



Pleasant Green
United Methodist Church

PleasantGreenUMC.org

Roots & Branches

February 2016



The Greatest is Love

By Rev. Dr. Jesse Brunson

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthian church in chapter 13 and verse 13 he offers a solution to the discontent he addressed in chapter 12. In chapter 12 he told them that they were all important to the kingdom. He urged them to understand that each person and each gift was important to the work of Kingdom building. But in chapter 13 he says he would show them a more excellent way, and that is the way of love. In other words, love is the answer to all of the confusion, misunderstanding, and wrong feelings they were dishing out to each other. He shared with them that in comparison to faith, and hope that **love is the greatest.**

Well we would agree with the Apostle that love is greatest among the attributes of God, for God is love, says the scripture. But when we have love and no hope then what will we profit? If we have love and no faith then what will we accomplish? If we are a married couple and deeply in love but we have no hope for our future then our love will soon disappear. If we are good parents and deeply love our children but one is gravely ill and the doctors have done everything possible to heal; then they admit without the help of the Almighty our child will not survive.

At such a time we realize that love is wonderful, but it must be accompanied by faith and hope. As a matter of fact it is love which causes us to have hope and faith. It is what causes our hope to have a foundation, and it is what gives our prayers faith. Yes the greatest is love, for without it our efforts are in vain.

During the month of February we celebrate Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day is when we celebrate love. But which expression of love do we celebrate? Do we celebrate the love we have for family and friends, called in the Greek *Philo*? The love as expressed by Ruth for her mother in law Naomi, when she said, "**where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God will be my God.**" (*Ruth 1:16*) This expression of love is best seen in family and best friends.

What expression of love do we celebrate on Valentine's Day? For many it will be the expression of *Eros* love, the love of a significant other. We will celebrate it with candy and flowers or a night on the town, which is wonderful. Well God does recognize this expression of and celebrates it with us. This love relationship is expressed in scripture, according to the Song of Songs: "**Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your love is more delightful than wine. Pleasing is the fragrances of the perfumes.**" (*Song of Songs 1:2-3*)

What expression of love do we celebrate? Will we celebrate *Philo* love, *Eros* love or will we also celebrate *Agape* love; a higher love, as expressed by God, as the Apostle John explains: "**God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but might have everlasting life.**" (*John 3:16*)

My friends, I declare to you that we should celebrate all aspects of love. We celebrate love of family and friends, love of spouse or a significant person, our love of God and His love of us. For I employ you that indeed **Love is the Greatest.**

Blessings, Pastor Jesse



Ash Wednesday Service ~ February 10 ~ 7:00 pm ~ Chapel

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a time when Christians prepare for Easter by observing a period of 40 days of fasting, repentance, moderation and spiritual discipline. The service helps us to realize that both sin and death have been triumphed through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

During the service, Pastor Jesse will lightly rub the sign of the cross with ashes onto the foreheads of worshipers. The use of ashes as a sign of mortality and repentance has a long history in Jewish and Christian worship. Historically, ashes signified purification and sorrow for sins. The palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday service are burned to produce ashes. The ash cross on the forehead is an outward sign of our sorrow and repentance for sins. *UM Book of Worship*



From the Prayer Team...

Praying for the Leaders of Pleasant Green Church

Dear Heavenly Father and Guardian of all of your church children,

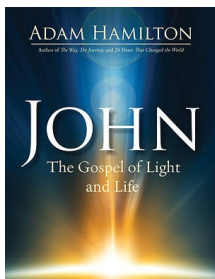
As Pleasant Green and other Methodist Churches reflect on your word and how to become more disciple – oriented through Project Bountiful, open our hearts, minds and souls to your guidance and leading. Help us to know clearly what is your will and not ours; while making your will our own. Be patient with us as we try to find your way. We especially lift up the leaders of Pleasant Green and their families, as they strive to understand the direction for your church. Help them know what you value and love about who we are and what we do, and what you would like us to prune. Help our leaders know how we fit with the community, and how you would like to develop more disciples in our community. Mold us as a congregation as you mold us as individuals, bringing us more in line with the teachings of your Son.

Clearly give our leaders your vision, strength, and passion to guide us through this process. And as we wait patiently for our part in this process as the body of the church; let us be trusting, faithful and confident that your hand is in it all. Let us be active as we wait, responding prayerfully and thoughtfully to requests for information and ideas. We pray these things, Lord, knowing that your Son is the center of all that we do and all who we are. Amen.

The February 2016 meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 17th at 6:30 pm. We pray actively for our church activities, church and extended family members, and local, national and global issues. We will also talk about how the beginnings of visitation to those who are home-bound went. Come join us! In the meantime, check out the Prayer Ministry bulletin board above the prayer letters table in the hallway leading to the Fellowship Hall. Sign the prayer letters under the bulletin board. Signing a letter means you commit to pray for that person at least once during the week. Did you know that even though you don't know the person, he or she is so grateful that you care!

Remember to fill out the yellow prayer cards found in the pews to request prayer for those in need.

Join Wednesday Morning Bible Study at 10:30 am!



The Gospel of John is the most deeply spiritual of the four gospels. This writing is filled with rich images and profound truths, but John

notes that his aim in writing the gospel is that readers will not only believe in Jesus Christ, but that they “may have life in his name.” You can experience a season of spiritual growth and life-changing renewal in Adam Hamilton’s six-week, DVD-series, *John: The Gospel of Light and Life*. You’ll follow the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus and understand the context of some of the best-known verses in the New Testament.

Dear Pleasant Green Members,



Thank you so much for your prayers and support during the sudden passing of my 91 year old mom, Mary Yates on Christmas Eve.

She always enjoyed so much attending the musical performances by the summer campers at Pleasant Green. She loved chatting with Jo Anna who made her feel right at home and also with Lesley Weaver as she reminisced about Brogden Jr. High where she was employed for 30 years.

She was a wonderful blessing to my life and I miss her daily. Your thoughts and prayers mean a lot to me. Your church has been a part of my life for many years.

Thanks again, *Pam Hall*

(formerly on staff at PG Afterschool & Summer Camp for many years)

FREE TAX HELP FROM VITA

February — April 15

www.orangecountyvita.org

You can now make your appointment online.

VITA is a free tax service for clients of any age or county of residence with low to moderate income. Free tax preparation and e-filing are provided by trained IRS-certified tax volunteers.

pleasant green youth group



February Youth Calendar

Friends, Fellowship, Games and Lessons / Sunday School 10 am

Contact Ali DeLeo for more information: 202-744-6440 or alideleo@gmail.com

Youth News & Upcoming Events

ELEVATE ~ Sundays 5:00–7:30pm ~ February 7, 14 & 21

To sign up for dinner, please let Ali know or go to the doodle poll at <http://doodle.com/poll/ssknxhec9ifqri49>

February 7 ~ Souper Bowl Sunday ~ Youth will collect cash after 8:30 & 11:00 Services

February 21 ~ Youth are Liturgists / Ushers / Greeters at 11:00 Worship Service

30 Hour Famine – Friday-Saturday, February 26-27; service projects and lock-in at PGUMC

Relay for Life Orange County– Friday, May 6 – Ryan Montgomery for more details

(ryanm921@gmail.com)

World Vision

30 Hour Famine

In the next few weeks our youth will raise money for the 30 Hour Famine as well as be educating themselves about the world outside of their own in which more than 870 million people are hungry. They will end their fundraising time by actually going hungry themselves for 30 hours and during that time also participate in a service project.

Hosted by World Vision, an international Christian humanitarian organization that serves children and families in nearly 100 countries, the 30 Hour Famine seeks to raise awareness and support to end world hunger. Our youth will also stand in solidarity with the more than 26,000 children around the world who die from hunger and preventable diseases each day.

The Pleasant Green Youth have raised \$29,000 for 30 Hour Famine from 2003—2015!

Please join with the youth in this great cause.

Let's help make the world different!

Ways you can participate with our Youth:

Pray for the youth and leaders throughout the event, that they might not only have endurance, but also their eyes might be opened in new ways and their hands moved to service.

Donate financial support by sponsoring one of our youth participants. Just think, every dollar you donate provides another day of food and care for a child in need.



On February 7,

Souper Bowl Sunday,

our youth will be collecting donations (in soup pots) at the sanctuary doors after worship. All in attendance are encouraged to drop \$1 (or more) in the pot on their way out. You may also bring food for OCIM food cart.



tacklehunger.org

A simple prayer: "Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those who are without a bowl of soup to eat" is inspiring a youth-led movement to help hungry and hurting people around the world.

This prayer, delivered by Brad Smith, then a seminary intern serving at Spring Valley Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC, gave birth to an idea. Why not use Super Bowl weekend, a time when people come together for football and fun, to also unify the nation for a higher good: collecting dollars and canned food for the needy?

This year Charlotte area churches are challenging Denver area churches to participate in the Souper Bowl. Organizers want the entire city of Charlotte to donate canned food and money for local charities.

Mission / Vision Statement

Using the energy of the Super Bowl to mobilize youth in a united national effort to care for people in their local communities who are hungry and those in need. Transform the time around the Super Bowl into the nation's largest celebration of giving and serving.



Valentine's Mission Sweet Treats Sale

Please come and support missions by buying a tasty Valentine treat for you or someone you really like!

The mission team will be selling treats at 9:30 and after the 11 am service on Valentines Sunday - that is February 14th!

Donations of sweet treats are appreciated! Please bring by 9:30 am.



From El Salvador Mission Team...

After meeting, the PGUMC Mission Team thought that we need to address some common concerns of our fellow church members. One of the primary desires of the Mission Team AND the church is for EVERYONE who is feeling the call to participate in a mission experience have that opportunity. We have all had questions and doubts when we made our decisions to participate.

Several common concerns we were able to identify:

1. The cost. It is true that the church's mission trips have involved costs to the participants. We have created and participated in numerous fundraisers to offset these costs. In the past, the Team has asked the team members to come up with a nominal "deposit" to make the plane reservations. In most cases that is the only direct cost that was seen by the team members. We either raised the remaining funds for the trip or others in the congregation have generously donated to cover the costs. We have always been able to cover the costs in the past and trust we will in the future. We are sincere in wanting to stress however, that even if the deposit we have asked for in the past is seen as a deterrent, we do not want that to prevent anyone from participating. With that in mind, we do NOT plan on "requiring" a deposit for upcoming trips. We trust in the faith and generosity of both the participants and the PGUMC congregation. We will find a way to make it happen.

2. Safety. There have been reports in the news lately of violence, primarily gang and drug related, in many Central American countries and specifically El Salvador. The Mission Team, our sponsors and friends in El Salvador are well aware of potential security concerns. The Team takes every precaution and avoids dangerous situations. We have not felt any undue concern being there and hope it won't prevent others from participating.

3. Language. It is true that El Salvador is a Spanish speaking country. It is also true that in many of the places we work and visit, few of the local population speak English. There are interpreters with the team during formal "events" and on work sites. Also, several team members speak Spanish with varying degrees of fluency. It is not a problem that should deter anyone. Take it as a challenge to try another language, it's fun.

4. You'll get sick. No, you cannot drink the water. However, you will be constantly supplied with SAFE bottled drinking water. You will get supplied SAFE meals to eat. We have also found that other methods have been used, probiotics, etc., that seem to be effective at preventing most tummy problems. That being said, people have gotten sick and the possibilities are there. However, if you were to ask anyone who has gone and gotten sick, most would still think the experience was worth the risk.

Please be in constant prayer for our team. If there are any questions, do not hesitate to contact a member of the El Sal team: Kathryn Dempsey, Mark/Theresa Stocking, Wendy Andrews, Chris Best, Jim Perry

So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do. Luke 17:10 Amen!

Leadership Training Workshops

~ Sunday, February 7 ~

2 p.m. – 6 p.m. at Mt. Sylvan UMC

**Aligning and Streamlining Leadership Structure For Effective and Fruitful Ministry
led by Dr. Christine Harman**

(for Lay Leadership Team, Church Council, Pastors)

We will focus on what's important: the mission and nature of the church. What do we actually need to live up to God's expectation for us? What processes might we engage to shift our administrative and committee structure towards alignment with mission and vision?

**Communications: External and Internal
led by Maggie Ivancic and Jacob Blount**

(for Communications staff, volunteers, and Pastors)

We will reflect on the media and methods of communication. How much is enough? What is most effective?

**Rethinking Sunday School
led by Mitzi Johnson and Alice Kunka**

(for Nurture Committees, Age-level Coordinators & Small Group Leaders)

We will imagine models of Christian formation that will produce spiritually mature believers; small groups, class meetings, accountable discipleship and covenant groups, and more.

Sustainable Financial Management and Planning led by Jim Thompson

(for Finance Committees, Trustees, and Pastors)

We will consider positive strategies for budgeting and managing the church financial assets and needs.



**Kid's Connect
Saturday, March 12
Brookdale Assisted Living
1:00pm**

The children will tell the Egg Story, make Easter Eggs to share, hand out bookmarks & crosses to the residents.

We will have a snack at church when we return and be ready for parents to pickup at 4pm.

Permission slip is needed for child to participate.

All Ladies Invited!

**Baby Shower
for Alicja & Ryan Link**

**Sunday, February 7
3 - 4 pm ~ Parlor**



From Project Bountiful....

Values, Vision and Mission....continuing

Based on prayerful guidance, prior thoughts from *Unbinding the Gospel*, suggestions from *Project Bountiful* resources, and respectful discussion, the following Beliefs/Values, Vision and Mission of Pleasant Green Church were submitted to you as the congregation for reflection and editing. Hearing no additional comments, the same ideas were submitted to the Connectional Table on February 6. Since this article was needed before the Connectional Table met, we don't have the final discussion and outcomes. Stay tuned! Look for notes in the bulletin, information in announcements; and flyers.

Beliefs/Values: We believe in:

- Christ as the center of all that we do.
- The study of God's Word.
- The Bible as essential to our faith.
- Mission as our local and global commitment.
- Hospitality as our welcoming of all of God's children
- Our stewardship of God's creation.

Vision:

Pleasant Green is a nurturing congregation, connecting to the community for the equipping of disciples for service to the world.

Mission:

Pleasant Green is called to love God, nurture ourselves and one another, and extend God's love to the world.

Project Bountiful work that is in progress includes:

Our own Discipleship inventory for each leader and as a church body

Community needs survey

Discussion about 3rd spaces. Third spaces are those community places where our neighbors meet for a variety of events. They may include golf, fishing, dance competitions, gymnastics, bars, among other activities. These activities tend to be popular and fulfill needs for inclusion, socialization, recognition and/or quiet, solitude and escape from a busy world. Third spaces tend to be preferred by many over affiliation with a church, in today's world.

Communication Plan for sharing ideas and needs for Project Bountiful

Pleasant Green is still in the assessment phase of our project. The Home Team wants Pleasant Green to have a firm understanding of our own strengths and needs, as well as those of the community, before we build our Ministry Action Plan. To get more involved with PB, talk with Pastor Jesse, Andrea Harris or Gail Pruett.

Sunday School Nursery Available February 14

At this time the nursery space is doubling as a nursery and a children's classroom. We have a number of small children that could benefit from having a nursery, allowing their parents to attend Sunday School.

The Christian Education Committee is suggesting that the adult Sunday School Class meeting in the Youth Ministry room relocate across the hall to the multi-purpose room. This would then allow the youth class to meet in the youth room down stairs, freeing up another class room on the Sunday School Hall upstairs.

Jesus did say to his disciples let the little children come unto me and do not hinder them for such is the Kingdom of heaven. (Matt 19:14)

Therefore as good disciples of Jesus Christ let us welcome children and make Pleasant Green a children friendly congregation.

COME, HOLY SPIRIT, INTO MY HEART,
THAT I MIGHT SEE THE THINGS THAT ARE OF GOD.
COME, HOLY SPIRIT, INTO MY MIND,
THAT I MIGHT KNOW THE THINGS THAT ARE OF GOD.
COME, HOLY SPIRIT, INTO MY SOUL,
THAT I MIGHT BELONG ONLY TO GOD.

SANCTIFY
ALL THAT I THINK, SAY, AND DO,
THAT ALL WILL BE FOR THE
GLORY OF GOD.
AMEN.

The 2016 Connectional Table meets on February 6th at 9am for breakfast.

Please Attend! We need everyone's ideas and perspectives as we plan key goals and activities for the upcoming church year.

**Methodist Home for Children
Sunday Offering
February 7**



Help make a difference in the world...one child at a time. Your special offering will help clothe, feed and provide for children in our care as well as provide support to our foster and adoptive parents who offer safe and loving homes for children all over NC.

Make checks payable to PGUMC.

At Methodist Home for Children, we work to provide safe, stable homes where children can thrive and live fully into their God-given potential. While not always traditional or biological, an MHC home is where both child and family are equipped to succeed. It may be a group home that helps juvenile offenders transition to healthy, independent living or a foster home that shelters a child while his family is stabilized. Whatever form it takes, the end goal is always the same—a safe, stable home.

Methodist Home for Children, headquartered in Raleigh, is a 501(c)(3) that works to ensure safe, nurturing homes for children while working to eradicate the social and family problems that lead to abuse, neglect, family disruption and abandonment.

The first building was completed in late 1900, and the first child was admitted in January 1901. By year's end, Methodist Orphanage was home to 28 children.

Founded in 1899 as a traditional, campus-based orphanage, we now provide community-based services for children and families throughout North Carolina. We partner with public agencies to serve children in crisis and we raise private funds to ensure that we can deliver the best in evidence-based services.

We Change Lives!

Mark Your Calendar for Summer!

PGUMC Summer Camp

June 20 - July 29

Vacation Bible School Musical Week

June 20-24

July 18-22

Tom Carr's GRIT Hall of Fame

Got Grit?



The 9th Annual Induction Ceremony

Pleasant Green UMC

February 23 at 7:00 pm

G - Getting Along With Others

R - Responsibility I - Integrity T - Tenacity

Tom Carr is an author, a marathon runner and retired Cameron Park Elementary School Counselor. His goal continues to be a preventive one: to create and implement programs that steer kids toward the kind of behavior and choices that would help them succeed. He founded the Got Grit? organization to honor hardworking students. Teachers nominate students from 3rd -12th grades for a variety of reasons: a sudden breakthrough in math after years of struggling, a gesture of kindness, completing a grade despite health problems, putting in a serious effort every day at practice, even if the student is not a star athlete. Tom says, "I tell them you can't change other people, but you can change yourself. And when you change, they change."

** The PG Summer Campers love Mr. Carr and have looked forward to his coming each summer for the past 20 years.*

Information from Tar Heel of the Week article by Marti Maguire (N&O)

**PGUMC Kid's Worship
Volunteers Needed!**



Two volunteers, a leader and assistant leader, are needed for each Sunday at 11am. Everyone has an important role in our children's Christian education and spiritual growth.

***If you are available to help please contact:
andrea.harris68@yahoo.com or
Michelle Baker - mbaker1778@gmail.com***



**Common Thread
January 16**



*January 17 ~ Baptism of
Magnolia (Nola) Wrenn King,
daughter of Megan & Heath King,
granddaughter of Debbie & Steven Collins
and Janice & Clint King and
great-granddaughter of Elaine Flannery.*

PLANNED GIVING: IRA UPDATE

Congress renewed *and* made permanent a popular charitable IRA provision in the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act of 2015. This provision allows people aged 70½ or older to make direct charitable gifts from traditional and Roth IRAs to charities in a total amount up to \$100,000.

These gifts are free from federal income taxation. In addition, the income tax laws of most states also allow tax-free treatment for these gifts.

Making gifts from IRA funds that would otherwise lead to increased taxes can be a wise choice for many. This is especially true for those who must take required minimum distributions each year.

The Hearts & Hands Class



invites all to join them on Sunday, February 14, as they volunteer at the Murdoch Developmental Center in Butner. The group will be leaving the church at 8:30 am in time to arrive for transporting the residents to the Center's Worship Service.

*Contact Van McCay with any questions:
919-477-9692.*

On Epiphany, Pleasant Green hosted a luncheon for 30 retired ministers and spouses from our district.



**All ladies invited!
UMW Chili Supper**

Monday, February 8 6:30 pm

**Program: Kathryn Dempsey's
Mission Trip to Viet Nam & Laos**



Pleasant Green United Methodist Church
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Website: PleasantGreenUMC.org

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Director of Spiritual Formation and Youth Ministry-

Alison DeLeo: alideleo@gmail.com

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**Brunswick Stew still
 available ~ \$9 a quart**

BRUNSWICK STEW & CHICKEN DUMPLINGS DINNER

Saturday, March 5 ~ 4 - 7 pm at Pleasant Green UMC

This dinner is sponsored by the United Methodist Women but help is needed from all our church family so please mark your calendar!

Proceeds from this fundraiser and fellowship event are used for local and district missions.

Support UMCOR's Coffee & Chocolate Project



Coffee - decaf & regular ground - \$8 per bag

Chocolate Bars - \$2.50

Dark Chocolate with Almonds ~ Caramel Crunch

Mint ~ Orange ~ Dark Chocolate—65% and 80%

Milk Chocolate with hazelnut ~ Milk Chocolate Caramel Crunch



This fair trade economic model 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.