

ROOTS & BRANCHES

AUGUST 2022



On the State of the Church

In 1987, I was baptized at Queen Street United Methodist Church, a people who continued to teach and love me throughout my life. There, I learned how to pray, how to study, how to serve, and most importantly, how to live life in community in the way of Jesus. I went to college and felt the love of my home church through Bernice Hardy, an 85-year old friend who sent me letters and “goodies” at school. It was there on those creaky wooden floors, pews full of family and friends, where I said my marriage vows almost a year ago.

My church supported me financially when I went to graduate school, supported me through the ordination process, and continues to support my ministry as an ordained elder in the present day. This August, I celebrate ten years of preaching, teaching, and leading in the United Methodist Church. It has been a decade filled with beauty, wonder, disappointment, grief, joy, and challenge. But perhaps the current state of the local – and the universal – Church is as challenging now as it has ever been.

On May 1, a new denomination was formed: the Global United Methodist Church. In the coming months and years, there will be a number of UM churches who choose to disaffiliate and join the new denomination due to issues concerning human sexuality. You have likely seen headlines describing the situation as a “schism” or our denomination “splitting.” This language is misleading. This is not a schism. Rather, certain pastors and certain churches are choosing to leave. We will have a special called Annual Conference on November 19th to vote on their departure.

The UMC has and will remain focused on our mission: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Please be mindful that you may hear misleading information about the process and the denomination. If you are interested in knowing more, I would gladly be in conversation with you and/or help direct you to sources where we can learn more (some of which are at the bottom of this article). If you have specific questions about the GMC,

I will likely not know the answer, because I am not giving my time and energy to their efforts. I will, however, join in the spirit of our Bishop and bless those who choose to go with a gracious exit.

I will remain United Methodist – and I will do so with a grieving heart. I cannot bring myself to say to another member of the body “I have no need of you” as certain churches choose to leave. This also does not mean I agree with everything the UMC has ever done or will do in the future. However, I have understood from the beginning that our polity is democratic and part of the legislative process is a General Conference that meets every four years. There are certain parts of our Book of Discipline that are subject to change based on their rulings. This is not new. There have been times when the church has been too progressive for me, and there have been times when the church has been too conservative for me. I’ve gotten frustrated with bureaucracy and yet I rejoice that the UMC has always been a “big tent.” I’m not foolish enough to believe that the grass is greener somewhere else or all our troubles would disappear if we just “started over.” As a believer, I at least know how the story ends: when every tribe, nation, and tongue will gather before the throne and before the Lamb (Revelation 7). So in the midst of conflict and trouble, I will keep leaning in to faith and hope and love. I pray these things will continue to guide me, guide us, and guide all who profess the name of Jesus (1 Corinthians 13).

While I do not have the time or space in one newsletter article to expound on the complexity of all the issues before us in our current day, I will admit with a humble heart – I also don’t understand them all myself. Human sexuality has plagued humanity since the Garden of Eden. It’s far more than same-sex marriages (and perhaps this ought to be the least of our worries,) but pornography, adultery, divorce, remarriage, polygamy, loveless marriage, sexless marriage. With that being said, having read and studied the gospels my entire life, I bear witness to a God who offers salvation to all people and God’s grace is far more mysterious and bigger than my small mind can begin to comprehend.

The UMC is far from perfect. But we have a rich heritage, a robust theology, and a vigorous practice of ministry. When the next hurricane hits, we will be among the first to arrive for relief. As we strive to do

things like replace our playground, support refugees, provide space for Duke interns to lead and grow, and send mission teams to El Salvador, the UMC will be among the first to write us a check. In a world where too many children are without a home, it will be the Methodists building Homes for Children.

The quote that is often attributed to St. Augustine is this: “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity.” The big question is: what are the essentials? We all may answer that question differently, but for me it is the greatest commandment: to love God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength and to love our neighbor as ourself.

Therefore, I would invite us all to commit our lives to prayer, to love, and to seeking God’s will in all things. In his second letter, brother Timothy advises us to avoid “wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening” (2 Tim. 2:14). This month, I’m celebrating 10 years of ministry in the UMC and I’m praying to God for the strength, resolve, and wisdom for the next ten. I will need it. In the meantime, let me remind you, Pleasant Green, that you are a gift and I’m grateful to be on the journey with you.

Shalom,
Laura

Other helpful links:

Bishop Fairley has sent a new email titled “A New Season for the People Called United Methodist” dated July 14, 2022, and our conference website now has very detailed information and links to help clarify and in some cases correct what some have heard or read.

Bishop Fairley’s [July 14th Email](#)

What does this mean for my church?

(An official document from the NC Conference on the current options available for churches in this season of our life together.)

History of the UMC and Human Sexuality.

(An official document from the NC Conference on the background and history of the church’s debate on human sexuality.)

[#BeUMC](#) resources and testimonials

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

Worship Service

Sunday’s 10:30 am, IN PERSON / [LIVE STREAM](#)

Children’s Church

During Worship, Old Sanctuary

Clyde Walker Sunday School Class

9:15 am, In-Person or [ZOOM](#)

NEW Sunday School Class

9:45 am, In-Person– Seekers room #217. All ages welcome.

Children’s ministry at Pleasant Green is going very well. We have been engaging with a curriculum called *Simply Loved* which starts from the beginning of the Bible to teach children about the amazing love of God. Our time is spent singing, dancing, acting out Bible stories, and applying them through games and crafts. The children really love gathering together during worship to sing, dance, and praise God.

Please consider volunteering for children’s church to see child like faith in action and play! You can sign up at this link: <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10E60U3715qex83-B3gvL8g6LnsdRleaEEwliBNz44n8/edit?usp=sharing>

FINANCIAL UPDATE

<i>2022 Unified Budget</i>	335,441.48
<i>YTD Total Income to Operating Fund</i>	148,232.96
<i>TTD Operating Expenses</i>	167,299.47
<i>YTD Operating Fund Balance</i>	-19,066.51
<i>2021 Operating Fund Balance Forward</i>	26,386.05
<i>2022 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance</i>	7,319.54
<i>Current Building Mortgage Balance</i>	166,486.25

AUGUST 7

PGUMC SUMMER RETREAT at FireFly Farm!

5:30-7:30 pm, 4911 Hunt Rd., Hillsborough

All ages are encouraged to join us for a time of reflection, relaxation, and fellowship. Come enjoy some BBQ while we mingle with the farm animals and pick some beautiful flowers. Parking is available at the barn. A big thank you to Cindy Stubbs for hosting this event at the farm!

*Please bring a folding chair and container for flowers.



AUGUST 21

ST. MARY’S HOMECOMING

Sunday Service at St. Mary’s Chapel, 5 pm
Dinner to follow at PGUMC

St. Mary’s Chapel was established in 1759 for the purpose of holding Anglican services in Orange County for the homesteaders who lived in the vicinity of the “Trading Path”. The Gothic Revival Style Chapel that now stands was constructed of hand-made brick in 1859. Regular services were discontinued in the 1930’s.



2022-2023 PG Afterschool

We are gearing up for PGUMC Afterschool! If you would be interested in volunteering for our homework support program (Monday-Thursday, 4:30-5 pm), please email susan_adams2@hotmail.com. Thank you!

Links below for information & registration:
[Afterschool Application](#)
[Afterschool Manual](#)
[Afterschool Calendar](#)



Wrapping up Summer Camp

We had 4 amazing Weeks of Summer Camp 2022! VBS, Safety Week, Camp Chestnut Ridge Traveling Camp and Fun in the Sun. Thanks to all who gave contributions for scholarships as well as volunteered with the campers, making PGUMC's 30th Summer Camp another fun summer!



Thanks to all who helped clean up the church playground the morning of July 4th! The Summer Camp staff felt much safer with leaves and greenery cleared away, making it easier to spot snakes! Help is still needed to spread mulch on the playground. Come at your convenience, tools are located next to the pile of mulch!

AUGUST

1

Kayleigh Freeman McCoy

2

COMMUNITY HOUR OF PRAYER, 9-10 am
 READ & SEED, 6:30 pm
 FireFly Farm- 4911 Hunt Road

Sydney Baker

3

*Brad Morris
Michelle Baker*

4

Joe Berini

5

*Shayne Overaker
Gary Burke*

6

JohnRichard Ray

7

WORSHIP, 10:30 am
 PGUMC SUMMER RETREAT
 5:30-7:30 pm at FireFly Farm
 4911 Hunt Rd., Hillsborough
 (pg 3)
*Nola King
Daisy LaBarre
Al Edens*

8

COMMUNITY HOUR OF PRAYER, 9-10 am
*Margaret Latta
Bill Weaver
Parker Bourlon
Jonathan Whitford*

10

YOUTH HANG OUT, 2-5 pm
 Fieldtrip to Whit's Frozen
 Custard & games at PGUMC
*Neo Best
Brock Snowden*

11

Davis Leonard

12

*Jacob McCoy
Amanda Riley-Smith
Amy Weaver*

13

14

WORSHIP, 10:30 am

15

ELEANOR WALKER CIRCLE
 PRAISE BAND PRACTICE, 7:15 pm
*Gail Pruett
Channin Bennett*

16

COMMUNITY HOUR OF PRAYER, 9-10 am
 CIRCLE OF FAITH, 6:30 pm
 Now meeting every 3rd Tuesday of each month. Please come & join us!

17

PRAYER MINISTRY, 6:30 pm

18

*Ginger Link
Kiah Gaskin
Rick Cassidy*

19

COMMON THREAD
 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall
 CHRISTMAS IN JULY
 Last day to drop off supplies
*Joel Leonard
Donnie Harris
Alex Stocking*

20

21

WORSHIP, 10:30 am
 ST. MARY'S HOMECOMING, 5 pm
 Dinner to follow at PGUMC
 YOUTH KICK OFF, 4 pm
 & PARENT MEETING, 4-4:45 pm
 Meeting in the Youth Room &
 Pizza Dinner to Follow, 5:30 pm
Jackson Berini

22

PRAISE BAND PRACTICE, 7:15 pm
Jimmy Turner

23

COMMUNITY HOUR OF PRAYER, 9-10 am
 ADMIN COUNCIL MEETING
 7 pm
Jeanette Watkins

24

25

26

Duke Divinity School will using our facilities 8 am-2 pm

27

*Andy Dill
Mike Martin*

28

WORSHIP & PRAISE BAND
 10:30 am

29

FIRST DAY OF AFTERSCHOOL
Billy Johnson

30

COMMUNITY HOUR OF PRAYER, 9-10 am
Amy Fister

31

Our PGUMC members landed safely in El Salvador and have been hard at work!



UPCOMING..

SEPTEMBER 11
BACK TO SCHOOL BASH

Church & Community wide.
4-6 pm. More detail to come!

SEPTEMBER 13
BLOOD DRIVE AT PGUMC

10 AM-3 PM
Sign up at redcrossblood.org
(sponsor code: Pleasant Green)

SEPTEMBER 14
FELLOWSHIP DINNER

Covered dish dinner at 6 PM.
Sponsored by the Eleanor Walker Circle.

SEPTEMBER 24
NATIONAL DAY OF
VOLUNTEER YOUTH
MINISTRY TRAINING

Soapstone UMC, in Raleigh NC, is hosting NDOVYMT 2022! Teach your entire team of Youth Ministry Leaders.
trainmyvolunteers.com

SEPTEMBER 25

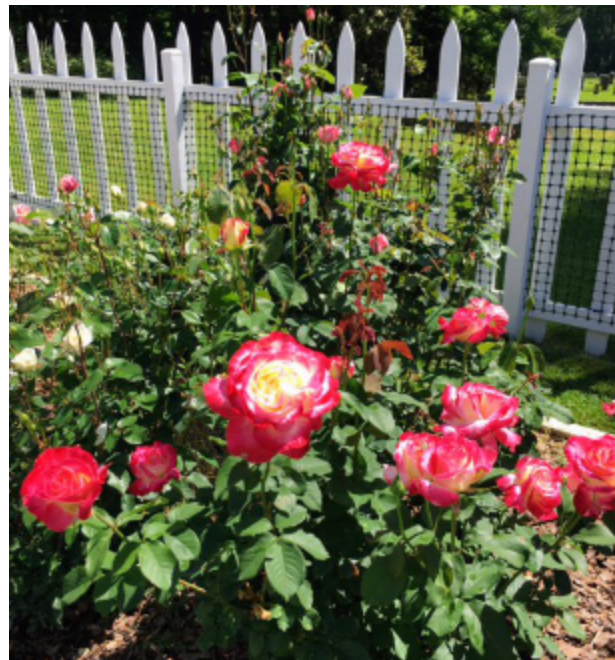
OCTOBER 9
PGUMC HOMECOMINGOCTOBER 18
CHARGE CONFERENCE

Dear Friends,

Please know how appreciative I am for all the kindnesses I've received since my snakebite. I'm so grateful for and to all who were in my path as the morning's events unfolded at Pleasant Green: Kelly Lee in the church office, Summer Camp personnel, Durham County Sheriff's Deputies there for a presentation to summer campers and, finally, Orange County EMS. I was transported to Duke Hospital where the head of the Emergency Department is a famous snakebite specialist! Each played their part to help me get treated quickly. I'm recovering well! I see God's hand in all of this as I most often trim the roses early in the morning-alone!

I'm looking forward to returning to my "job" in the rose garden and encourage all of you to enjoy our beautiful roses.

Fondly, Becky Crawford



Dear Pleasant Green Family,

I am so grateful for your prayers and support for two things that have been important to my family and me. The first is your support for the NAMI North Carolina WALK, which is our big mental health awareness and fund-raising event of the year. The WALK itself took place on May 21st. Several hundred people attended at the beautiful Dorothea Dix Park, despite it being a very hot day. There were also groups who walked in their own locations across the state; at least 600+ additional people. The fund-raising ended on July 23rd and we met 91% of our goal! Your prayers and donations meant a lot as I served as the WALK Chair.

I also appreciate your prayers and expressions of concern for my sister Donna who had brain surgery and a series of serious complications that nearly took her life. She is now home, recovering She told me she felt your prayers and that they made a difference.

In both situations, God listened and answered our prayers. God is good! Thank you for being so God-loving and caring.

Sincerely, Gail Pruett

As Methodists, we are now in the second period of "Ordinary Time" in our Christian calendar. This is "where we see, speak about and join God's ongoing work in the world." <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-is-ordinary-time> For those of us who attended the Good Friday service in the Chapel on April 15th, we were exposed to heart-felt, emotional, and scripture-based testimony about how the last words and phrases of Jesus Christ on the cross affects us. We are continuing to reprint some of those presentations. They will not be in the order found in scripture, but, as our church authors (Laura called us "preachers") submit them. No matter the order, the words are profound; calling us to put into action what we learned on Good Friday. With the vast droughts across the globe, both for the need for Jesus's living water and the need for the earthly substance of water, this article applies.

"I Thirst" (John 19:28)

Reflections by Janice Nicholson and Kathryn Dempsey

One of the times I was especially aware of the importance of drinking water was when I was visiting Israel several years ago. At nearly every tourist stop, vendors were selling bottled water and our tour guides kept reminding us not to get dehydrated. It gets very hot in Israel. So, it is heart-breaking to hear Jesus nailed to the cross, saying "I thirst" and being given sour wine on a sponge. "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Psalm 69:21

But was Jesus talking only about physical thirst? There are many passages of Scripture that talk about thirst in a metaphorical sense. Psalm 42 talks about longing for God as a deer thirsts for water. In the Beatitudes, Jesus said "blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled." Matthew 5:6

As Jesus hangs there dying, he has been concerned about others. Asking forgiveness for those who are persecuting him because they know not what they are doing. Comforting the criminal hanging alongside

him. Asking John to care for Mary as if she were his mother. When he says "I thirst" could he be talking about us? Could he be saying to his Father, "I want so desperately for more people to come to the salvation of knowing they are forgiven and loved? I want my suffering to help others come to accept the Divine Love we are offering."

The prophet Amos (8:11) proclaimed "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD." Many people in this world are thirsting for the words of the LORD. Just as Jesus offered living water to the Samaritan woman at the well, Isaiah 49:10 reminds us that the One who loves us will take care of us: "They shall not hunger nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them: for He that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall He guide them."

Let us pray that more people come to Jesus, to accept his salvation, forgiveness, and love.

The Prayer Ministry meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm in person or by free telephone conference. The next meeting is Wednesday, August 17th at 6:30 pm. You may also contact Gail at pruettg4mh@gmail.com. Please join us! We would love to share God's love with you as we pray for people and situations in need of God's healing grace.

A New and Effective Lifeline:
Call 988

Since July 16th, a new suicide and crisis hotline has been established nationally and in North Carolina. The new hotline number is 988!

Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org! 988 offers 24/7 access to trained crisis counselors anywhere in the United States who can help people experiencing mental health-related distress. That could be thoughts of suicide, mental health or substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotion distress.

When calling 988, callers first hear a greeting message while their call is routed to the local Lifeline network crisis center (based on the caller's area code). A trained crisis

counselor answers the phone, listens to the caller, understands how their problem is affecting them, provides support, and shares resources if needed. If the local crisis center is unable to take the call, the caller is automatically routed to a national backup crisis center. The Lifeline provides live crisis center phone services in English and Spanish and uses Language Line Solutions to provide translation services in over 250 additional languages for people who call 988. *Chat and texting are available in English only.

This information comes from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA): <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988/faqs>

Further Information or Support from NAMI NC:
Helpline Call: 800-451-9682 (NC only M-F, 8:30am-5pm)
Helpline Text: 919-999-6527 (M-F, 8:30am-5:00pm)
Email: mail@naminc.org

NC Annual Conference notes, Year 2022. “Graceful Justice”

The NC Annual Conference was held in person this year at the Greenville Convention Center, Greenville, NC. The Conference ran from Wednesday, June 15–Saturday, June 18. The Conference consists of many business meetings, some worship services, seminars, ice cream, music, and some entertainment. A note to all—it is open to all. You do not need to be a conference delegate to attend. Only delegates can vote, but all are welcome. There were 1,100 in actual attendance. In recent years, the Conference has also been live-streamed so that you can watch from home. I encourage all to watch some or all of the proceedings.

All business and most of the other events at Annual Conference can be accessed online at the NCCUMC website (nccumc.org), so this report will be brief. If you are not able to access the information online and wish to know more detail, please call me. I will visit you and share information as requested—for hours, because the Annual Conference is hours long!

We began our sessions with a separate Laity and Clergy meeting, then a worship service after that. Business began with a presentation of the Standing Rules, presented by Rev. George Speake, of that committee. What a surprise we had when there was much discussion about an item in the Standing Rules report. Our Conference shares a bishop with the Kentucky Conference at this time. An “assistant to the bishop” position was created and funded with Cabinet approval. The issue was that some believe this position should have been voted on by all members of the Annual Conference, not just the Cabinet and various committees. It was an ongoing discussion, but the Standing Rules were finally approved.

There was much discussion regarding the Insurance Report, as it was recommended that the Conference move away from a self-funded plan to a plan managed by a private company. This is due to rising healthcare costs not only for healthcare, but for managing healthcare. More detail on the changes are found at nccumc.org.

Impacting local church budgets the most was a recommended increase of an additional \$1,000 to travel expenses for clergy. The current amount is \$4,000/year, which would be \$5,000 in 2023. Also, an increase of 2% is recommended for clergy salaries.



There will be no increase in salaries for District Superintendents.

As has been the trend, total numbers for members of the NC Annual Conference is down. Total number in 2022 reported is 214,320. A decrease in total giving of \$10 million dollars was reported. More people, more stewardship is recommended, but we know we always work on that, each church perhaps in a different manner, but always following the commission from Jesus to “go and make disciples, baptizing them, teaching them” (Matthew 28:19-20).

NC Annual Conference, for me, is a time that highlights the global reach of missions within The United Methodist Church. It is faith-affirming to see so many people working locally and globally in mission to our fellow people in need. There are issues that we are NOT united about. How those issues will be resolved is not for me to answer. My focus, as I hope yours is, as a fellow United Methodist member, is what are the ways we are united? What is the one thing that unites us? Jesus Christ!

Submitted by, Sandy Quinn, Lay Delegate.



Durham Bulls Baseball Family Night!



Please remember to support the Circle of Faith’s “Christmas in July” Mission Project! Take ornaments from the Christmas Tree in the Narthex and purchase the back to school items needed for teachers and students starting school this fall in our Orange County Elementary, Middle & High Schools. Please leave your donations under the Christmas Tree in the Narthex by August 20!

Thank you in advance for your support of this project!

GLOBAL FRIENDS ESL PROGRAM

Friday classes 10:30 am - 12:30 pm (starting back at PGUMC mid August)

Volunteers needed to Set-up/Cleanup Church area, Transport families to/from Pleasant Green, Provide Snacks, Assist with Childcare and ESL classes.

Volunteer Registration Form: bit.ly/GFESLvol

The Global Friends ESL program is a collaborative effort of The Church at Spring Forest, Durham Home Church Network, and Pleasant Green United Methodist Church. We work in partnership with World Relief. Our certified ESL teachers and program volunteers are passionate about welcoming our newest global neighbors and supporting English language acquisition as a major part of companioning refugees in rebuilding their lives here in the US. We welcome all people without discrimination, based on race, gender, religion, or sexuality. While the Global Friends ESL program is grounded in the Christian practice of hospitality, we are ecumenical and do not proselytize volunteers or students.

Contact Wendy Anderson for questions 919.630.1939 / wen_a@nc.rr.com.



THE GARDEN AT SPRING FOREST

2022 CSA Season is May 17 – October 25!

Support Local Agriculture! Check out the website and signup! www.springforest.org

Get 20 weeks of healthy, all natural produce over a 24-week period. Foods are non GMO and are free of pesticides, herbicides, artificial hormones and other atrocities. Choose from a full share, small share or bi-weekly share for the season. Perfect for those who like to cook and prepare ahead!

Pick up in Hillsborough (1907 New Sharon Church Road) or ask Nancy Maloney to drop your box off at PGUMC on Tuesdays. 603.370.2477.



SUPPORT UMCOR'S COFFEE & CHOCOLATE PROJECT

Fair trade provides opportunities for churches to support a system that nurtures rather than diminishes God's vision of abundant life. UMCOR's partner is the employee owned fair trade organization called Equal Exchange.

For sale in the Parlor

12 oz Ground Coffee Bags, \$8
Mind Body Soul Regular

- Organic Chocolate bars, \$2.50**
 Dark Chocolate Almond & sea salt (55%)
 Dark Chocolate Caramel Crunch & sea salt
 Dark Chocolate Mint Crunch (67%)
 Panama Extra Dark Chocolate (80%)
 Dark Chocolate Orange (65%)
 Very Dark Chocolate (71%)
 Milk Chocolate
 Milk Chocolate Caramel Crunch & sea salt
 Chocolate with Coconut Milk (55%)



The NCUMC Conference has two separate advance special numbers for giving to Ukraine. One is for refugees who have fled outside the Ukraine (982450). The other is for aid inside the Ukraine (14063A). Givers choose where their money should go.

Please make checks payable to PGUMC with # or Ukraine refugees / Ukraine aid on memo line.



Pleasant Green

United Methodist Church



PleasantGreenUMC.org | pgumc@ncrrbiz.com | 919.383.5764

Pastor

Rev. Laura Thompson
lthompson@nccumc.org

Director of Family Ministries

Emily Robbian
emily.robbian@duke.edu

Duke Intern

Trevor Warren
trevor.warren@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 *www.PleasantGreenUMC.org*

Smartphone *Text "PleasantGreen" To: 77977*

Envelope *Mail or slip under office door*

Amazon Smile Support PGUMC when you purchase through amazon smile. They donate 0.5% of your purchase price on eligible items to the "Pleasant Green United Methodist Church" charitable organization. We hope you'll consider this as we continue to find creative and generous ways to share resources together. Already have an Amazon Prime account?

Go to smile.amazon.com and use your existing login.
Pleasant Green's unique charity link:

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/56-1152936>



Blood Drive

September 13th at PGUMC
10 am-3 pm

To sign up, contact the Church office at 919.383.5764 or pgumc@ncrrbiz.com or go to redcrossblood.org (sponsor code: Pleasant Green)

PLEASE
RECYCLE