

NEWS FROM THE PLEASANT GROVE PEWS

APRIL 2026

Celebrate the Open Tomb

The name “April” comes from the Latin *aperire*, meaning “to open,” symbolizing spring’s blossoming. The Romans celebrated the promise of spring. We celebrate the open tomb. Christ is risen! The promise, the hope, rebirth and renewal.

Pastor Paul Klepees has his own thoughts on that open, empty tomb and how we live the resurrection — Jesus is alive and brings us new life. Read more on page 2.

Also on page 2, check out our “April Showers” plans for Fill The Cart this month. We’re loading up on hygiene supplies to replenish the shelves at SERVE and our food pantry for those who need these basics.

We return our attention to the Pleasant Grove budget again this month with a deeper look at the categories where we have budgeted funds. See page 7 for a further explanation of where the funds go.

Associate Pastor Macy Storts celebrates the resurrection as a way of life, year-round. Read more on page 9 to learn how we as Easter people reflect the good news of the resurrection in all that we do.

NextGen Minister Kris O’Neal is looking to the future — summertime. As the school year begins to wind down, Kris is ramping up expectations for UNITE camp in July. He urges preparation and intention — get ready for God to move in your life. Read more on page 11.

If you saw the calendar on page 5, you know the month is packed with events. Get the details on events and schedule changes in the announcements on page 13.

But wait ... there’s more! Take a gander at the outreach opportunities on page 19. Sign up for an Easter baptism, read about the continuing Holy Week activities, get an early peek at Vacation Bible School plans and find out about the next Early Response Team training for helping with disasters.

As always, dear reader, you are the reason for *News from the Pleasant Grove Pews*. Share your news, events, photos and suggestions with Kathy Casteel at kcasteel@ktis.net and Betsy Bell at mammabell003@gmail.com. We can’t wait to hear from you!

PLEASANT GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

3686 State Road E
Auxvasse, MO 65231
Office: 573-387-4822
MyPGUMC.org

*Our Mission: To know Jesus Christ
and to make Him known.*

PASTOR

Paul Klepees
pastor@mypgumc.org

PASTOR OF CARE & CONNECTION

Macy Storts
macy@mypgumc.org

NEXTGEN MINISTER

Kris O’Neal
nextgen@mypgumc.org

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Nancy Linville
admin@mypgumc.org

For prayer requests, our Prayer Tree
number is 573-597-2102,
emailmacy@mypgumc.org.
For announcements or Information
Tree: nalinville.church@gmail.com.



News from the Pleasant Grove Pews
is published monthly by Pleasant Grove
United Methodist Church.

©2026 All rights reserved.

THE PASTOR'S PEACE



PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT FRONT: SPENCER, PAUL, GIBSON BACK: MARGIE, EZRA, AND MAVERICK KLEPEES

Living the Resurrection

BY PASTOR PAUL KLEPEES

Easter is more than a moment we celebrate; it's a reality we're invited to live.

It's easy to treat the resurrection as something that happened to *Jesus* a long time ago. We gather, we sing, we proclaim, "He is risen," and then, if we're not careful, we go right back to life as usual. But the resurrection was never meant to stay in the past. It was meant to change the present.

Paul puts it this way in Romans 6:4: "Just as Christ was raised from the dead... we too may live a new life." That's the invitation. Not just forgiveness someday. Not just heaven someday. **NEW LIFE! RIGHT NOW!**

That means the resurrection shows up in the ordinary places. It shows up in forgiveness when it would be easier to hold a grudge. It shows up in hope when things feel uncertain. It shows up in choosing faithfulness when no one else is watching.

Resurrection isn't just about

JUST AS CHRIST WAS RAISED FROM

THE DEAD THROUGH THE GLORY OF

THE FATHER, WE TOO MAY LIVE A NEW

LIFE.

ROMANS 6:4

what God did. It's about what God is still doing.

So, here's the question I've been sitting with: Where do you need new life?

Maybe it's in a relationship that needs healing. Maybe it's in a habit that needs to be surrendered. Maybe it's in a part of your faith that's grown a little tired. Wherever it is, Easter reminds us that God is not finished.

In 2 Corinthians 5:17, we're told, "If anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come." Not *will* come. *Has* come.

The tomb is empty. Jesus is alive. And because of that, new life is not just possible; it's already breaking in.

Let's live like it.

FILL THE CART

APRIL SHOWERS

April showers may bring May flowers, but they can also bring a smile to someone who just needs a little help with the daily essentials to get their life back on track. This month, Pleasant Grove folks will Fill The Cart with a shower of body wash, soap and shampoo products. Donations of these personal hygiene essentials will go to SERVE, Callaway County's ecumenical social service agency.

SERVE operates a countywide food pantry in Fulton, offering food items, personal hygiene products, cleaning supplies, household items and baby products to individuals in need, regardless of income. Pleasant Grove's Fill The Cart collection will help replenish SERVE's stock of hygiene products this spring.

Pleasant Grove distributes those SERVE offerings through our food pantry, which is a mobile site of the SERVE food pantry program. Boxes of food and other essentials are distributed at Pleasant Grove on the third Thursday of every month from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the church basement. This month's distribution date is April 16.

Let's shower our neighbors with kindness this spring and help those in need get a clean start.

TRULY I TELL YOU, WHATEVER

YOU DID FOR ONE OF THE LEAST

OF THESE BROTHERS AND SIS-

TERS OF MINE, YOU DID FOR ME.

MATTHEW 25:40

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE FOR 2026

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

PALM SUNDAY WORSHIP

Pleasant Grove worship, 9 A.M. & 11 A.M.
Prairie Chapel worship, 10 A.M.

SUNDAY-SATURDAY

Daily Video Devotion at 8 A.M.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP

Prairie Chapel 6:00 P.M. Maundy Thursday Worship
Pleasant Grove 6:30 P.M. Potluck Dinner Worship

FRIDAY, APRIL 3

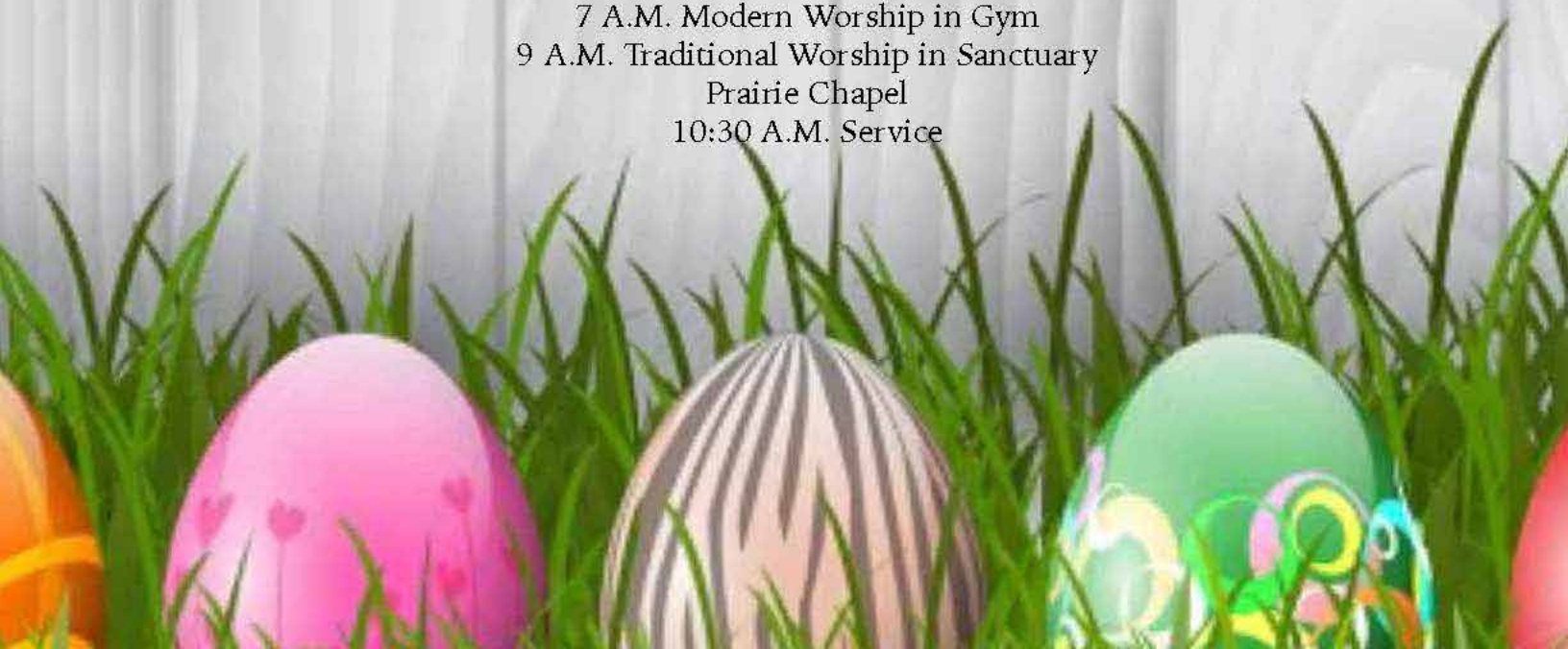
GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP

Prairie Chapel 6:00 P.M.
Pleasant Grove 7:30 P.M.

SUNDAY APRIL 5

EASTER WORSHIP

Pleasant Grove
7 A.M. Modern Worship in Gym
9 A.M. Traditional Worship in Sanctuary
Prairie Chapel
10:30 A.M. Service





ON THE ROAD AGAIN

IS HEADED TO



PELLA
Sowa

APRIL 21-24

**CARPOOLING FROM PLEASANT
GROVE AT 7:15 A.M.**

JAN HANKINSON 573-999-2139



Coffee with Sisters in Faith

Saturday, April 11

8:30-10 am

at Pleasant Grove

Hosted by Judi DeYoung



Budget Breakdown

A deeper look into where the Pleasant Grove budget goes.



In March we brought *News from the Pews* readers a recap of the State of Pleasant Grove presentation that took place in February. This month, we take a deeper dive into our 2026 financials and look at what each portion of the \$285,313 budget represents.

Administration 7.6%

Items in this category are the things we need to run the church office, including office supplies and other administrative materials, as well as such necessities as background checks. This category becomes the catch-all for anything that does not fit in the other budget areas.

Ministry Programs and Worship 9.8%

This category budgets funds for worship supplies, décor, curriculum and Bibles.

Denominational Giving and Missions 8.8%

Pleasant Grove's mission giving and apportionments to the United Methodist Church come from these funds.

Facilities and Operations 29%

Funds for building maintenance and supplies come from this category.

Staff and Ministry Leadership 44.8%

This is the largest expense category in the budget, covering salaries, benefits and continuing education for those in paid staff positions.

**The budget does not include Pleasant Grove's \$61,000 in cash reserves.*

Women's Ministries
Yoga

join us in the gym

8:00 AM

Every Tuesday

FOR MORE INFO
CONTACT
JULIE HUFFMAN

jfhuffman@hotmail.com

(First yoga session is FREE)

CONNECT WITH US!

 MYPGUMC.ORG

 FACEBOOK.COM/PGUMCHATTON

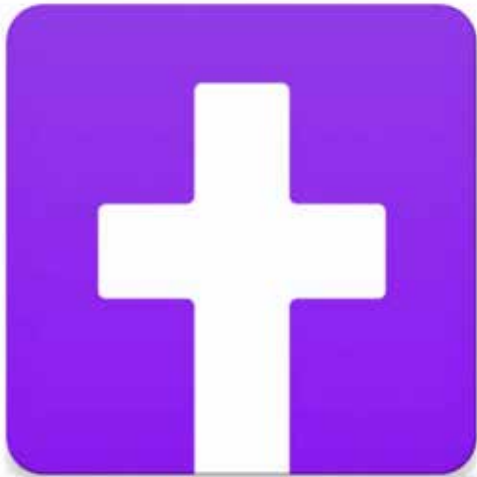
 FACEBOOK.COM/LIMITLESS

 INSTAGRAM.COM/MYPGUMC

 MYPGUMC.ORG/YOUTUBE



The PG App



Powered by Ministry One



THREADS OF CARE



KALEB AND MACY STORTS WITH BOONE

Resurrection Hope: A Way of Life

BY ASSOCIATE PASTOR MACY STORTS

Happy Easter to you and your family! The month of April invites us to fully live in the joy of Easter. As the world around us begins to bloom, we hear again the astonishing words being spoken from an empty tomb: “He is not here, but has risen.”

He is risen indeed! These words are not just a proclamation of what happened long ago, but they are a declaration of what God is still doing today.

The women who went to the tomb came expecting death and were met with life. Fear gave way to wonder, and sorrow turned into hope. The resurrection of Jesus reminds us that God is always working beyond our expectations, bringing life where we least expect it. Because Jesus is risen, we trust that no situation is beyond God’s redeeming power; we choose hope even in uncertain times, and we share Christ’s love through acts of compassion and service.

Resurrection is not confined to Easter morning — it’s a way of life.

As Easter people, Pleasant Grove is called to reflect the good news in all we do. Through worship, fellowship, service and prayer, we become witnesses to the living Christ, offering hope to a world longing for renewal.

Wishing you all Easter blessings!

WHY DO YOU LOOK FOR THE LIVING AMONG THE DEAD? HE IS NOT HERE, BUT HAS RISEN.

SAVE THE DATE!

June 12-14

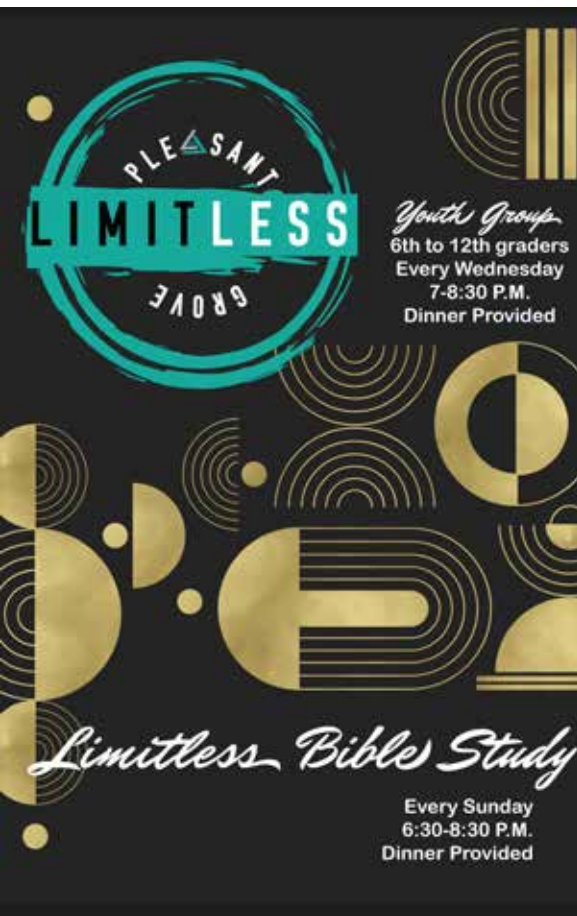
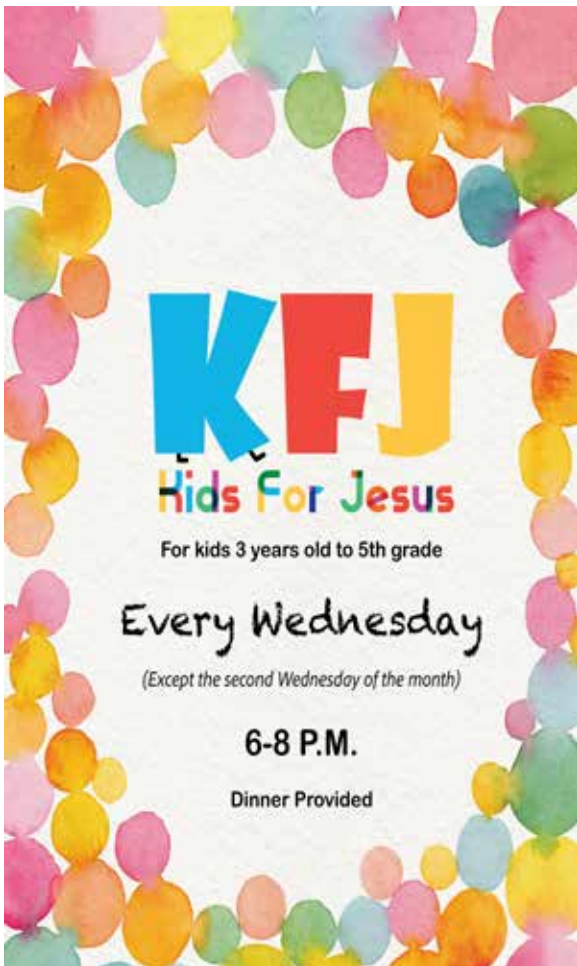
Vacation Bible School at Pleasant Grove



I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. (Philippians 4:13)

Enjoy games, crafts and snacks. Every day brings a new lesson on how God gives us strength to weather any kind of challenge.

All kids grades K-5 are welcome!



Be Intentional: Live With Purpose

BY NEXTGEN MINISTER KRIS O'NEAL

As the school year winds down and summer approaches, life begins to shift. Schedules loosen, routines change, and we start looking ahead. In moments like this, it's worth remembering something simple but powerful: Life is a gift.

You were created with intention. Not rushed, not random, not overlooked. When you begin to see your life that way, it changes how you live. You stop measuring your worth by comparison and start living from a place of identity and purpose.

That identity isn't built on labels. It's rooted in belonging. We were made to be connected, valued and unified. When we live from that truth, it shapes how we treat others — with grace, dignity and love.

At the center of it all is Jesus. When we keep our focus on Him, everything else starts to come into focus. Even in seasons of change, we have something steady to hold onto.

This summer, we have a powerful opportunity with UNITE camp, July 20–24. The theme is “In Tension” — learning to live in the space between where we are and where God is leading us. That kind of growth takes preparation.

Parents, begin praying now. Students, come ready and expectant. Don't just attend — be ready for God to move.

So don't drift through this summer. Be intentional. Invest in what matters. Grow in your faith.

Life is a gift. Live it fully.

**THE PLANS OF THE DILIGENT LEAD SURELY TO ABUNDANCE,
BUT EVERYONE WHO IS HASTY COMES ONLY TO POVERTY.**

PROVERBS 21:5



CENTRAL METHODIST UNIVERSITY

CONTACT:
KRIS O'NEAL
NextGen@mypgumc.org
417-718-4772

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Schedule Check

Pleasant Grove's Holy Week observance has led to a few scheduling changes the first week of April. The gym will be closed to outside activities from March 30 to April 5. Kids For Jesus and Limitless youth group will not meet on Wednesday, April 1.

No Sunday School on Easter morning, April 5. Youth Bible Study will not meet on Sunday evening, April 5.

The church office will be closed April 6-10.

Men's Group Meets

The Pleasant Grove Men's Group will meet just once this month, on Thursday, April 16. The 7 p.m. gathering takes place at the church. Get updates on all Men's Group activities with a group text from leaders Cody Jones and Brandon Crawford. Connect with Cody at 573-826-0926 or Brandon at 573-220-5347.

Coffee with Sisters in Faith

Get your caffeine fix and great fellowship at Coffee with Sisters in Faith on Saturday, April 11, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at Pleasant Grove. For more information about Sisters in Faith, contact Angie Raebel at 573-416-6438 or email Plote.hogan@gmail.com.

LIFT Meeting Postponed

A scheduling conflict with a school event has led L.I.F.T. (Ladies In Faith Together) to cancel its April 8 meeting to plan and prepare for Vacation Bible School. Sarah Peck will announce a new meeting date later. For more information, contact Sarah at 573-808-2324 or email cspeck428@gmail.com.

On The Road Again ... for Tulips

The On the Road Again gang will celebrate tulip season in the Dutch town of Pella, Iowa, during a three-day visit April 21-24. On tap is a lot of Dutch food, arts and crafts, historical sites and tulips, of course. The group will carpool to Pella from Hatton, leaving from the church parking lot at 7:15 a.m. on Tuesday, April 21. Contact Jan Hankinson at 573-999-2139, email janhankinson@gmail.com, for more information.

KFJ Winds Down with a Party

Kids For Jesus wraps up this spring on Wednesday, April 29. It's also party night for the kids as they celebrate their KFJ year. Parents are invited to stay for the party and see what the kids have accomplished over the year. KFJ will resume in the fall.

For the remaining KFJ meetings in April, sign up to feed the crowd at www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10C084AADA929A5FFC16-62307829-kfyouth#.



Hey, Graduates!

Pleasant Grove will honor its graduates of college, high school, eighth grade, kindergarten and pre-kindergarten on Sunday, May 17. Please submit names of graduates to Nancy Linville in the church office by May 3. Include graduate's name, school, grade, a picture and future plans.

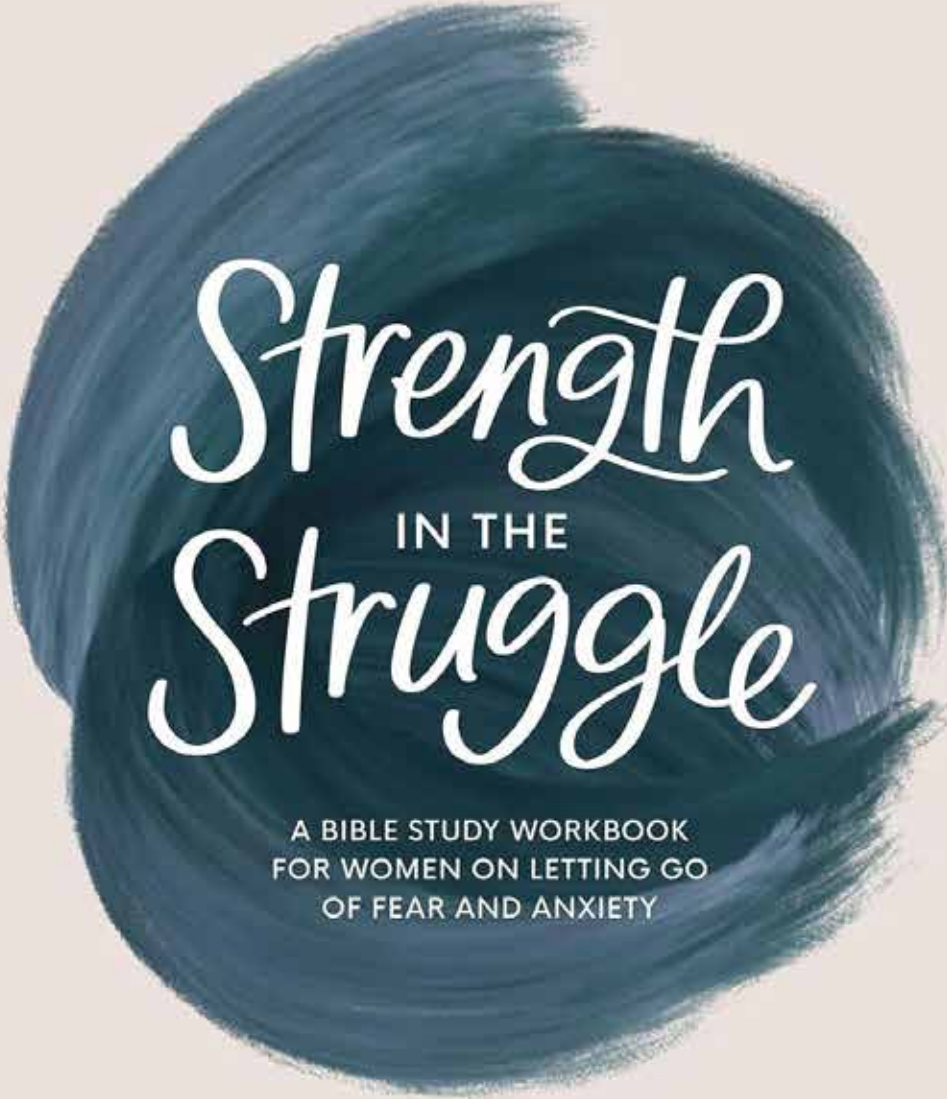
Quilters' Quest

The Festival of Sharing is gearing up for its 2026 Quilt Auction to benefit the Church World Service Blankets Program. Last year's auction raised \$7,543.89. If you would like to donate a quilted item, visit www.FestivalOfSharing.org/quilt-auction for details on auction categories and submissions. Auction items are due Aug. 15 in the Missouri Conference office, 3601 Amron Court, in Columbia.



WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

PAPER PEONY PRESS



Strength IN THE Struggle

A BIBLE STUDY WORKBOOK
FOR WOMEN ON LETTING GO
OF FEAR AND ANXIETY

LAUREN IBACH

**9:30 A.M. TUESDAYS
AT PLEASANT GROVE**



PLEASANT GROVE MEN'S GROUP

**JOIN US ON THURSDAYS AT
PLEASANT GROVE**

**3686 STATE ROAD E
AUXVASSE, MO**

**APRIL 16
7 P.M.**

CODY JONES

573-826-0926

BRANDON CRAWFORD

573-220-5347



SERVE and Baby Grace

Pleasant Grove is a mobile site for SERVE food pantry and Baby Grace.

THURSDAY, APRIL 16TH, 11 A.M.-2 P.M.

(We are open every third Thursday of the month.)

If you are in need of a food box from SERVE,
please stop by! You can register that day and
participate in the food pantry.

The Baby Grace store offers free diapers, wipes and gently used or
new clothing for ages birth through 5 years.

COMMUNITY LUNCH

The Discipleship Sunday School class invites
you to join us for a homemade meal.

Stay for a game of cards, dominoes, or
bring a suggestion!

THURSDAY, APRIL 16TH, 12 NOON



Let's support and uplift each other
through the power of prayer!

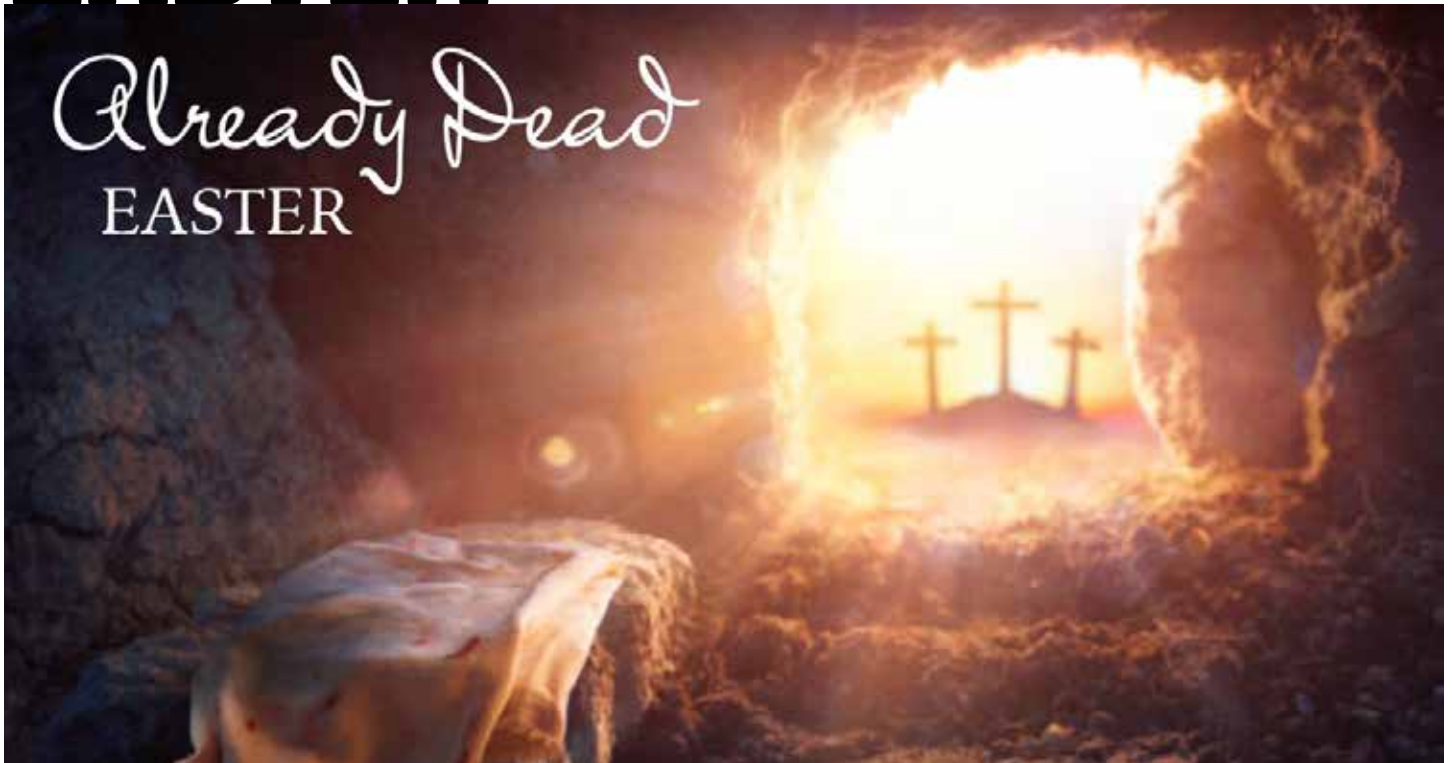


Pray with us

FOUR WAYS TO REQUEST PRAYER

1. Submit your prayer requests through the PG App by tapping Contact and the Prayer tab. Fill out the brief form and submit.
2. On our website, MyPGUMC.org, click on the Prayer Request graphic on the home page or click on the Prayer Concerns under the Stay Connected menu (MYPGUMC.org/stay-connected/prayer-concerns). Fill out the brief form and submit.
3. Contact the church office at 573-387-4822 or Pastor Paul Klepees at 816-752-3635.
4. Call the Prayer Tree at 573-597-2102 or email macy@mypgumc.org.

JOIN US FOR NEW SERMON SERIES **EASTER**



APRIL



OUTREACH PLANS

Join Us for Holy Week

Pleasant Grove continues Holy Week observances throughout the first week of April.

Sunday, March 29–Saturday, April 4:

Daily video devotion at 8 a.m.; watch online on Facebook, our YouTube channel and the church website, www.MyPGUMC.org.

Palm Sunday, March 29:

Pleasant Grove worship, 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.
Prairie Chapel worship, 10 a.m.

Maundy Thursday, April 2:

Prairie Chapel worship, 6 p.m.
Pleasant Grove potluck dinner & worship, 6:30 p.m. in the gym

Prayer Vigil, April 2-3:

24-hour prayer vigil from 7 p.m. Thursday to 7 p.m. Friday. Sign up for your 30-minute slot at church; pray anywhere.

Good Friday, April 3:

Prairie Chapel worship, 6 p.m.
Pleasant Grove worship, 7:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday April 5:

Pleasant Grove, 7 a.m. modern service in the gym
Pleasant Grove, 8 a.m. egg hunt & continental breakfast
Pleasant Grove, 9 a.m. traditional service in sanctuary
Prairie Chapel, 10:30 a.m. service

Easter Baptisms

Easter Sunday is a special time to get baptized. If interested, please reach out to Pastor Paul Klepees or contact the church office, 573-387-4822. Let us know if you prefer to be sprinkled or immersed and what size T-shirt you wear.

Vacation Bible School Set for June

The women of L.I.F.T. (Ladies In Faith Together) are planning a fun-filled weekend of Vacation Bible School June 12-14 at Pleasant Grove. Find your strength in God at the very cool Snowball Mountain Challenge! Open to children in kindergarten through fifth grade, VBS sessions will run Friday evening, Saturday morning and afternoon, and Sunday afternoon. Volunteers are welcome (Limitless youth, too!) to teach and help with games, crafts, food, skits and music. We'll also need nursery workers to care for the younger children of volunteers. Mark your calendars; more details to come!

Disaster Response Training

As we head into the severe weather season, the United Methodist Church teams are gearing up to help wherever disaster strikes. If you'd like to help, Early Response Team training is available on Saturday, April 11, at Manchester UMC in St. Louis. Early Response Teams fill a specific need in the days after a disaster to clean out flood-damaged homes, remove debris, place tarps on homes and otherwise help to prevent further damage, while providing a caring Christian presence. Register for the class by April 3. Get all the details at www.MoUMethodist.org/disaster-response.

BLESSINGS

**BRING THE WHOLE TITHE
INTO THE STOREHOUSE
... AND SEE IF I WILL NOT
THROW OPEN THE FLOOD-
GATES OF HEAVEN AND POUR
OUT SO MUCH BLESSING
THERE WILL NOT BE ROOM
ENOUGH TO STORE IT.**

MALACHI 3:10

Join us in our mission to know Jesus Christ and make Him known. Your generosity enables us to help more and more people experience a life-changing relationship with Him. We are truly grateful for your donations and hope the convenience and simplicity of our ways of giving are helpful to you.

1. Try scanning our QR code.



2. To use mobile giving, download the "Church By Ministry One" app to your mobile device. Search for Pleasant Grove by entering the zip code 65231.
3. Online giving can be found at www.mypgumc.org/donate.
4. Text "GIVE" to 573-312-2909.
5. Cash and checks can be placed in the offering plates during worship services or mailed to the church office at 3686 State Road E, Auxvasse, MO 65231.

Consider becoming a recurring giver. Church statistics show that churches with high numbers of recurring givers experience the most growth.

If you need assistance or have questions about our digital giving methods, please reach out to Nancy Linville in the church office Monday through Thursday, by phone at 573-387-4822 or email admin@mypgumc.org.



Pleasant Grove

W O R S H I P T I M E S

First Service 9:00-10:00 a.m.

Sunday School 10:10-10:50 a.m.

Second Service 11:00-Noon

