

The Messenger

Crievewood United Methodist Church

January 16, 2013

Pastor's Pen

Praying it Forward

I was seen kneeling by the mailbox earlier this week, word spread that I must be praying for a Publishers Clearing House check. Now why didn't I think of that? I am no stranger to the posture of prayer, and have been known to pray for fewer Macy's ads, but the passing motorist spied me taking down the mailbox Christmas decorations placed by our youth.

Placed has such a gentle connotation when in fact it was as if the decorations had been welded on. I guess I never realized that such thin wiring, applied correctly, could hold in a F-5 tornado, but I have a hunch the decorations would still be on the mailbox should it have landed in Oz.

Besides learning that our youth have great mailbox decorating talent, this anecdote connects with some of the major themes of our shared life at Crievewood. For one thing, I was reminded that people see us in the course of life, and some even take notice. There are surely worse comments, e-mails, texts, tweets than "Peter was seen praying", however, the point is that along with open minds, open hearts, and open doors the faith community is an open book.

We are in the Christian season of Epiphany, immersed in scripture that calls us to carry, reflect, share, radiate, offer (pick a verb) the Light of Christ into, for, with, in, to (pick a preposition) the world. Or to state it another way, as followers of Christ Jesus our lives are a witness to the life and lifestyle to which Jesus has called us. And people see us; some take notice.

It is a pretty exciting time to be part of the Crievewood congregation, and it is not unreasonable to anticipate others will want to come and be a part of what God is doing in this place. This past Sunday we had a Church Conference and approved a motion defining the scope of our building renovation and expansion project, as well as a motion concerning necessary financing. The primary takeaways from the gathering were threefold: we had a profound experience of holy conferencing as we discussed the project scope and financial realities; we are clearly intent on seeing the full project completed but prudently acted to postpone building the new fellowship hall; and we are excited about the next step forward and seeing the onsite work commence.

It is not lost on me that our Church Conference was held on Baptism of the Lord Sunday, following worship services in which we reflected upon Luke's account of the baptism of Jesus. Having been baptized, Jesus prays and two things happen: the Holy Spirit descends on him like a dove and he hears a voice from heaven confirming his relationship with God. The Spirit gives power, the voice empowers; the Spirit guides along the way, the voice announces the way, sublime gifts with which Jesus connects through prayer.

Here in 2013 neighbors and passersby will see physical changes occurring on our property and take notice. This is a good thing, and we must offer radical hospitality. Yet, our broader challenge as a congregation is to keep a healthy prayer life so that we might stay connected with the movement of the Holy Spirit and God's claim upon our lives. Individually, should you choose to come and kneel and pray beside the church, someone will likely notice and word will get out. But then I guess that is the point; the Word became flesh so the Word might get out. Inside or outside the church walls, Jesus has taught us to pray it forward.

Peter van Eys

Up-Coming Events



2nd Annual Crieewood Chili Cook Off

Sunday, January 27th at 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Prizes will be given for:

Spiciest, Best Traditional, Best Non-Traditional and Best Over All.

If you wish to bring chili, you are not required have it judged.

Voting will be \$1 per vote and all proceeds will go to the Capital Fund for the church expansion.

Sign up sheets will be sent to each Sunday School class.

If you have questions, contact Chris Cates at 775-7920 or cates512@gmail.com.

Leaders' Training

Nashville District Leader Training will be on Tuesday, January 22, from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Brentwood UMC. If you have accepted a new leadership role in the church and would like to learn more about that role or if you would like to share ideas with others in a similar leadership position, this is a good opportunity.

Also, there are newly purchased ministry guideline booklets available for viewing in the office. These same guidelines are available electronically on disk.

Missions

Super Bowl Subs

Please support our youth as they prepare for Mountain TOP! We are offering 12" subs for Super Bowl Sunday made with fresh ingredients from Publix. Place your order, and it pick up in the church kitchen on Super Bowl Sunday (February 3) immediately following the traditional worship—it's that simple. There is no set fee, but donations are accepted! Please return your form(s) by Sunday, January 27, to church office, the envelope by Steph's office, or directly to Steph. **One sandwich per form, please! Forms are available in the narthex and in the bulletin on January 20.**



Community Care Fellowship

Community Care Fellowship is in need of all sizes of men's undershirts and is grateful to those persons who donated items last month. **CUMC's December T-shirt total was 70 shirts.** We will continue to collect garments, so if you have any donation, please leave it on the table at the top of the stairwell off the narthex.

Christmas Cards

Nurture Committee is collecting old Christmas Cards to be used for Christmas books in 2013. A collection box can be found under the table in the Narthex located near the stairwell.

Activities

Joy Club

The JOY Club meeting on **January 24** is at the church on the Fellowship Hall Stage. Lunch, prepared by Kathryn Buffler, will be at 11:00 a.m. There will be a review of all the 2013 programs, and as time permits, a few games will be played. Please bring \$8.00 to cover the cost of lunch. Reservations for the January lunch should be made with Jean McCurdy by January 20, 2013.

Wednesday Night Fellowship

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Welcome to these spring programs on Wednesday Night.

*On January 16 we will meet in the Youth Room for a Bahamas mission trip review led by Steph Dodge and company.

*In conjunction with the Tennessee Conference Children's and Family Ministries, Patty Smith will teach us about **Safe Sanctuaries** on January 23. The training program will run from 6:00-8:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall and is offered as our Wednesday night program so that we all can educate ourselves about our church policy and its merits. All church members are asked to participate. It will be eye-opening!

This training is so important that we are offering a second training session on Saturday, February 2, from 9-11 a.m. in Fellowship Hall for those who are unable to attend on January 23. But we are hoping to have as many as possible at the Wednesday night training, so please make every effort to attend.

*All children's choirs and preschool activities will meet in their usual spots.

*The nursery will be available for those with children two and under

Wednesday Night Menus

Wednesday, January 16—Baked chicken breasts, gravy, rice, carrots, green beans, rolls, and dessert

Wednesday, January 23—Hamburger steaks, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, and dessert

Wednesday, January 30—*Soup Night*: Alabama chicken stew, Annette's potato soup, and Charlie's corn muffins, and dessert

Financial Peace Coming to Crieviewood UMC

Thursday nights, 6:30 p.m., beginning January 31

Need some help with budgeting? Want to experience freedom from debt? We are excited to be able to offer our church family and Crieve Hall community Financial Peace University. Millions of people have gone through Dave Ramsey's *Financial Peace University* (FPU). They've worked a plan, rewritten their stories, and changed their futures. This class meets for nine weeks, one night a week. It incorporates small-group discussions that help encourage accountability and discipleship. FPU teaches members how to handle money God's ways, and His ways work!

We are offering child care for participants, and in order to staff our nursery appropriately, the deadline to register for child care is January 22.

Register for the course online at <http://www.daveramsey.com/fpu/locations/org/43476/class/224308>. Please contact Leigh Ann Cate with questions.

Youth

“Red Carpet” Valentine Banquet

The annual Valentine’s Dinner, served by the youth, will be Saturday, February 9th at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. The dinner is planned with a Hollywood theme this year, so come dressed in your academy award-winning attire, and get your photo taken with the stars in our photo booth. Our Oscar-worthy menu will be announced soon. There is limited seating available so sign-up today with Steph. All donations from the meal go towards youth missions including Mountain TOP.



News Tidbits

Capital Campaign Envelopes

There are “It’s About Time” capital campaign single envelopes available on the small table in the narthex to the left of the office door. You are welcome to use those envelopes when you are donating to the building fund.

Hilltop/New Creations Class

The New Creations and Hilltop Sunday School classes have been meeting together for quite some time under the leadership of David White. As of the new year, they are no longer two separate classes. They are one class - Hilltop/New Creations. Both classes have had their own identities for many years and saw no need to change the name. So, they combined them! They will continue to meet in the Hilltop classroom until the building renovations are complete.

Reminder

The winter season has arrived, so please remember that the church’s schedule follows the Davidson County School’s schedule. If Metro schools are closed for inclement weather, all church activities scheduled that day are also canceled.