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# ROOTS & BRANCHES

JULY 2021

*PleasantGreenUMC.org*

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## “Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power.”

This was the verse that we recited over and over again throughout our week at VBS. Throughout the week our groups of knights – red knights, blue knights, green knights, and orange and yellow dragons too – went on a daily quest to find a new piece of armor. We “armored up” with things like faith, truth, justice, and salvation. In the midst of the elaborate decorations, dancing, crafts, and not to mention 80 bodies moving throughout our building, it is worth our attention to pause and recognize just how radical and transformative this message is for our lives.

Justice, faith, salvation – these are not things we typically add to “armor” our lives with. In fact, many of us armor up with things like exhaustion, perfectionism, scarcity, fear, caring way too much about what people think, numbing, the need for certainty over trust, comparison, self-doubt, greed. What does it really mean to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His power? From the pulpit on the Sunday following VBS, we took a minute to reflect on these questions using David and Goliath as our guide. Here are 5 ways, or “5 smooth stones,” if you will, that give us wisdom about what real power and strength can look like:

**Stone #1:** David lived a life of faith. David didn’t start trusting in God as soon as he faced the giant. No, he trusted long before then so that when he faced the giant, he could do so with courage, with hope, and with confidence.

**Stone #2:** David doesn’t wear the armor. He takes it off. Saul tries to armor his with the bronze helmet & coat of mail & straps & sword. David tries to walk in it but he can’t. So he removes them. I wonder if we are tired and heavy laden sometimes because we are carrying around armor we weren’t meant to carry. Putting on and taking off things that don’t fit us. Being people we were never called to be. Relying on armor that will actually never protect us. Putting our trust in things that won’t actually save us. Our methods of defense have changed, but still we defend ourselves in ways that keep us from being connected to ourselves, and God and each other. David shows us that we don’t have to put on armor we were never meant to wear.

**Stone #3:** David knows God and David also knows himself. Verse 33 Saul says this to David, “You can’t go out and fight this Philistine. You are still a boy.” How many times have you started out to do something – and some outside voice puts some doubt in your mind? And if we are honest with ourselves, it’s really hard to get those voices out of our heads. They get really loud, really fast. David knew himself. Maybe he hadn’t faced a giant man before. But in his resume he protected sheep: and if a lion or bear came along, he would go after it and strike it. David literally had fought lions and bears before. He trusted his experience. He knew what skills he had to offer. He didn’t let the voice of Saul stop him from believing in himself.

**Stone #4:** David understood something about power. Because the verse that immediately follows is this one, “The Lord, who rescued me from the power of lions and bears, will rescue me from the power of this Philistine.” David’s power didn’t come from his own strength. It came from God. That Ephesians verse says Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Not my power. Not our power.

**Stone #5:** David adapts to the challenges ahead. He doesn’t just enter the battleground, he completely changes the fight. He enters a battle without any conventional weaponry. Because he knows it won’t work. This is not a fight Israel could win. He picks up 5 small stones instead of a sword. How often do we try to solve a really old problem by the same old tactics? We arm ourselves with what was in the past when what is really called for is an entire new way of being, an entirely new way of showing up and facing those 9 foot-tall giants before us.

May we learn from the wisdom of David in his early years. The ruddy one who said, “don’t lose courage because of this Philistine!” Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God’s power. Thanks be to God!

Laura



Sunday Worship



Outreach Worship

### Financial Update

2021 Unified Budget	<b>327,037.42</b>
YTD Total Income to Operating Fund	<b>119,147.05</b>
YTD Operating Expenses	<b>142,873.14</b>
YTD Operating Fund Balance	<b>-23,726.09</b>
2020 Operating Fund Balance Forward	<b>18,065.45</b>
2021 Current Actual Operating Fund Balance	<b>5,660.64</b>
Current Building Mortgage Balance	<b>221,582.41</b>

Join us for Worship in our Sanctuary each Sunday at 10:30am!

### FAMILY NIGHT AT THE DURHAM BULLS JULY 17, 6:35 PM

Families of all ages are welcome! We have 60 tickets available first come, first serve. Tickets are \$6 a person & children under age 2 who will sit on a lap are free. Reservations must be made by July 5th at noon.

Reserve your tickets here!  
<https://forms.gle/NuQ4yHcGuvGc6uZP8>

### 2021 Pleasant Green Summer Camp!



July 12-July 16, 7:30am-5:45pm at PGUMC  
Register now on the church website!

### We're Hiring!

Pleasant Green is seeking a part-time (10-15 hrs/wk) Music Director. The Director of Music will lead and facilitate the music ministry of the church. Pleasant Green is blessed to have talented and active musicians in the congregation, a Rogers Organ and a Yamaha grand piano in the sanctuary, and a well-stocked choir room.

#### Primary responsibilities:

- Preparing and leading music for Sunday morning worship; conducting weekly choir rehearsals; planning and implementing music for the church year in conjunction with pastor and staff; coordinating with other music groups within the congregation; and overseeing the vision and direction of the music ministries of the church.

- Skill sets include a level of proficiency in playing piano and organ; ability to effectively direct and accompany the choir; interpersonal relationship skills; willingness to assume other tasks as required.

For further information or to apply, please send a resume and cover letter to Susan Adams at [susan\\_adams2@hotmail.com](mailto:susan_adams2@hotmail.com).





# July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>4</b> Independence day <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30am	<b>5</b>  <i>Jack McCurdy David Totten</i>	<b>6</b> <b>Read &amp; Seed Patch</b> 6:30pm  <i>Joni Wilson Shelton</i>	<b>7</b> <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30am  <i>Mariah Umstead</i>	<b>1</b>  <i>Scott Bell Isaiah Harris</i>	<b>2</b>  <i>David Bracey Asher Nichols</i>	<b>3</b>  <i>Terry Perry</i>
<b>11</b> <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30am	<b>12</b> <b>Praise Band Practice</b> 7pm  <i>Nicholus Sutton Samantha M. Gilbane</i>	<b>13</b> <b>Traveling Camp at PGUMC</b> July 12-16		<b>8</b> <b>Youth Outing to Maple View</b> 2pm	<b>9</b>  <i>Kathie Breweur Linda Fonville</i>	<b>10</b>  <i>Caroline Bryant Mike Dempsey Kaitlyn Micol Vic Witt Cheri White</i>
<b>18</b> <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30am	<b>19</b> <b>Praise Band Practice</b> 7pm  <i>Jim Boffey Brook B. Shotwell Jason Martin Bryan Parrish</i>	<b>20</b>  <i>Ray Finley</i>	<b>14</b> <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30am <b>Prayer Ministry</b> 6:30pm  <i>Eloise King</i>	<b>15</b> <b>Circle of Faith</b> 6:30pm  <i>Mary Westmoreland James Rodgers Crandall Anderson</i>	<b>16</b>  <i>Van McCay II</i>	<b>17</b> <b>Durham Bulls</b> 6:35pm  <i>Betsy Cassidy Jason Godwin Lucas Best Tom Sutton</i>
<b>25</b> Praise Band <b>Worship Service</b> 10:30am <b>Youth Gathering at PGUMC</b> 7-8:30pm <i>Gwen Snowden Naomi Fister</i>	<b>26</b>  <i>Kory Tomlinson</i>	<b>27</b>  <i>Martha Ann Walker Debbie Freeman Laura Fister</i>	<b>21</b> <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30am  <i>Sandra Totten Kelli O'Hara</i>	<b>22</b>  <i>Marcia Ferris</i>	<b>23</b>  <i>Wayne Powers</i>	<b>24</b> <b>Common Thread Ministry</b> 9:30am
			<b>28</b> <b>Bible Study</b> 10:30am	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>



**Youth Outing to Maple View- Thursday, July 8 @ 2pm**  
Meet at the church at 2:00 for a trip out to Maple View Farms for ice cream. Please bring money for ice cream. Transportation provided.

**Youth Gathering- Sunday, July 25, 7-8:30pm**  
Rising 6th graders through seniors are invited to the church for a night of fellowship, fun, and study of Scripture. Light refreshments will be served. At this event we will also discuss what hopes students have for the youth group over the coming year.

Contact Keli Pennington at 309-712-9060 or keli.pennington19@gmail.com with any questions.

**Read & Seed Patch 7/6**  
The Island of Sea Women by Lisa See  
Meeting 6:30pm at Firefly Farm, 4911 Hunt Road, Hillsborough.  
Zoom is also available- <https://nccumc.zoom.us/j/99801109814>  
Meeting ID: 998 0110 9814  
Contact Cindy at pmfajs@yahoo.com for more information.

**Wednesday Bible Study**  
Join us each Wednesday at 10:30 in-person in the Clyde Walker classroom or online- <https://nccumc.zoom.us/j/95194663395>

**Common Thread Ministry 7/24**  
Common Thread Ministry will meet on June 5th at 9:30 AM.  
Contact Gloria Perry at 919-971-0924 for more information.



## 2021 FALL STEW

**Saturday, November 6.**

Mark your calendars and plan to help if you can!  
More info to come!

*Billy & Mindy Walker stirring stew in 1982*



## NC ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021

The North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church met virtually this year, beginning on Wednesday, June 16, 2021. The Clergy session and Laity sessions were held on Wednesday. The Laity session, which is open to all, was led by John Hall, Conference Lay Leader. This session began with prayers, beautiful music performed by various musicians in our conference, and then video clips of various ministries within the NC Conference. The Laity mission focus was “kin-dom”—not kingdom—highlighting our kinship with all people. Many of the mission ministries are like those at Pleasant Green UMC. Some examples of ministries we viewed were food pantries, a free clothing store, summer care for children, community gardens, visiting within a church’s area, and other food/assistance ministries. The “free clothing store” was an interesting idea. The church has the store open one day per week for a few hours, and people can come in and shop for what they need, at no cost. Another church collects food, as does Pleasant Green, but they distribute the food one day per week, in bags, in a drive-through line. The food includes cold items such as dairy and meat, as well as canned goods and fresh vegetables.

The Thursday session began with a worship service and a time of remembrance for clergy and clergy spouses who have passed on in 2020 and 2021. Our beloved Emma Bass, a clergy spouse, was among the names listed as a bell ran for each person.

Bishop Ward, who is retiring on September 1, announced that June 30 is “Jerry Bryan Day” within our Conference. Jerry has served as Conference secretary for 25 years.

When Bishop Ward retires, effective September 1, 2021, Bishop Leonard Fairley will become the NC Conference Bishop. Bishop Fairley is currently serving

as Bishop of the Kentucky Conference and Red Bird Conference. He is adding the NC Conference to his responsibilities. Because of his multiple duties, an assistant to the Bishop has been appointed. Gray Southern will become this assistant. Rev. Southern was our District Superintendent a few years ago. Rev. Southern was also elected as the new NC Conference Secretary, succeeding Rev. Bryan, who is retiring.

Bishop Ward reported that there were 950 voting members online for the virtual conference, and she declared that as a quorum so that business could proceed. First order of business was to vote and ratify the 2020 business from last year—approved.

George Speake was elected Conference statistician for another four years. He then reported on the Lay Equalization plan. This plan is set so that there are an equal number of voting clergy and laity within our Conference. From our church, Rev. Laura Thompson is our voting clergy, and I am the voting Lay member. Because there are many retired pastors and pastors serving in other mission areas, “at large” lay members are selected to “equal out” the balance. It was suggested that when Districts are considering at large members, they seek out young people and people of minorities. If anyone is interested in becoming an “at large” member next year, please contact our District Superintendent, Mike Freese, and request to be considered.

Reports from conference Laity groups were viewed online next. The United Methodist Women, United Methodist Men, United Methodist Youth, Lay Servant Ministries, and other groups reported on how we recognize “Who Is My Neighbor”. We were reminded that “all who follow Jesus” are the church. The church is the people, not the building, and United Methodists try to live a life that follows that role provided to us by Jesus. We saw and heard of many examples of that lifestyle.

The afternoon session began with a celebration and recognition of 2020 and 2021 retirees. Our former pastor, current member, and neighbor, Rev. Brian Wingo, was a 2020 retiree.

Business followed the retiree celebration, with Finance reports first. The Conference Budget request for 2023, to be raised in 2022, and voted on in 2021, is \$15,394,544, which is a decrease of \$78,170 from the budget for 2022. This budget amount was voted on and approved. As per normal business for the NC Conference, budget funds are raised the year prior to

### (Con’t NC Annual Conference 2021)

the budget spending year. If the funds requested are raised, then they are available. If the entire amount requested is not raised in the prior year, then budget adjustments are made. This method ensures that the NC Conference is accountable for the actual funds available for use and does not exceed the amount available.

Salaries for District Superintendents will not increase in year 2022. Pastor and staff salaries are suggested to be allowed a 1.6% increase, as each church considers their own budget. Churches can increase this per their own resources available.

Insurance costs will increase by 3% for church portion and participant. The same benefits will be provided. The NC Conference is a self-funded insurance plan, and the Insurance Committee reviews coverage each year, attempting to control costs while providing the best care possible.

The minimum salary for a pastor under full time appointment is \$47,373.00. The minimum for a student pastor is \$30,792.00. Pastors are provided a parsonage or housing allowance, paid utilities, travel and education allowances, one month of paid vacation time off, and other benefits per the individual church’s ability.

Nominations and voting for District officers was held next, then video clips of appreciation and love for Bishop Ward were viewed, which ended our 2021 Business session with joy. Next year—meeting in person in Greenville, NC is our expectation.

Friday’s Conference session was a day of ordination, held at various times with short breaks in between.

Another year of business, some joys, and with high hopes for that in person meeting in 2022.

All reports and business for the NC Conference can be viewed and read, including the Conference workbook which has detailed Finance and Business reports, on the NC Conference webpage, nccumc.org.

And—we are pleased that Rev. Laura Thompson has been re-appointed to serve as our pastor for another year!

*Submitted respectfully by Sandy Quinn,  
Lay Delegate for Pleasant Green UMC.*

## CELEBRATING OUR 2021 GRADUATES!



*(Left to right: Keli Pennington, Megan Carter, Bailey Anderson, Will Walker, Corbyn Poe)*

*Congratulations to our 2021 Summer Browning Scholarship Recipients—Bailey Anderson, Hunter Brown, Rick Cassidy, and Will Witt.*

## JUNE BLOOD DRIVE



*Thank you to all the donors & volunteers!*

“THE LORD SAYS: HEAVEN IS MY THRONE,  
AND EARTH IS MY FOOTSTOOL.”

Isaiah 66: 1

BECAUSE OF THEIR ACTIONS AND THOUGHTS, I  
AM COMING TO GATHER ALL NATIONS AND  
CULTURES. THEY WILL COME TO SEE MY GLORY.

Isaiah 66: 18

### God’s Direction for a Strong Nation through Isaiah

As we look forward to July 4th and Independence Day, let us keep in mind who gives each of us as individuals and our country strength and life. We tend to drift from realizing that it is God who provides for us and leads us in ways that are pleasing to Him. He is all around us, and the earth we live on is His footstool (IS 66:1). This was brought to light recently in the Clyde Walker Sunday School Class, who has been studying the Book of Isaiah.

What God does not want us to do is worship idols. What might those idols be in our day and time? Taking pleasure with ourselves because we are created in His image? Thinking our ways are the right ways? Rationing our resources, keeping them from the needs of vulnerable people and nations? God also does not want us to quarrel, brawl, hit each other (IS 58:4). Oppress people, especially after a display of righteousness such as fasting (or prayer or going to church) (Is 58:3b). Trample the sabbath, doing business as usual (IS 58:13). Lie or be deceitful (IS 59:3-4). Ouch!

Since our nation is made up of individuals, we have the responsibility to follow God’s ways so that our nation is strong. How will God respond if we worship Him, honor Him in everything we do, love Him and everyone He puts in our path? God, in speaking to Zion (his people on the holy mountain) and Jerusalem is also speaking to us, “For Zion’s sake, I won’t keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake I won’t sit still until her righteousness shines out like a light,

and her salvation blazes like a torch” (IS 62:1). Isaiah 65 is rich in examples of God’s pleasure if we become a righteous nation. Just a few of his blessing include “No one will ever hear the sound of weeping or crying again” (IS 65:19). “No more will babies live only a few days and the old fail to live out their days” (IS 65:20). In 2019, the infant mortality rate in the United States was 5.7 deaths per 1,000 live births. The United States ranks behind 25 other countries. In North Carolina, the rate was 6.97%. “They won’t labor in vain, nor bear children into a world of horrors, because they will be people blessed by the Lord” (IS 65:23). Our current world of horrors: covid, oppression, water and air pollution, drought, heat, among others. Some people may say that in these passages, God is only referring to Jerusalem, especially during the second coming of Christ. Instead, let us consider that God is talking to us, in the United States, on this July 4th. What would our country look like if we listened?

Let us pray:

*Heavenly Father and Lord of our Nation, help us to listen to you. Help us to discern your will and not our own. Help us to be loving and kind to everyone you put in our path because you created them in love. Help us share with other nations and peoples out of the abundance you give to us. We need your strength, patience, and guidance as we strive to do your will. Thank you for creating us with You in our hearts and in our nation. Amen.*

The Prayer Ministry meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6:30 pm in the Clyde Walker Classroom/Parlor. The next meeting is Wednesday, July 21st at 6:30 pm. You may also contact Gail at pruettg4mh@gmail.com. Please join us! We would love to have you.



Meals on Wheels Orange County, NC, is in need of volunteers to help set-up and deliver meals in northern Orange County. MOWOCNC is currently delivering frozen meal boxes containing 5 frozen meals once per week. As we move past COVID, we are planning on returning to hot meal delivery. Our goal is to deliver hot meals M-F. In order to do so, we must expand our volunteer base from coverage of one delivery day to five. As we recruit and train more volunteers, additional delivery days will be added. If you would like to learn more about volunteer opportunities, please visit [www.mowocnc.org](http://www.mowocnc.org) or call Heather Harris, Volunteer Coordinator, 919.942.2948 ext. 3.



Thank you for keeping our cart in the Narthex full and the OCIM pantry overflowing! Any monetary donations toward MEALS ON WHEELS or OCIM operating expenses donations are also appreciated.



Habitat for Humanity Orange County will be constructing two houses in the Hillsborough area this summer. Each team can have 6 to 8 volunteers and must be sixteen or older. The work will be mostly outside on Saturdays from 9:00AM to 3:30PM. If you are interested in being a part of a team from PG please contact Pastor Laura or Jim Perry.

The Habitat for Humanity ReStore is open at 672 N Churton St., Hillsborough to shop, donate & volunteer!



Dear Friends in Mission,

Thank you! The dear people you just helped with your gift may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be- Thank you!

And through your financial gifts for **Imagine No Malaria, Red Bird Missionary Conference Church and Outreach Ministries, and World Hunger and Poverty** you are serving within a vital web of interactive relationships, partnering to engage globally in direct ministry to people in need.

Together, may we continue to reveal the love of God for men, women, and children of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds and to demonstrate the healing power of the gospel with those who suffer.

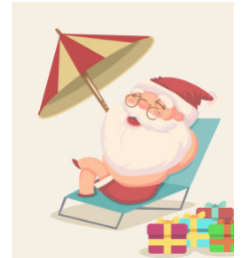
Grace and Peace,

Roland Fernandes, General Secretary

### The United Methodist Women’s Mission Project “Christmas in July” Donations Needed!

Collecting “Back to School” supplies for classrooms in our Orange County Elementary, Middle & High Schools. Please leave in the Narthex.

- Baby wipes
- Disinfecting wipes
- Antibacterial liquid hand soap
- Kleenex
- Ziploc sandwich size bags
- Ziploc gallon bags
- Band-aids
- Crayons
- Fiskars Kid size scissors
- Dry erase markers (thin and regular)
- Black sharpies (regular size)
- Highlighters
- #2 yellow pencils
- Pencil bags /boxes
- Large erasers/pencil top erasers
- Boxes of Crayola markers
- Boxes of washable Crayola markers
- Crayola watercolor paints (2 rows)
- Glue sticks (no rose art)
- Sticky notes (post-its)
- Multi-color packs of construction paper
- 2-pocket plastic folders
- Black & white Composition books
- Index cards 3x5
- Loose leaf notebook paper
- Clear contact paper
- 3-ring binders
- Book bags (no wheels)



**Thank you for all the donations to this mission during Vacation Bible School!**

### Families Moving Forward Donations Needed!



- New single sheets
- New double sheets
- New comforters
- New pillows
- Diapers sizes 1,2,3,4
- Toothpaste
- Paper towels
- Toilet paper
- Brooms
- Dust pans
- Bleach
- Small bottles of dish soap
- Clorox disinfectant wipes
- Low-sugar juice boxes
- Vitamin Water zero
- Gatorade zero
- Sugar-free water bottle packs

**Pleasant Green**  
*United Methodist Church*

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Director of Family Ministries:  
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keli.pennington19@gmail.com

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Kory Tomlinson  
kory.tomlinson@duke.edu

**WAYS TO GIVE**

**ONLINE:** www.PleasantGreenUMC.org

**SMARTPHONE:** Text "PleasantGreen" To: 77977

**ENVELOPE:** Mail or slip under office door

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!

**DOWNLOAD THE PGUMC APP**

**APP STORE:** Search "Pleasant Green UMC"

**SMARTPHONE:** Text "PleasantGreenapp" To:77977

Download and Explore! It's free! One of the features we're excited to share through this app is a 'Daily Prayer'. A place where you can click for a Bible verse, prayer, and thought of the day. Inspiration for the whole family right at your fingertips.

**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>



**PLEASE  
RECYCLE**