

We began our year revisiting that story of the wise men who followed a star because they were seeking the new born king. In just a few short Sundays, Jesus was already beginning his ministry with the calling of the disciples. Interestingly enough, in John's gospel the very first words out of his mouth were "what are you looking for?" In other words, what are you seeking? What do you need? It's hard to believe, but, Lent is on the horizon and throughout the season we will hear stories of Jesus encountering people who are seeking: Nicodemus comes to him in the veil of the night, the Samaritan woman at the well in the middle of the day, and a man who was born without sight. Throughout these stories, the people come seeking something: a new beginning, vision, a different life, a deeper faith. As these stories unfold, new perspectives are gained, questions are asked, explorations are set in motion, and mystery grows.

This Lent, we will examine some of these questions asked in scripture: Can these bones live? Who will you listen to? How do we begin again? Some of these



questions are restorative, others hopeful, and still others curious. But each bring some clarity, new perspective, and more importantly, a wider grace to encounter God in our everyday lives.

Throughout the season of Lent, I hope we will wrestle with these questions again: what am I seeking? And what is God seeking? Perhaps it is a number of things: clarity, community, connection, wonder, justice, balance, or rest. I hope we as a community are continually seeking our calling, the Holy, the good, and what our next steps are as we long to live a life of discipleship. This Lent, let us pay attention to Jesus' question "what are you seeking," and engage in the spiritual practice of seeking. May we stay curious, open, and agile. May we make space in our lives for the chaos to settle and for God to speak. Ultimately, may we be drawn into the heart of God during this holy season of wilderness. I hope you'll join us.

Shalom,  
Laura

*Thank you to Jim Crawford for serving 15 years as President for Pleasant Green's United Methodist Men.*

## SUNDAYS

### Worship Service

10:30 am

In Person / [LIVE STREAM](#)

### Children's Church

*During Worship, Old Sanctuary*

[Volunteer here!](#)

### Clyde Walker Sunday School

9:15 am

The Parlor or [ZOOM](#)

### Hearts & Hands Sunday School

9:30 am

Seekers room #217

## MID-WEEK SMALL GROUP STUDY

*The Good and Beautiful God*

Wednesdays, 10:30 am at Church  
OR Tuesdays, 6 pm on Zoom

These gatherings will be the same content - feel free to join the one that best fits your schedule.

## FINANCIAL UPDATE

<i>2023 Unified Budget</i>	<b>350,139.70</b>
<i>YTD Total Income to Operating Fund</i>	<b>14,089.34</b>
<i>TTD Operating Expenses</i>	<b>24,765.34</b>
<i>YTD Operating Fund Balance</i>	<b>-10,676.00</b>
<i>2022 Operating Fund Balance Forward</i>	<b>14,533.53</b>
<i>2023 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance</i>	<b>3,857.53</b>
<i>Current Building Mortgage Balance</i>	<b>132,237.40</b>

# UPCOMING EVENTS

For the full calendar and event details, go to <http://www.pleasantgreenumc.org/calendar>

## CPR & AED TRAINING

### CPR Course

Saturday, Feb 25 (9 am-12 pm) @PGUMC

Instructor: Bill Blankenship/AHA

Cost: \$45 (plus \$17 for a certificate)

Questions: email [nancyhmaloney@gmail.com](mailto:nancyhmaloney@gmail.com)

Sign up: by February 18<sup>th</sup> in the Narthex or contact the church office.

### AED Training

Sunday, Feb 26 (11:45 am)

Instructor: Megan Maloney

Meet us in the Fellowship Hall after Worship

## CHICKEN & DUMPLINGS DINNER

Saturday, March 11th 4:30-7 pm

Sponsored by the United Women of Faith at Pleasant Green.

Dinner includes: green beans, coleslaw, beets, rolls, drink, & dessert.

Dough making & rolling dates TBD.

## DURHAM BULLS BASEBALL



Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup> 1:05 pm

Join us for fun, food & fellowship!

30 tickets are available at a first come basis. Contact Emily for questions. Reserve your tickets here!

<https://forms.gle/mj7DWUs3EBNsXUZK6>



## PGUMC SUMMER CAMP

Inviting 1st - 6th graders to 4 weeks of Summer Fun!

Summer Camp hours: 7:30 am - 5:45 pm

Week 1 June 19-23, Vacation Bible School

Week 2 June 26-30, Chestnut Ridge Camp@PGUMC

Week 3 July 10-14

Week 4 July 17-21

Online Registration: <https://bit.ly/PGcamp23>

Contact: [pleasantgreenafterschool@gmail.com](mailto:pleasantgreenafterschool@gmail.com)

Registration fee: \$20 (for NON-Afterschoolers)

Tuition: \$175 per week (each additional child per family \$160)

Scholarships available with demonstrated need.

Each week of summer camp includes a variety of fun-filled activities and field trips! Morning/afternoon snacks and drinks for lunch included. Campers should bring a bag lunch each day, except week 2.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



June 19 - 23

Registration for kids:

<https://bit.ly/pgvbs23>

Register to volunteer:

<https://bit.ly/pgvolvbs23>

# LENT 2023



### ASH WEDNESDAY

**seeking:** *Is this the fast that I choose?*

Isaiah 58:1-12

Is this the fast that I choose? As we begin our series, we must examine if our actions match what we profess. As we practice seeking this Lent, what kind of fast will you choose? How will you live your faith? How will you live the questions of your faith?

### THE FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

**seeking:** *Who will you listen to?*

Matthew 4:1-11 | Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

Seeking the fruit of the garden, Adam and Eve allow the snake's manipulative voice to become louder than God's voice. In the wilderness, Jesus defies the deception of the tempter by listening intuitively—to God, to his inner moral compass, to the teachings of his faith. And so, who will you listen to? What sources do you seek for news, information, and media? Whose voices—and what messages—take up too much space in your head? Within the onslaught of messaging we receive, we are invited to choose carefully.

### THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

**seeking:** *How do we begin again?*

John 3:1-17 | Genesis 12:1-4a

Nicodemus comes to Jesus under the veil of night to ask him big faith questions. Jesus invites him to begin again, to learn a new way of knowing and living out his faith. In Genesis, God commands Abram and Sarai to leave everything—their home, their family, their land—to seek the land of Canaan and begin again. Like Nicodemus, what are the questions we ask in the dark? Like Abram and Sarai, how do we follow God's calling to begin again?

### THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

**seeking:** *Will you give me a drink?*

John 4:5-42 | Exodus 17:1-7

In the heat of midday, Jesus seeks out a Samaritan woman drawing water from a well. His command to her is also a question and an invitation into a new way of life: "Will you give me a drink?" This question creates a dialogue between them in which Jesus sees the woman fully; she leaves the well transformed. In the wilderness, the Israelites essentially ask: "Will you give us a drink, God? Will you take care of us, even now?" This week, we might imagine ourselves at the well or in the wilderness. Are we willing to care for our neighbors, seeking to not just quench thirst, but to find living waters that sustain us all?



### THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

**seeking:** *Who sinned?*

John 9:1-7 | John 9:8-41

When Jesus and the disciples encounter a blind man along the way, the disciples immediately ask, "Teacher, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2). They ask a really bad question, filled with assumptions and harmful theology. Unfortunately, the crowd continues to interrogate the man and dissect the miracle of his healing. This week, let us pay attention to the questions we ask. What assumptions do we carry? What is our intent? When seeking clarity or understanding, what are better questions we can ask?

### THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

**seeking:** *Can these bones live?*

John 11:1-45 | Ezekiel 37:1-14

In Ezekiel's vision, God asks the prophet, "Can these bones live?" Do we believe new life can come after death? Can we find hope when things are bleak? Can we really trust in God's resurrection? While we look to God to carry us through the valley, God looks to us to embody hope for others. As we prepare to enter Holy Week, we remember how Jesus began his final journey toward resurrection: by returning to Judea after the death of his dear friend, Lazarus. As we walk through the valley of dry bones that leads us to Calvary Hill, let us seek out the hope that will stir in us and sustain us.

### PALM / PASSION SUNDAY

**seeking:** *Where are you headed?*

Matthew 21:1-11

Imagine you are in Jerusalem when Jesus enters on a donkey. Within the chaos and commotion of that scene, where are you and which way will you go? Will you follow Jesus all the way to the cross? Jesus' willing surrender to his arrest should always catch us off-guard. As dismayed as the disciples, we ask, "Jesus, are you really headed this way, straight to your death?" Many of our weekly questions throughout the season so far have helped us prepare spiritually for Holy Week. Now we examine if our beliefs have changed our behaviors. Has your path changed? In the midst of opposing forces, which way will you go?

### MAUNDY THURSDAY

**seeking:** *Will you wash my feet?*

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

In his final night with his friends and followers, Jesus shows the fullness of his love by removing his robe, kneeling, and washing the disciples' feet. As he makes his way around the room, Jesus comes to Simon Peter who protests, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Like Peter, we may also question if God loves us and will care for us, even at the brink of death. In these final hours of accompanying Jesus to his grave, can we seek a posture of trust? Can we allow ourselves to be embraced and loved—by our neighbor and by God?



# Pleasant Green

*United Methodist Church*

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**Pastor**

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**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*

PLEASE  
RECYCLE