



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

May is beginning to look like it's going to be an exciting month! The United Methodist General Conference wraps up May 3rd, and regardless of any outcomes, my prayer is that we can put the last few disruptive years behind us and focus solely upon our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Then, May 5th is a day that celebrates the Mexican Army's victory over France at the Battle of Puebla. Popular thought in the United States is that it is Mexico's Independence Day, but that isn't correct and it's only a minor holiday in Mexico. However, it has evolved into a time for us to celebrate the rich culture and heritage brought to us by our southern neighbors. And who is going to pass up a chance to eat tacos, right? Not me! In the middle of May, we will be celebrating Jesus' final good-bye to his disciples with his ascension, and then celebrating the birthday of the church on Pentecost. And we will celebrate! We will finish the month of May, remembering those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for us on Memorial Day Weekend. Each week of May brings something special, and we will begin a new study on The Lord's Prayer in the midst of it all. But for now, I want us to preview, and think about, Pentecost.

As you have heard me say, Pentecost is my favorite holiday. Pentecost hasn't been hijacked by the retail world; no one has figured out how to market Pentecost. Pentecost is the day we celebrate as the

birthday of the Church, as it's the day the Holy Spirit came upon believers AND STAYED! The Holy Spirit had existed alongside God since the beginning but had come and gone in various situations. Whenever God "breathed His breath upon people" it was the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit was always working. But at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to live in the lives of all believers, to be with believers at all times. And on the day of Pentecost, the Church was born. Jews from everywhere had gathered in Jerusalem for a major holiday, and they all heard it – the sound of a mighty rushing wind! They all saw it – what seemed to be tongues of fire settled on each of them. Pentecost was LOUD, it was EXCITING, and it was ENERGIZING! As Peter preached that day, everyone gathered heard his words in their own language. Three thousand – THREE THOUSAND PEOPLE – received the message of Jesus Christ and were saved that day! And as the disciples and those 3,000 people continued telling the story, more were added to their number daily!

I didn't mean to tell the whole story, but once I begin, I get so excited I can't help myself. Can you imagine the excitement there that day? The enthusiasm? The joy?

I believe I have experienced something similar to Pentecost the first two days I worked at a hotel welcoming delegates from thirteen different countries to Charlotte for The United Methodist General Conference. And that was just one hotel. I do not know how many total countries were represented. But I do know the Holy Spirit was definitely in that place and although there were many languages being spoken, the language of the love of Jesus Christ was universal – we all spoke it. Delegates from countries that ordinarily do not get along, came together at the airport, rode a bus together to their hotel, and entered the lobby of the hotel talking and laughing together. These delegates have mingled with one another, seen the sights of Charlotte, gone shopping together, and had meals together at various restaurants during their free time. I have seen excitement among them as they have been together. I have seen enthusiasm. I have seen joy. And they are passionate about sharing their excitement, their enthusiasm, and their joy, whether it's the German lady sharing the chocolate she brought with her from Germany, the lady from Latvia gifting us with ink pens with her church's name on them in her language, or others just stopping by for energetic conversation. And I thought, "Wow! This is what happens when we let Jesus get involved in our conflicts. This is what happens when Jesus is the most important thing in our lives. Conflicts, disagreements, all our differences, even language barriers, are set aside, forgotten, for His purposes. When we let Jesus get involved, we actually become The Church!"

As we approach Pentecost, and throughout the Month of May, may we ask ourselves: Is Jesus the most important thing in my life? Do I allow Jesus to get involved in my conflicts? Am I excited and enthusiastic about sharing Jesus? Do I have joy because of Him?

--Pastor Glenda



Easter Joy!

As is Pastor Glenda's tradition, she ends each worship service by asking the youngest people in attendance to carry our candles out of the sanctuary following the benediction. This simple act symbolizes our taking the light of Christ out of our sanctuary and into the world as we depart. This is a beautiful way to highlight the energy and enthusiasm that children bring to our worship. And this is a great way to help these young people know that they matter and that they are at home with us at Pleasant Grove.

On Easter Sunday, Lynette and David Primm's two grandkids, Carleigh and Lucas, were with us. They came forward at the close of our Resurrection Celebration and carried our candles down the aisle of our sanctuary. It was a precious moment for all of us and we hope that Carleigh and Lucas will remember this day for a long time. Can't you just see the joy on their faces?? Easter Joy!!!

"Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'" (Matthew 19:14)





A Note from the Church Office

Hello Spring!

I don't know about you, but I am ready for warmer weather, sunny days and sittin' on the porch.... Pastor Glenda and I have been blessed to put quite a few things in the rearview mirror and we are looking out upon the windshield. I've always been told that in front of you the window is larger and the rearview is smaller so you can focus on moving ahead. Not to say reflection is bad, as it helps with determining your movement forward....

As I am settling in and working through my first Spring, upcoming Summer and soon to be Fall, I am amazed by the love everyone puts into the church, our property, and buildings. There are folks putting up signs and handling maintenance issues, planting flowers and ensuring everything looks "just right" for worship, etc. I am learning so much about the life of this wonderful church and am so very grateful to be a part of it.

Several matters that we wish to bring to your attention:

Pastor Bennett and I met with Mr. Byrum, Executive Director, and Mr. Hicks, Bus Coordinator, of Mountain Island Charter School last month and we were able to address the safety concerns of our church, children, their buses, and parents. Guidelines have now been set (as there weren't any on file for either the school or the church) and they have a designated place to park for their pickup and drop-off by the Family Life Center on the dumpster side, and they can no longer park along the front of the FLC nor the side lot of 7 spaces adjacent to the church offices. You may have also noticed new signage, including the 24-Hour Video Surveillance and 5 MPH Speed Limit. This affirms that we are doing everything we can to keep everyone safe.

And, because this is my first year here, if there is any event or special thing that occurs that I may not be aware of, please be sure to let me know as I do not wish to let something you are used to go undone.

God's Blessings to each of you,
Angela





News From United Women in Faith

The April meetings of the United Women in Faith were well attended with eighteen members present. The afternoon circle welcomed Dale White as a new member. Shirley Harris and Sherri Brown each presented a meaningful devotional for their respective Circles and both groups had business sessions. Five members of Circle #3 will be attending the Metro District Spiritual Prayer Breakfast at North Davidson United Methodist Church on Saturday, April 27th . It's great to have Pleasant Grove represented at the district events. It certainly gives our district leaders support as they work to keep the United Women in Faith active and informed.

The Circle meetings for the month of May will be held on Tuesday, May 14th with Circle #3 meeting at 2:00, and Circle #6 meeting at 6:00. Both meetings will convene in the Fellowship Hall. A little "birdie" tells us that Circle #6 will enjoy a very sweet and seasonally appropriate devotional from Mary Usher!

We are an active United Women in Faith unit and are always seeking new members to help us grow, as we strive to increase in number and in our ability to be a force for missions! Come be a part of this beautiful group!

---submitted by Jeannie Upton



Taste of Oakdale Returns

We would like the church family to know we are partnering with Oakdale School for their Fundraiser Festival, Taste of Oakdale! We will be honoring their request to have their participants and attendees park in our parking lot. So, if you drive by on Saturday, May 18th , and see that our parking lot is full, and you wonder what is going on at your church, you will know that the school has crossed the road, and we are loving on them in this small way!

But don't let that be the only way you support our neighbor across the street! From 10:00 AM until 2:00 PM there will be food trucks, family fun, and local crafters on the school grounds. You don't want to be that person who comes to church on Sunday morning, hears about the fun and festivities, and then realizes that you missed out! What a fun way to be a part of the community, put your support of Oakdale School on display, and show your Oakdale pride!



Pleasant Grove Gives Again!!!

On Sunday, April 14th, our church welcomed Emma Lyons, the community engagement coordinator for Foster Village Charlotte, to share with us how Foster Village, a non-profit organization, is working with foster families to meet their urgent needs. They provide access to educational resources and emotional support and most importantly, advocate by being a community voice for children. Unfortunately, 50% of licensed foster homes stop fostering after their first placement and 80% of foster children suffer from depression and mental health issues. With monetary donations and the community support of Foster Village, a better future can be created not only for our children and their foster parents but also for our community! As always, our church members opened their hearts and wallets and gave in a very generous way through monetary donations and Amazon gift cards. There were many smiles, and also happy tears, when Sherri presented Emma with \$1005 in Amazon gift cards during the service! These gift cards will go a long way in providing welcome kits that go with a child to a new foster home. No child should ever have to grow up without the experience of a family and it truly does take a “village” to help make a positive difference in the lives of our foster children and their families. Thank you, thank you, Pleasant Grove!!

“Helping a child today will prevent a broken adult tomorrow.”

---Kathleen Paydo (licensed foster parent)

“There can be no keener revelation of a society’s soul than by the way in which it treats its children.”

---Nelson Mandela

---submitted by Mary Usher



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

THANK YOU!

The Church Family recently received this note of thanks:

Dear Pleasant Grove UMC,

Thank you so much for making my visit to Pleasant Grove possible. It was my honor and a complete joy to worship with you. Pastor Glenda's message meant so much to me on a personal level, speaking right to the heart of what we do.

I've told my boys before that God did not intend for foster care, or for families to be broken and that it breaks his heart too. Being reminded that families and dysfunction are found all throughout the Bible, and as part of Jesus' own story with an adoptive father in Joseph, we know we are not alone. Jesus has been there and can relate with us on so many levels. How tragically beautiful is that!? Anyway, thank You.

AND for the gift cards! What an absolute gift! I am not sure what I was expecting, but that wasn't it. Thank you, church, for sharing from your heart. Thank you, church, for making me feel so welcome, for your kindness, and for the wonderful generosity. I will keep you all in my heart and in my prayers.

Gratefully,
Emma Lyons
Community Engagement Coordinator, Foster Village Charlotte



United Methodists Join Together

...to nourish our neighbors across the Charlotte metro area!!!

By now, we are all probably aware that the General Conference for the United Methodist Church will be in Charlotte as April ends and May begins. During these two weeks we all have an opportunity to participate in the mission initiative to alleviate hunger in our communities. In the Metro District we are partnering with Nourish Up (formerly Loaves and Fishes) to nourish our neighbors. In North Carolina 10.9% of North Carolinians face food insecurity, 17% of North Carolina's children are food insecure, and 14% of NC Food and Nutrition Services recipients are age 60 and over. With these astonishing statistics, how can we ignore the chance to help? The priority needs are canned meat (tuna, chicken, salmon), canned fruit (no sugar added or in 100% juice), canned vegetables (no salt added or low sodium), pasta (canned or dry boxed), and cereal (whole grain). Please bring your donations to our collection area in the sanctuary or to the church office. We will accept donations through Sunday, May 5 th . Together we can make a difference in the lives of our neighbors, as we share God's love with those in need!





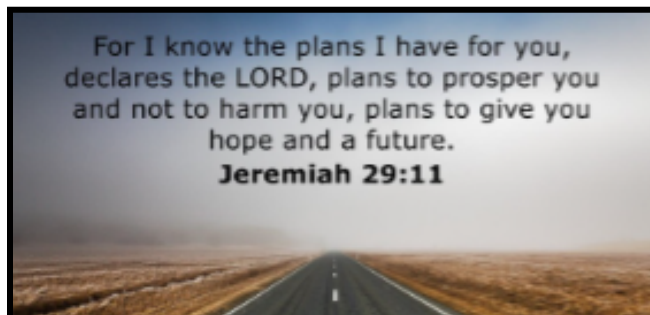
We Love Our Teachers!

Most of us, when we look back to our school days, can think of at least one very special teacher. We remember the teacher who took that extra time to make sure we didn't fall behind. We smile when we remember a teacher who went the extra mile to assist us in our studies. And we have that special fondness for a teacher who truly cared about us and wanted to make sure that we knew we mattered. Well, here at Pleasant Grove, we are blessed to have teachers just like this in our two weekday children's ministries...our Child Development Center and our After School Care. Teacher Appreciation Week will be observed during the week of May 6th . During this time, we need to make sure that our wonderful teachers know just how much we appreciate them and how much we admire them for what they do. If you, or your group, would like to help express our thanks to our CDC teachers, please contact Teri at 704.392.0835. If you would like to show your appreciation to our After School Care teachers, please contact Angela in the church office at 704.392.2387. Let's come together to shower our teachers with love, admiration, and appreciation!



Grad Sunday 2024

Pleasant Grove will once again honor our graduates on Sunday, June 2nd , during our 10:00 worship service. This year, we will be honoring two college graduates, Joseph Roberson and Michael Gray, and looking forward with them to a very bright and promising future. The most important things we can do on Grad Sunday are to communicate to these young adults how truly special they are, that we are here for them as they move into a new chapter of their lives, and that God loves them even more than we do! Make plans now to be with your church family on this very special day as we share God's love, and our congratulations, with our Graduates!



After School Care Post

Happy Spring to everyone! We had a great time on Spring break. Of course, we had normal Springtime weather for North Carolina...three seasons in one day!!! The children are back in shorts and short-sleeved shirts and are certainly excited for the return of the warm weather. We have been working on several crafts; umbrellas for our April showers, decorating little picket fences, painting butterflies, and many more to come! The students are gearing up for end-of-year testing with only a few more weeks of school to go! Hard to believe!

We have begun working on ideas for Summer Camp and think we'll have some fun things lined up. We are low in enrollment numbers for this summer. If you know of anyone in need of summer camp for their school-aged child, please have them give us a call at 704.393.7895 from 2:30-6:00 PM, Monday-Friday. We would love to welcome some new friends for summer. We always have fun together at Pleasant Grove Summer Camp!!!

*---submitted by Sherrie Cannon
and the ASC Staff*

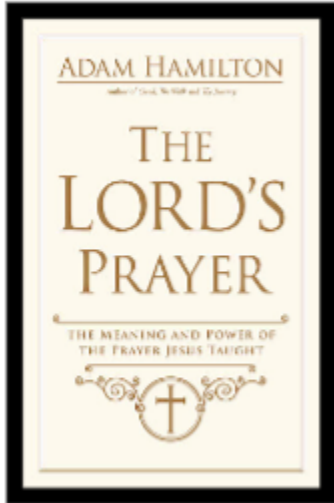


Our Lending Library is Here for You!!!



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!!!

Join Us For Another Bible Study



You are invited to join your church family for another awesome study time together! We will be using The Lord's Prayer: The Meaning and Power of the Prayer Jesus Taught, by Adam Hamilton as our primary resource, and our discussions will be facilitated by Pastor Glenda. The study begins on Thursday, May 23rd, at 6:00 PM, and runs for six weeks. We will meet in the office building, in the Double Ring Classroom, beside the Chapel.

Most Christians know the Lord's Prayer by heart. We pray it often, at different times and in different settings. We remember it as the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. But do we really understand and appreciate the meaning and power of its words, what we ask of God each time we pray it?

When the disciples asked Jesus how to pray, Jesus gave them this prayer. He likely taught it to his followers often, not just one time. He never intended the Lord's Prayer to be a museum piece, framed and placed on a mantel or in a display case. It was Jesus teaching God's people, through his disciples, how to pray.

In The Lord's Prayer: The Meaning and Power of the Prayer Jesus Taught, pastor and bestselling author Adam Hamilton guides us to really know—and really pray—the Lord's Prayer. He explores each of its rich lines and their meaning in the Bible, illuminating what we ask of God and what we ask of ourselves through its words. And he teaches us how to use it as a pattern for our own prayer life.

Please let the church office know that you plan to participate in this study. The books are available for pick up in the office at your convenience. The cost of the book is \$15 and if you are able to pay for your book that is appreciated. However, the cost of materials should never keep you from being a part of our Bible study. Your participation and thoughtful input to our discussions will be reimbursement enough!!! We look forward to digging deeper into God's Word together as we explore the sacred words of The Lord's Prayer!



Our gym is open to the church family and community for indoor walking on Monday and Wednesday mornings between the hours of 9:00 and 11:00. It will never be too hot, too cold, or too wet to walk in our gym! So, you have no excuses! Everyone is welcome to come enjoy the fellowship and movement as we all work toward better health together!

Recommended Reading



Calling all history buffs! Calling everyone who likes a gut-wrenching human-interest story that ends with the always preferred “good conquers evil!” Calling anyone who loves to read an almost unbelievable story of faith, love, forgiveness, and courage...even amid horrific abuse and atrocities! Calling all who need to be inspired to higher ground in their walk with God!

Undoubtedly many of us have read *The Hiding Place*, by Corrie ten Boom. This classic, written more than 50 years ago, is an autobiographical account of the faith and actions of Corrie and her family as they provided housing for the Jewish people of her community, as well as the Dutch Underground Resistance workers who did everything they could to thwart the Nazi oppression of their people and nation. This book, written so many years ago, had a profound impact on millions of readers and continues to inspire even today.

This month’s recommendation, [The Watchmaker’s Daughter](#), by Larry Loftis, expands her story and is the first major biography of Corrie ten Boom. Through well-documented research and compelling attention to detail, Loftis takes readers through the incredible true story of Corrie, the first licensed female watchmaker in Holland. She and her family owned a Haarlem watch shop and lived a quiet, nondescript life. That is, until 1940. The Nazis occupied the Netherlands, and Jewish citizens began to disappear. The ten Booms, devout Christians, joined the Dutch Resistance and constructed a secret room in their home to hide Jews and refugees. The Gestapo came down hard on Haarlem, and the ten Boom family was arrested in the winter of 1944. After a series of forced moves in trucks and train cars, Corrie and her sister Betsie were sent to the notorious Ravensbrück concentration camp. During their imprisonment, it was Betsie who inspired Corrie to dig into her faith and live a life of love and forgiveness. While facing horror from day to day, Corrie found peace in her faith, and she found that she was able to minister to her fellow prisoners. Against all odds, she survived, though she lost many loved ones, including her father and sister. One of the most arresting passages in the book involves Corrie’s father, lovingly called Opa. When other Christians questioned him about the risks he was taking to protect the Jews, his response was that he was honored to help the people who were the “apple of God’s eye.” He felt that it was a privilege to work on behalf of God’s chosen people. What an example of loving God and loving our neighbors! After her release, Corrie’s journey was truly only beginning. She held off bitterness, embraced forgiveness, and then spent the remainder of her life traveling the world as an evangelist, sharing her story of faith, hope, and love. Relying on details from primary sources and Corrie’s own archives, [The Watchmaker’s Daughter](#) gives us a captivating portrait of a humble woman who lived out her life with grace, courage, and faith.

I believe that all of us will benefit from reading [The Watchmaker’s Daughter](#). It is so easy for us to roll along in life, thinking that every other Christian has experienced the same path that we have experienced. But, when you read of those who were willing to risk all that they had to show God’s love to others, it can literally stop you in your tracks. It can cause you to ask yourself some really tough questions...What am I willing to risk? What causes would motivate me to live a life of risk? Could my faith stand in the face of pure evil? How firm is my willingness to forgive? As we read [The Watchmaker’s Daughter](#), we just might find those questions swimming around in our hearts and minds, making us take a good, hard look at our faith and what it could become.

[The Watchmaker’s Daughter](#) is available at Hobby Lobby, Barnes and Noble, Amazon, the local public library, and in our very own Lending Library at Pleasant Grove. Pick it up. Give it a read. You will be impacted by this book! Happy Reading!!!

---submitted by Sherri Brown



The Recipe Box

This recipe has a very long and rich history. The common belief is that lasagna was created in Naples, Italy in the 13th century. A book found from that century actually contained a recipe for lasagna, though the Greeks, Romans, and British might dispute this!

This particular recipe is a different twist on the traditional one. But I bet Garfield, the comic strip cat who LOVES lasagna, would gobble it up! Buon Appetito! (Enjoy your meal!)

Classic Lasagna Rolls

- 12 lasagna noodles
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1½ - 2 jars pasta sauce with herbs (26-ounce jars)
- 15 ounces ricotta cheese
- 1¼ - 1½ cups shredded mozzarella, divided



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Prepare a 9 x 13 baking dish with cooking spray. Cook noodles according to package directions. Drain and lay noodles flat on a sheet of wax paper. Cook beef, onion, and garlic in a medium skillet. Drain and return to pan. Add sauce and bring to a boil. Spread 1½ cups of sauce into the bottom of the baking dish. Mix ricotta and one cup of mozzarella in a bowl. Spread 3 tablespoons of this mixture evenly on each noodle. Roll up the noodles tightly. Place the rolls, seam side down, on top of the sauce in the baking dish. Spoon remaining sauce over each noodle. Sprinkle parmesan cheese over the noodles. Bake lasagna rolls until heated and bubbly, about 30 minutes. Remove and sprinkle with remaining mozzarella. Let stand for five minutes to melt the cheese and serve!

Fun Fact: Poland set a Guinness World record for the heaviest lasagna. It weighed in at 4,865 kilograms or 10,725.489 pounds! It fed 10,000 servings!!!

---submitted by Peggy Green



THE FOLLOWING GIFTS WERE MADE TO THE CHURCH:

IN MEMORY

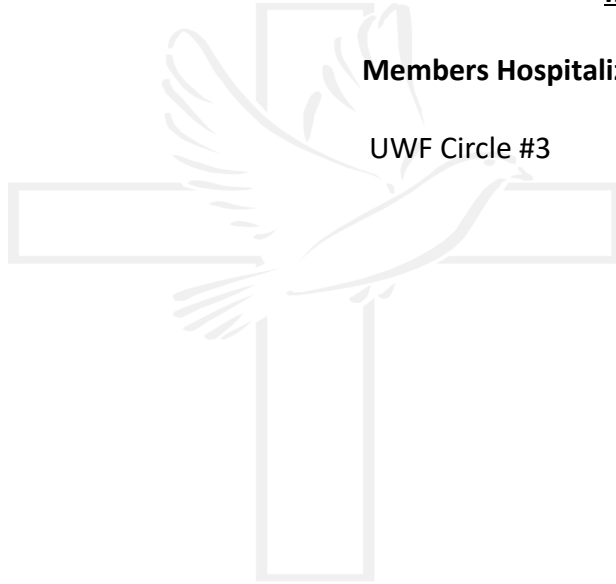
Nancy Brown

Don Brown

IN HONOR

Members Hospitalized the 1st Quarter of 2024

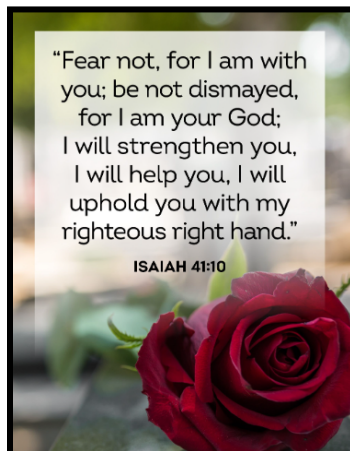
UWF Circle #3



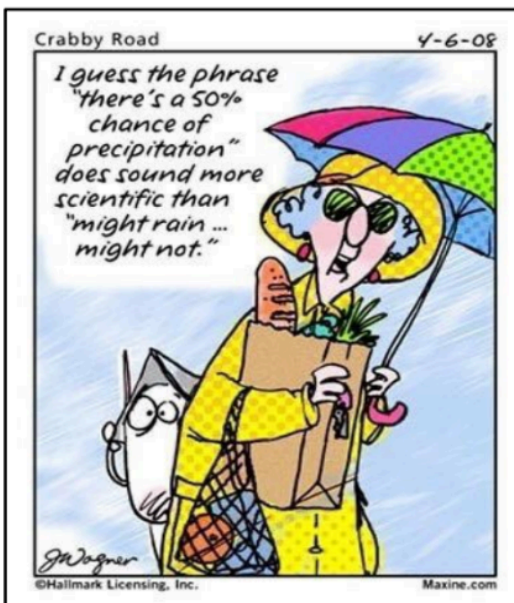
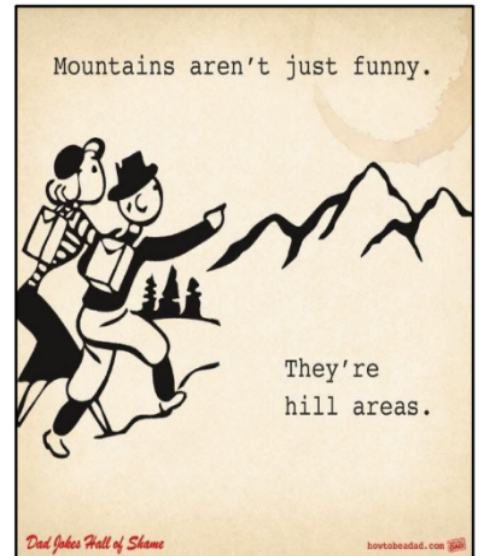
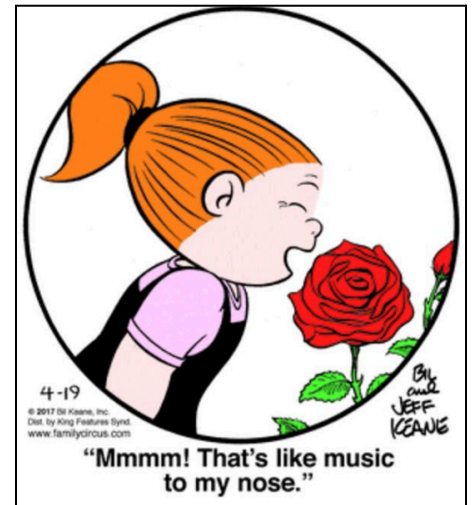
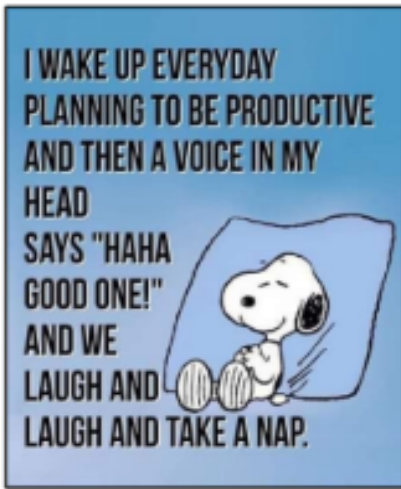
The church family extends our deepest sympathies to:

Mike and Susan Laney on the recent passing of Mike's brother, John Laney.

Hazel Sanders and family on the recent passing of Hazel's nephew, Larry Durgin II.



Just for Giggles



Gardening

Word Search Puzzle



- | | | |
|-------------|--------|--------------|
| CLIPPERS | RAKE | SUNSHINE |
| COMPOST | SEEDS | TILLER |
| FLOWERS | SHEARS | TROWEL |
| GARDEN HOSE | SHOVEL | VEGETABLES |
| GLOVES | SNAILS | WATER |
| HERBS | SNIPS | WATERING CAN |
| HOE | SOIL | WEEDS |
| PLANTING | SPADE | WHEELBARROW |