

The Messenger

Crievewood United Methodist Church

December 10, 2014

Pastor's Pen

Hope

Our sanctuary is beautifully appointed for the Advent season, walk past the dumpster through the front doors, across the narthex and you enter holy space. Whether you come to the sanctuary on Sunday or through the week, I invite you to spend time there in quiet reflection; notice the banners, the blue paraments, and the many symbols of Christ Jesus. Words, images, colors, and sounds prime us to receive good news from long ago.

In my own time of meditation I was drawn to the word **Hope** on the banners for the first Sunday of Advent as well as liturgical cloth from the Advent wreath stand. Seems to me that God is nudging us to understand we, the Church, are in the business of hope. In light of international and national events that threaten to crush the spirit, reclaiming the power of hope is a faith imperative.

George Frederic Watts, a 19th Century British painter, created a series of allegorical works including one titled *Hope* (Tate Gallery, London). It depicts a young woman sitting on a globe, hunched over and blindfolded, playing a lyre with all its strings broken but one. The mist around the globe and the soft, dark colors evoke sadness, yet the intent of Watts has struck its chord across generations.

In his sermon *Shattered Dreams* Martin Luther King, Jr. referenced this painting to balance the realities of the present with the hope that undergirded his ministry. Last year following Nelson Mandela's death, Gordon Brown (British Prime Minister from 2007-2010) said in a speech to the House of Commons:

Hung by Mandela on the bare walls of that bleak prison cell was a facsimile of the British painting by a famous artist, Frederic Watts. The haunting image he had in this prison cell was of a blinded girl sitting on top of a globe of the world. The painting, entitled "Hope", is about the boldness of a girl to believe that, even when blinded and even with a broken harp and only one string, she could still play music. Her and Mandela's belief was that even in the most difficult and bleak of times, even when things seem hopeless, there could still be hope. (December 9, 2013)

And with President Barack Obama in Nashville today, I should note that Watt's "*Hope*" painting has been identified as a favorite of his. (www.telegraph.co.uk, Alastair Sooke)

It really is a provocative painting. Emily Dickinson penned that "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul, and sings the tune without the words, and never stops at all". Both Watts and Dickinson connect the inner strength, conviction, impulse of hope to music; the tune of faith deep within and the making of music even with broken strings.

In I Peter 3:15 we are told to be ready to make an accounting of the hope that is in us. The Advent season provides opportunity for us to offer such testimony to one another and the world; it will certainly be a prominent theme in our worship experience Sunday. There is so much in the world that grieves the heart of God and knocks people of faith to their knees. Yet, because God acted and incarnate love was born, we, Crievewod UMC, exist to proclaim and sing and live hope.

Peter van Eys

Up-Coming Events

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 are welcome. Please bring a snack to share.

Celebrate the Season

The Chancel Choir will share a musical gift with us on Sunday, **December 21st**, at the traditional service as the choir presents their Christmas cantata **Celebrate the Season**. Nursery and Children's Church will be offered. Please plan to attend this special Christmas worship.

Christmas Eve Service

Join us at 5:00 p.m. in the sanctuary on Christmas Eve. This family friendly service is open to all ages and offers opportunities for children to participate in the service, so there is no nursery available. Don't miss the beauty of family, fellowship, and worship in the candle lit sanctuary adorned to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Missions

The Last Minute Toy Store

The UMM will 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. To buy for ages 0-4, it is easiest to shop the store displays labeled for that age group.

Purchasing 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.

Please drop off toys in the box provided in the narthex. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

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.

Crievewood UMC Scholarship

The students of Martin Methodist College send Christmas greetings and grateful appreciation to the members of Crievewood who contribute each year toward the sponsorship of a student scholarship at Martin. This year's recipient of the scholarship is Benjamin N. Forbes, a sophomore with a business administration major whose hometown is Gallatin, Tennessee.

Volunteers

Volunteers are still needed to work the 61st Avenue UMC Last Minute Toy Store. If you can help on December 18-20th, please call 615-292-7184 or email 61avenueumc@bellsouth.net.

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.](#)

A visit to Puckett's grocery and restaurant in Leiper's Fork is planned on [January 22](#). Puckett's is a family restaurant established in the 1950's that still operates today and focuses on providing Southern comfort food accompanied by hospitality and country music. If you wish to attend, please make a reservation with Jean McCurdy by January 18. Then arrive at the church that Thursday by 10:15 a.m. There will be a van for transportation.

Blood Pressure Check

You can have your blood pressure checked the second Sunday of each month after the traditional service in the New Journey classroom. Please take just a few minutes to protect your health.

Choir Practice

	Gathering	Chancel Choir
December 10	after the children's program	7:00 p.m.
December 17	6:00 p.m.	6:00 p.m.
December 24	no practice	no practice
December 28	7:15 a.m.	—
December 31	no practice	no practice

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.

A Christmas Concert

If you want a break from the Christmas bustle, come to the sanctuary on Monday night, [December 15th](#) at 7:00 p.m. Carolyn Binkley and some of her friends from Wisdom Chorale will entertain you with a variety of Christmas songs.

A Celebration of Service

Please join us after the traditional service on [January 11, 2015](#), at a reception for Sheryl Roos. After many years of service to the children and parents of Crielwood, Sheryl has retired from the Nursery Coordinator's position. Please come and share your appreciation.

Other Items

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be delayed until December 31st because the regular newsletter cycle would put the second newsletter of December on Christmas Eve when the office is closed. The normal two week cycle will resume in January beginning on January 14.

2014 Contributions

All 2014 contributions should be turned into the church office by [noon on Wednesday, December 31, 2014](#), in order to be counted in the 2014 tax year. Please do not wait until the last minute. Be aware that mail delivery has been slower due to holiday volume.

Children's Corner

Nursery Schedule

12/14/14
12/21/14
12/28/14

8:00-10:30 a.m. Shift

Mindy and Camden Morris
Tracey and Jared Lee
Susan and Randy Cortner

10:30 a.m.-noon Shift

Rainey White
Peggy Cates
Susan Cortner and Glynnis Boyce

