and Erin were all here in our afterschool/summer camp program

as students! To have them come back and work with us was very special! A BIG thank you to Colin Winslette...the children were so excited to see him and listen to his Bible stories each week! And thank you to our parents who

entrusted their children to us this summer. We are now looking forward to a new grade, new teacher, new friends, and we hope that our children all have a wonderful and successful year!

If you know of a student 16 years or older that would like to work a few hours after school, please have them give us a call at 704.393.7895. Pleasant Grove After School Care is a great place to be!







The church office recently received the following notes of thanks:

Sonya, Dylan, Hannah, and I would like to thank you for all your prayers, cards, phone calls, food, and monetary donations during Brad's illness and passing. You will never know how much your outpouring of love and support has meant to us. We do ask that you keep praying for us as we learn to do life without Brad.

Much love to you all,  
Kathy Alexander and Sonya, Dylan, and Hannah Baucom

I would like to thank all the members of Pleasant Grove for the many cards, calls, and prayers lifting me up during my recent surgery. Thank you for being such a caring congregation by being the hands and feet of Christ.

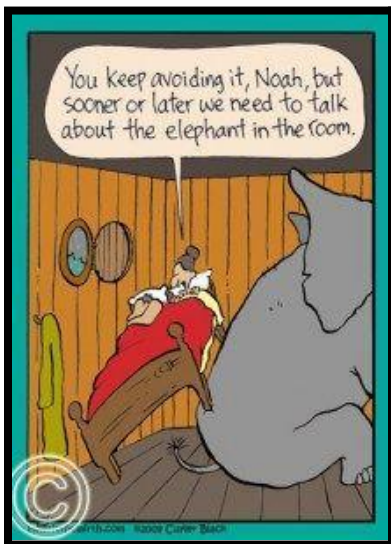
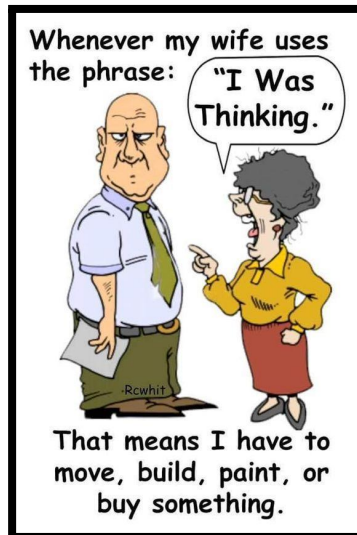
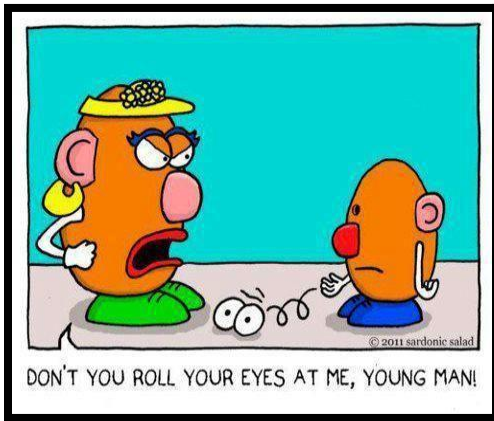
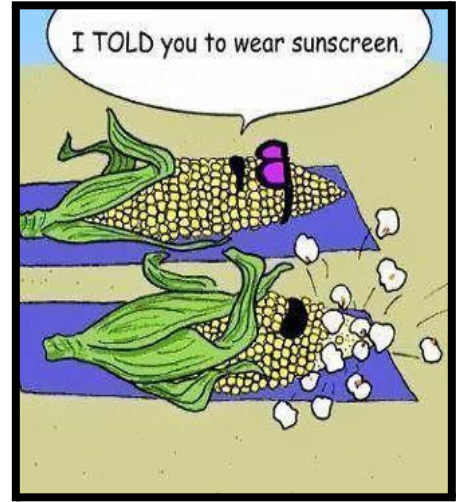
Much love,  
Hazel Sanders



The church family extends our deepest sympathies to:

Susan and Mike Laney, and the entire Isenhour family on the passing of their mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Ruth Isenhour.

# Just For Giggles!!!





# APPLE

## WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

- BASKET
- BIG
- BITTER
- CIDER
- COBBLER
- CORE
- CRUNCH
- FRITTERS
- GOLDEN
- GREEN
- HARVEST
- JUICE
- LEAVES
- ORCHARD
- PEEL
- PICK
- PIE
- RED
- SEEDS
- SLICE
- SMALL
- SWEET
- WORM

H	F	R	I	T	T	E	R	S	H	L	D
B	Y	H	S	E	E	D	S	E	E	K	P
R	J	B	K	N	E	P	I	E	D	M	K
E	O	S	I	C	P	T	P	C	A	I	C
L	A	N	I	G	S	I	E	J	O	C	C
B	L	U	G	E	O	R	C	H	A	R	D
B	J	L	V	O	S	P	G	K	R	U	E
O	V	R	A	E	L	T	R	J	X	N	C
C	A	P	V	M	W	D	E	Y	X	C	I
H	N	A	X	O	S	P	E	E	R	H	L
L	E	Y	R	W	F	V	N	N	W	E	S
L	Z	M	T	B	I	T	T	E	R	S	D

The words appear UP, DOWN, BACKWARDS, and DIAGONALLY.  
Find and circle each word.

