

The Messenger

Crievewood United Methodist Church

November 26, 2014

Pastor's Pen

Commitment and Justice and God's Kingdom

I awoke to a Winnie the Pooh blustery day and while drinking coffee watched the arrival of a Vermeer sky. I welcome days that channel my inner Dutch. Yet the greater stirring and brighter light were within as I reflected upon our time together the day before. What a wonderful Sunday morning!

It began early as it usually does; Gray unlocked the building and turned on the lights. Crievewood folks trickled in, members of the Hume-Fogg Magnet High School arrived, and a Stop Hunger Now truck pulled up; soon our fellowship hall was transformed into a work station for the packaging of 10,000 meals. Over 100 people, with beautiful intergenerational teamwork, assembled, measured, weighed, sealed, counted, boxed, and gonged (yes we rang a gong after every 1,000) meals that will travel from Hogan Road to children and families around the world who live with food insecurity.

Following the packaging event we moved to the sanctuary for a worship service liturgically designed to celebrate Christ the King Sunday and to consecrate our financial commitments to Crievewood. The Gospel reading from Matthew included the verse "Lord, when was it we saw you hungry and gave you food?" (Matthew 25:37) sublimely linking our morning deeds and proclaimed Word. We closed by singing "I Know Whom I Have Believed" while offering our commitment cards at the chancel rail, declaring in voice and through signature our faith and covenant. God has used, is using, and will use us, the Crievewood congregation, to offer Christ and build the Kingdom.

The wind eased up as the day progressed; clouds eventually pushed out as well. By evening a different tempest formed in Ferguson, MO and across the nation when news was released that a Grand Jury decided not to indict the police officer who shot and killed Michael Brown. Many have been on edge anticipating a decision and the reactions that would follow; the day arrived.

I have many thoughts about the crucible in which the nation finds itself over the August 9th shooting of a black teenager by a white police officer in a St. Louis suburb, I bet you do too; conversation is in order. However for this column, I would simply note the prevailing call for justice by all, no matter one's understanding of what transpired in that fatal encounter. And I am reminded that the cry for justice is an ancient one, a faith-filled and faithful one. It is a core characteristic which not only advances and announces the Kingdom but ultimately distinguishes it. Justice is the charge of the prophet and the longing of the heart as we enter another season of Advent.

Justice is a legal and theological concept addressing courts and punishments, money and resources, land and economics, power and powerlessness, in other words, justice is fundamental to everything that makes for the well-being, security, wholeness, and right relationships among people, structures, and systems. It and love are the lifeblood of covenant with God and neighbor, as God intends.

So, Advent 2014 is upon us. Pray we shall, believe we must, commit we have, convinced that justice is a load bearing wall in the house of the Lord. Packaging meals together, worshipping together, and setting aside a portion of our financial resources together were acts of faith that not only enlightened my soul and drafted the Holy Spirit, but conjoined me with the sacred work of bringing all God's people into right relationship.

On the matter of justice we have a powerful word and compelling vision; our laments serve to strengthen our hopes. I look forward to seeing you Sunday for the "Hanging of the Greens Service", in which we bless the signs and symbols that point us to Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Gray will turn the lights on, and together we will seek peace and justice and righteousness; in short, the full coming of God's Kingdom. I bet they ring a gong there.

Peter van Eys

Up-Coming Events



Unplugged

On Wednesday, **December 10**, please join us for “a dinner and a play” in Fellowship Hall. The meal will begin at 5:15 p.m. Come and enjoy poppy seed chicken, rice, green beans, rolls, and a variety of special desserts.

To help us plan, please RSVP through the bulletin reservation form or by calling the church office at 615-832-2897.

The cost of the meal is \$10 per person or \$20 per family.

The curtain rises at 6:15 p.m. as children of Crieewood present **An Unplugged Christmas**. In this musical the children have entered a contest sponsored by a local TV station for the biggest, brightest, Christmas show anywhere. Will they win? Join us on December 10 and find out!

Parents’ Night Out

Once again, Kathryn Buffler has graciously agreed to organize a Parents’ Night Out for our Crieewood families on **Friday, December 5** from 6-9 p.m. The youth will be assisting, and fun is the number one priority!

In order for us to properly staff our evening, we need your **RSVP NOW**. Please RSVP directly to Kathryn via email at kwbuffler@att.net. Please include your child(ren)’s name(s), AGE, and any allergies. The cost is canned goods for Second Harvest.

Cool Yule

Please join us for Crieewood’s holiday tradition of Cool Yule on Sunday, December 7, at 6:00 p.m. Contact Barry Coggins if you would like to perform.

Missions

UMC #Giving Tuesday

December 2

Methodists have united to provide an alternative to the consumer driven shopping traditions of Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Start your holiday season by giving instead of getting by supporting United Methodist missions and missionaries through this general holiday advance called #Giving Tuesday. Through this advance you can give to the overall work of Global Missions, the overall work of UMCOR, a specific UM missionary, or to one of the 850 different advances of the church.

Give online at www.umcmiissions.org/give. You may phone in a gift by calling 1-888-252-6174, or you can submit a check through the church. Make your check out to CUMC and designate in the memo line #Giving Tuesday followed by any specifically designated advance or missionary, for example, #Giving Tuesday- UMCOR or #Giving Tuesday-Ebola Response.

While people can give any time of the year to these various missions, giving on this one special day not only supports the various United Methodist projects, but allows us to give witness that Christmas is truly a season to celebrate God’s love for us through cheerful giving to others.

Angel Tree

Our Christmas Angels will soon be hanging on the tree near the church chancel. Please select an angel, making sure to record your name on the sheet on the clipboard beside the number which corresponds to the one shown on your selected angel ornament. Angel Tree gifts should be unwrapped and returned to the church with the Angel tag. Packages are due back at the church **by December 3**. Thank you for participating in this Christmas mission.

Stop Hunger Now Event

For the second year in a row, we honored Commitment Sunday not only with our monetary pledges, but with hands-on service in partnership with Stop Hunger Now. What a joy it was to see members of all ages work together to help those in need. With the help of over 100 people, we packaged 10,152 meals in just one hour! The Outreach committee extends sincere thanks to each of you for making our second annual Stop Hunger Now event a success.

Volunteers Needed

Could you give a few hours of your time to make this Christmas a more joyful one for Davidson County children from low-income families? Sixty-first Avenue UMC in west Nashville is in need of help with its annual “Last Minute” Christmas Toy Store.

Volunteers are needed for a variety of tasks Thursday, December 18th through Saturday, the 20th from 11:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. and Sunday, the 21st from 12:30-6:30 p.m. We are urging people to arrange their schedules so that they can stay for the whole time if at all possible. We have a special need for bi-lingual (English-Spanish) volunteers.

Also, we have a special need for gifts or gift cards for teenagers since most of our donations are for younger children.

The “Last Minute Toy Store” is for families who were not able to register for assistance in advance at Bethlehem Center, Salvation Army, etc. It is a cooperative effort of Sixty-first Avenue UMC and the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves’ “Toys for Tots” Program. Last year 4,973 children from close to 1,600 families received toys, books, candy canes, and oranges through this program.

If you can help out with this ministry, please call Sixty-first Avenue UMC at 615-292-7184 or email 61avenueumc@bellsouth.net.

Additional information is available at www.lastminutetoystore.com.

TP Sunday

As part of our ongoing support of Community Care Fellowship the Outreach Committee has reinstated **TP Sunday**. Please mark your calendars to bring toilet paper, any size package, on the **first Sunday of every month**. Packages may be left in the narthex of the church. Please join with us in supporting the homeless of Nashville. The next TP Sunday is **December 7**.

Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to celebrate God’s grace in your life or honor a loved one, consider purchasing a **white** poinsettia to be used in decorating the sanctuary for Christmas worship. The cost is \$12 per plant. Envelopes may be found in the narthex. Please place your flower envelope in the offering plate or bring it to the office. The deadline for ordering poinsettias is December 14.

Activities

JOY Club

The JOY Club is a group that meets monthly for an outing that includes a Dutch treat meal and an experience at a location in Middle Tennessee. In December the Joy Club outing is a trip to Chaffin’s Barn Theater to view *Tuna Christmas*. The group will leave the church on Thursday, **December 18**, at 10:00 a.m. Lunch will consist of a boxed lunch for \$8.50 or sack lunch that you bring with you. **Prior reservations are required.**

UMM

The United Methodist Men will hold their next monthly meeting on **Saturday, December 13**, at 8:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. The breakfast will feature country ham which is a tradition at the Christmas breakfast. The South End UMC Men’s Choir will perform adding to the festive atmosphere of the morning.

And.....

The UMM will also sponsor a toy drive for the Sixty-first Avenue Toy Store. New unwrapped toys and other age-appropriate gifts in the \$10—\$20 price range are needed for ages newborn to eighteen.

Buying gifts for teens is difficult. The organizers of “Last Minute Toy Store” encourage gift cards for teens that can be placed in stockings like a card from stores such as Target, Walmart, Amazon, Best Buy, iTunes, Old Navy, etc. If you prefer to buy specific items for teens choose items such as perfumes or colognes, bath/body products, portable music players, make-up kits, Titans or Predators stuff, ear buds, or skateboards.

A place to drop off toys is still to be determined, but we wish to encourage everyone at CrieveWood to take part. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Christmas Caroling



Come carol with us Sunday, **December 21st** at 4:00 p.m.. We will meet in the fellowship hall to hand out caroling books before traveling to the homes of some of our neighbors and members. All ages and singing abilities welcome!

Youth and Young Adults

Mailbox Decorations

If you are not on the list for mailbox decoration and would still like to get your mailbox done, please email Steph this week (steph@crievewoodumc.org). We will be decorating the mailboxes on Sunday, **November 30th**.

Children's Corner

Nursery Schedule

	8:00-10:30 a.m. Shift	10:30 a.m.-noon Shift
11/30/14	Christy and Kellyanne Shaw	Ali Stoner
12/7/14	Kim Boyce and Adele White	Sidney Garner
12/14/14	Mindy and Camden Morris	Rainey White