

The Messenger

Crievewood United Methodist Church

September 11, 2013

Pastor's Pen

2013 Charge Conference Pastor's Report

J. Peter van Eys

September 8, 2013

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In years past I approached the writing of my Charge Conference Pastor's Report as a sort of part English Class assignment in free verse, and part State of the Church address. I always had fun with it, whether or not the listening ears or reading eyes felt the ten minutes well spent. For 2013 though, our Bishop has provided questions that are to be "the centerpiece" of my report, in order to stimulate meaningful conversation with our District Superintendent. In other words, I should produce a script on point and brief.

At our recent Tennessee Annual Conference we were given the book, *Back to Zero*, by Gil Rendle and then heard the author share his thoughts on the future of the United Methodist Church. The basic premise that a shifting cultural landscape should cause us to return to our roots as a movement resonated with me as a hopeful course. At least as I interpret Matthew 16:18, the Church will exist as long as God intends, yet the vitality of a faith community has everything to do with its posture relative to the Holy Spirit. Which is, to say, its openness to God's movement in its midst.

Here at Crievewood, a significant study of the congregation took place in concert with the 50th anniversary of its founding. A resulting document provided concrete action steps and a defining mission statement, "*CUMC brings people to Christ by welcoming all who seek Christian Fellowship, Spiritual Growth, and Service to others*". Since 2006 we have followed the recommendations related to staff development and lay leadership structure, and are currently engaged in a building renovation and expansion project as envisioned. Guided by the wisdom and insight of past discernment, we are in a healthy and exciting season of life and ministry, not only by traditional quantifiers but by spiritual pulse. This faith community has drafted well God's movement.

Though architectural drawings and building specs will define our congregational life in the immediate, our focus must be on what God would have us do next. Demographic studies tell us that the Crieve Hall neighborhood is very stable, with a wonderful intergenerational mix. Younger couples have been moving in as houses turn over, but longstanding residents are living longer. Given that an intergenerational experience is one of the hallmark gifts of covenant life at Crievewood, we beautifully reflect and profoundly value a signal appeal of living in this neighborhood.

Furthermore, Crieve Hall folks are out and about walking, running, playing, and gathering. There is a strong Neighborhood Association that schedules regular opportunities for residents to get to know each other, as well as take care of each other. Crievewood UMC is an active partner in the Neighborhood Association, which again connects us to another factor in Crieve Hall's quality of life.

Considering our neighborhood a mission field, we need to strengthen our ministries with children and their families. Our building must be safe and inviting. Our ministries must be well designed and lovingly offered. Our community must be deeply rooted in covenant and extravagantly open to all. Certainly there is an opportunity to reach a large number of neighbors who are expecting or have recently become first time parents. The sublime nature of birth, the epiphany of responsibility for a child, and the challenges of parenthood stir in many not only a new understanding of God, but a new appreciation for the faith community.

In addition to nurturing the children and thereby supporting the parents, or providing parenting classes, our mission to young adults (single or married, with or without children) in Crieve Hall should slant toward active, short term opportunities that make a meaningful difference in the neighborhood and beyond. Too, we should design small group options for faith exploration and development that meet at times other than the traditional Sunday school hour.

The second key demographic, both in studies and through empirical evidence, is the senior population. With strong Sunday school classes and active UMM and UMW groups, creative lay leadership through our Nurture Committee, and the presence of multi-generational families, we have a thriving ministry with our older members. The growing edges are around the transitions that many

face and greater awareness of, and outreach to, new senior adults moving into the neighborhood.

I should emphasize that as a mission post in a mission field, it is essential that we continue to understand our facilities as a tool of ministry. A number of groups use our indoor and outdoor space, but it is imperative that we expand that commitment as faithful followers of Jesus Christ and as good neighbors in Crieve Hall.

There are two other points I want to make before ending this report. First, Crieve Hall is a very contained neighborhood. As Nashville continues to grow, the vitality of neighborhoods becomes a greater factor in the city's future; we are surely blessed with a wonderful location. However, we border to the south and west Brentwood and Oak Hill, and the particular challenges of affluence; we border to the north and east transitional neighborhoods, and the particular challenges of young professionals (Melrose and Nipper's Corner) and the immigrant population (Nolensville corridor). We certainly have contiguous mission fields to which God is calling us.

Second, and very much in line with Gil Rendle's thinking, I am convinced that our success at moving with God is tethered to how faithful we are to the life we claim, and that claims us, in the baptismal covenant. There exists at Crieve Hall an amazing fellowship of believers with an overflowing wealth of gifts. Truth be told, this church will be around for a while even if the current membership only shows up when it feels like it or measures its commitment by what it can get out of the relationship. That is really the greatest danger Crieve Hall faces. We are in an enviable position with people, resources, and location. We will soon have renovated and expanded space. We have a good reputation as a neighbor in Crieve Hall, and established connections to outreach ministries near and far. We feel healthy and our future seems bright, which should put us on notice to guard against complacency. The work of the Kingdom remains an urgent matter.

I recently visited Rothko Chapel in Houston, Texas. Mark Rothko was keen to use architecture and art to create a place where people of all faith could experience the holy. The brochure I was given affirmed his work by saying something to the effect, *he sought to do as close to nothing as possible...and succeeded beautifully*. Every congregation has members who live that very equation, so too do many clergy. Our starting point for living into the future is always the covenant. Each of us must take stock of our commitment to the example of Christ and the vows we make to each other and to God. At every moment that Crieve Hall is shaped and led by such faithfulness; it is a congregation soaring with the movement of the Holy Spirit.

Peter van Eys

Up-Coming Events

Teacher Appreciation Sunday, September 15

WE LOVE OUR TEACHERS!

Thank you to all who teach in our Sunday school program—children, youth, and adult classes. Your commitment to sharing the love of Christ through education is amazing!

AIM Spaghetti Dinner

The adults who are volunteering for Mountain Top are raising money to offset the cost of their mission trip by offering a delicious spaghetti dinner after the traditional service on **Sunday, September 15**. Some of the best Crieve Hall pasta cooks will be cooking up spaghetti, salad, French bread, and dessert. If you can't participate as part of the Mountain Top mission team but would like to support the mission, please plan on attending the spaghetti luncheon.

Men's Breakfast

The United Methodist Men will resume their monthly meetings on **Saturday, September 14**, at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. There is always a great breakfast, fellowship and program, so make an effort to come, then reach out and invite a guest to join you.

Crieve Hall Fall in the Hall

The annual Crieve Hall Fall in the Hall will be held at Crieve Hall from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 21, 2013. The event has music, food and beverages, and many booths and displays. Bring your lawn chair and chat with neighbors; enjoy the fun; but most of all, come and introduce your neighbors to the hospitality of Crieve Hall UMC.

Missions

How's Nashville

How's Nashville is a community-wide, collaborative, and inclusive effort to end chronic homelessness in Nashville.

In conjunction with How's Nashville, Creevewood Outreach Committee has agreed to provide WELCOME HOME KITS for Nashville's most vulnerable in the homeless community. These persons are being helped to move into permanent housing. As part of that move the Welcome Home Kits are being provided to help with establishing a new household. We would like to encourage each Sunday School class or group to assemble at least one Welcome Home Kit.

Habitat Build

Creevewood is supporting the Methodist Habitat Build again this year. If you would like to participate in the actual build, please contact either Don Proctor at 615-832-5135 or Joe Buffler at 615-351-0601. **Our day to work on the build will be Sunday, September 29th.**

Community Care Fellowship Annual Fund Raising Breakfast

CCF is having its annual Fundraiser Breakfast at Brentwood UMC at 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 26, 2013. Come and hear about new CCF projects and accomplishments such as the stories of success that people have had in finding jobs, the children's programs which operated during the summer months and the new one that started this fall, and our new involvement with Trinity UMC youth and congregation. Please help us celebrate the past and new adventures that you have helped make possible. If you would like to attend, please contact Ken Pinkston or Tom Lively.

A Thanksgiving Wish

Our dream for Creevewood is to provide a cozy, warm, inviting lunch for people in our neighborhood who may be alone or in need on Thanksgiving Day. The need could be emotional, financial, social...it doesn't matter. We just want to be a place of peace and fun for our neighbors.

Please pray earnestly, and contact Leigh Ann at lac723@comcast.net or 615-833-4528 if you are willing to help us with our First Annual Creevewood Thanksgiving! We would love help from ALL ages, and we hope this becomes a family tradition...serving others and creating an experience we will all treasure. Come serve and celebrate with us.

Volunteers will be needed Thanksgiving Week to prepare food and desserts; Thanksgiving Day we will need servers and clean-up crews.

Activities

JOY Club

The JOY Club is a group of mainly older adults meeting monthly for an outing that includes a Dutch treat meal and an experience at a location in Middle Tennessee. The meetings are usually the 4th Thursday of each month. A van is provided for \$3.00 per person. To set up a reservation see Jean McCurdy. Reservations must be made by the Sunday before the outing. Photos taken during the year will be judged in the November meeting and prizes will be given to best in show.

September: Thursday, September 26, lunch will be a buffet at Montgomery Bell State Park purchased at the senior rate of \$8.50 plus tax and tip. We will leave the church at 9:15 a.m.; seating for lunch begins at 11:00 a.m. Please have your reservations to Jean McCurdy by September 19th, and as always bring \$3 for the van.

October: Thursday, October 24, members will travel to Clarksville to visit the Custom House. The outing includes lunch (cost of \$10) and a tour of Clarksville. Gather at the church Thursday morning by 9:15 a.m. Please register with Jean McCurdy by October 18. Bring \$3 for the van.

Fifth Sunday Potluck

September is a five Sunday month, and the Adult Council is sponsoring a fifth Sunday potluck luncheon immediately after the traditional service. Find your favorite fall recipe and plan on joining your Creevewood family for lunch and fellowship on Sunday, September 29.

Wednesday Night Fellowship Fall 2013



- *Dinner is served from 5:15-5:50 p.m., and adult programs will run from 6-6:45 p.m.
- *On September 11, the WNF program is ***Aging Without Illness*** which will be led by Susan Bruey, RN MSN CHC. On September 18, Kathryn Spry, Clinic Coordinator, will speak about ***Justice for Our Neighbors***.
- *Children's choirs will begin at **6:00 p.m.**, but all leaders will be in the rooms to receive children at 5:55 p.m.
- *KFC will meet at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday nights
- *Gathering Music practice is at 6:00 p.m., and rehearsals for Chancel Choir are at 7:00 p.m.
- *PLEASE make your dinner reservation by Tuesday, NOON, if you do not have a standing reservation.

Tonight is our second Wednesday Night Fellowship, and we are excited so many of you made it last week. We hope to see even more this week!

Please note that **if you have children in Kid's or Preschool Choirs**, our new start time for choir is 6:00 p.m. instead of 5:45 p.m. We will dismiss all children from Fellowship Hall at **5:55 p.m.** This allows our adult program to begin promptly at 6:00 p.m. with the transition having already occurred. **Choir leaders will be in the choir rooms at 5:55 to receive your children**, so please be sure you leave your child with the adult leader rather than dropping off early.

We have yet one more request of those who have children. The stage ramps, the rails, and the table and chair racks provide too many opportunities for injury to our children. Also, we have many older members who attend our dinner who have limited mobility. In order to keep any of our less mobile or not so speedy members from falling and to prevent injuries to our children, please keep your children with you at the table and escort them to get their desserts. If children are finished eating and must get up, please keep them in the back of the fellowship hall, but out of the youth room and off the table and chair racks. Thanks for your help.

WNF Menus

- Wednesday, September 11—Roast, potatoes, carrots, garden salad, rolls, and dessert
- Wednesday, September 18—Potato bar, salad bar, and dessert
- Wednesday, September 25—Poppy seed chicken, rice, broccoli, cranberries, rolls, and dessert

United Methodist Women General Meeting

Saturday, September 28, at 9:00 a.m., the UMW will meet in Fellowship Hall for brunch, fellowship, a short business meeting, and a program you will not want to miss. Mark your calendar and make your plans to join other women of your church—men are also welcome. You do NOT have to be a member of a Circle to join us for this event.

Kay Strom of Mercy Ministries will share information about a vital program located in our own backyard!!! Since 1983, Mercy Ministries has restored hope to thousands of desperate young women seeking freedom from life-controlling issues—eating disorders; self-harm; drug and alcohol addictions; depression; unplanned pregnancy; and physical and sexual abuse including sex trafficking.

Mercy Ministries is a free-of-charge program, and is solely funded through generous donations from individuals, businesses, churches and ministries. They are dedicated to transforming the lives of generations searching for truth and wholeness.

Mercy Ministries exists to provide opportunities for young women to experience God's unconditional love, forgiveness, and life-transforming power. Join other women of your church to learn what is happening in your own backyard.



Children's Corner

Nursery Schedule

9/15/13
9/22/13
9/29/13

Toddler Nursery

Chris and Kelly Cates
Elise and Brad Warren
Jason and Alison Stoner

Infant Nursery

Ken and Anne Pinkston
Susan and Randy Cortner
Renee Hovis and Michelle Hussung

Kids For Christ

KFC , for 5th and 6th graders, will meet on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m. Come out and give us a try. We're lots of fun!!



Come and join
the fun!

Saturday,
October 26



Youth

The pumpkins are scheduled to arrive on Sunday, October 13.....

Other Items



In the tradition of Francis of Assisi there will be a short service on Sunday, October 6, at 5:00 p.m. to bless our animals and pets. Please assemble on the church grounds to the west of Fellowship Hall.

Looking Ahead

The Fall Season has begun and the holiday season will be upon us before we blink an eye. So, please begin to prepare for the Cool Yule celebration on Sunday, December 1st at 6:30 p.m. Contact Cheresse Brooks at 615-957-3615 and let her know what piece or presentation you would like to share at this celebration. We want to begin early this year and really pull together a wonderful event that warms our hearts and celebrates the true reason for the season!!!

Building Update

On September 5th, the Metro Board of Zoning approved our renovation and expansion project.