

Pastor's Pen

Life Altering

The past few days have reminded us we really are in the season of winter, the snow has been beautiful and life-altering. . . in the schools are closed, run to the grocery store, no paper in the driveway sort of way. We did cancel the early service in light of temperature and road conditions but had a nice gathering of folks for the late service. I am grateful for those who cleared the steps and ramp to make the church accessible, and for the coffee that was ready when people arrived.

Speaking of hot drinks, on Saturday the hills of Ellington Agricultural Center were alive with the sound of sleds sledding (like on the 13th day of Christmas), and some Crievewood members saw that as an opportunity to offer our church as a hot chocolate and restroom station. Spirit activated ministry no doubt; around 60 came in to warm up and experience our congregation's hospitality.

Recently I received an email from Jody, one of our members, about another, more profound, life-altering event, the suicide of her niece's 16 year old daughter Ellie on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. She shared with me remarks that were made by Ellie's parents at her Memorial Service and thought they deserved a wider audience; I agree. Here are their remarks:

Ellie was our daughter — but she was everyone's daughter — everyone's friend. You'll hear a lot of reference to diamonds today because Ellie was a diamond. She brought a bright light into the lives of everyone she met. But let's never forget that diamonds are made of coal and it's the pressure that makes them beautiful. Ellie shone brightly on the outside, but there was a darkness within her that no one could see — that we did not see. Ellie's life was very full. . . of friends — of family — of experiences. . . and she knew it — but the darkness within her was overwhelming. Our only solace is that Ellie has finally found the peace that she was looking for. Our sole wish now is that no family has to go through what we're going through — and that Ellie's death has as much meaning as her life.

Parents: Love your kids. Hug your kids. Talk to your kids. Talk to your kids about Ellie and what happened.

Kids: love yourselves, love your parents and tell them everything — reach out if you're in pain. Let's come together as a community to ensure that this tragedy does not happen ever again.

Lastly — the weather today could not be more appropriate — Ellie loved the rain — when she was little she used to love to play in the rain and jump in the puddles (making her mother crazy). Sherry and I want everyone to think of today's rain as Ellie's tears because we know that she is missing us as much as we are missing her.

According to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network (www.tspn.org) suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death for youth ages 10-24 in our state. It is important for us all to support mental health awareness and suicide prevention efforts; I invite you to visit www.elliesbus.org. I would also encourage you to get to know the youth at Crievewood, you might even call/email/speak to Stephanie Dodge about ways you can be involved in our youth ministry. The Christian covenant community was designed by God to be a life altering experience of love, grace, identity, and purpose;

thank you, Jody, for sharing a part of your family's story so that we might be reminded of this sacred imperative.

Peter van Eys

Up-Coming Events

Youth Valentines Banquet

Saturday, February 13 @ 6:30pm.

Be sure and make reservations soon because you don't want to miss out on a delicious dinner by one of Crievewood UMC's renown chefs and an entertaining and witty show by our talented Youth. You can sign up outside of Steph Dodge's office, call Steph or call the church office.



Record Release

Over these past two years, Caleb has been writing original songs for us to sing in our worship. This past year he and some friends recorded many of those songs and created a new project called *Gathered* which he has dedicated to Crievewood. On **Friday, February 5th at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall**, Caleb and the Gathering music team will celebrate the new record release by sharing the songs with the public. So come on out, enjoy some music, and feel free to sing along! The new release *Gathered* will be available for purchase. Proceeds from the sale will support Caleb's mission trip this summer to Quito, Ecuador.

Worship Life Survey

The beginning of a new year is a logical time to reflect on what we have done in the past and consider what we would like to do in the future. With this in mind, the Worship Committee would like to enter into a time of assessment of our worship life here at Crievewood. Our objective is to gain knowledge about our worship life, worship morale, and worship needs of our congregation. Your answers are very important and will be taken into consideration as a part of the work of the Worship Committee.

There are two ways to complete the survey:

- 1) Fill out a hard copy of the survey. Surveys will be available in the Narthex or in your Sunday School classroom as requested.
- 2) You may fill out the survey online through SurveyMonkey by clicking on or copy/pasting this link to your browser:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/cumcworship>.

This link is also compatible with your mobile device.

It is very important for each individual (no matter your age, how long you've been a member of Crievewood, etc.) to participate in this important process! Please fill out ONE survey, either on paper by finding a copy in the Narthex or online through SurveyMonkey. You may return your completed paper surveys to the provided box in the Narthex.

All surveys are due by Sunday, February 15th.

Thank you so much for your participation in this important process!

-Chelsey Hedglin

Chili Cook-off

Because of last weekend's weather our Chili Cook-off has been rescheduled. Please join us after the traditional worship service on **January 31** for a hearty chili lunch and warm fellowship.

Ash Wednesday Worship

Crievewood will begin the forty day season of Lent with an Ash Wednesday worship on **February 10th at 6:30 p.m.** in our sanctuary. Please join us on Ash Wednesday as we and other Christians worldwide begin this period of repentance and introspection.

Activities

JOY Club

On **Thursday, February 25** Joy Club will visit Edwin Warner Nature Center. Lunch will be at the Loveless Café after the program at the nature center. This activity is open to all members of the Creevewood family.

Tuesday Bible Study

Tuesday Bible Study, led by Jim Kannon, meets every Tuesday in the Wesley classroom. The group is starting a new book, *God Was Here and I Was Out to Lunch*, by James W. Moore, and to kick-off the study they will have a brunch with their discussion starting at **9:00 a.m. on February 3rd**. This is a great time to join, and new members are always welcome. If you come on February 3rd bring a dish to share.

Men's Breakfast

The United Methodist Men will hold their next monthly meeting on **Saturday, February 20** at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Please note that this meeting is one week later than normal because of the Valentine banquet. There will be the traditional Saturday breakfast followed by a program. All men are welcome; please invite a friend.

Wednesday Night live

Wednesday Night Live begins with dinner at 5:35 p.m. For reservations, please contact Jan at 615-832-2897 or turn in the reservation form in the Sunday bulletin. Upcoming menus are listed below.

January 27—Roast beef, potatoes, green beans, rolls, and dessert

Serving on 1/27—Fellowship Forum Class

February 3—Pork chops, hash brown casserole, mixed vegetables, white beans, and cornbread

Serving on 2/3 — New Creation/Hilltop Class

The cost for all weeks is \$8 per adult, \$5 per child 3-8 years old, free for ages 2 and under, and \$25 family max

Programs-

6:15-7:00 p.m.-Preschoolers meet in Room 116 for Art and Bible time.

6:15-7:00 p.m.-School-age children meet in the Choir room upstairs.

6:30-7:00 p.m.-Meditative service in the Builders' Classroom.

Peter will be speaking on the theme of baptism through February 3rd. Even if you cannot make it for dinner, join us for evening meditation, prayer, and praise at 6:30 p.m. in the Builders' classroom.

District Training

Nashville District Training has been **rescheduled to Saturday, February 13th**, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Calvary 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 in other churches, this is a good opportunity to learn and network. Classes include Evangelism, Financial Reporting, SPRC Training, Trustees, Increasing Energy Efficiency in the Church, Church Safety, and Creating a Climate for Innovation. To register, please contact the Nashville District Office at carol.ruckman@tnumc.com.

Chancel Choir

Chancel Choir is back in gear and will practice the third and fourth Wednesdays of the month at 7:07 p.m. Duos and Ensembles will also be formed to sing during the offertory on some Sundays. Music brightens the soul and is the perfect cure for winter doldrums. So join us for practice, and bring someone else with you.

Women's Retreat 2016

Theme: *BELOVED: Our Identity in Christ*

Registration for the 3rd Annual Beersheba Springs Women's Retreat has begun, and a group of women from Crieewood will be going! Please join us **March 18 and 19** for this one-night women's retreat on the mountain.

Details may be found here:

<http://www.beershebaassembly.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/2016-Womens-Retreat.pdf>

Registration forms are available in the narthex for your convenience. You may also print the online form and mail it in with your payment.

PLEASE let Kathryn Buffler know if you plan to attend so transportation can be coordinated.

Children's Corner

Nursery

January 31
February 7
February 14

1st Shift

Andy and Amy Freck
Randy and Susan Cortner
Joe and Chris Carter

2nd Shift

Mindy and Riley Morris
Randy and Susan Cortner
Kathryn Buffler/David Cate

Confirmation

A Confirmation Parent and Mentor meeting will be held in the Sanctuary during the Sunday School hour, this Sunday, **January 31**.