

# The Messenger

Crievewood United Methodist Church

December 18, 2013

## Pastor's Pen

### God's Reality

A cultural phenomenon over the last quarter of a century has been the "reality TV show". Many trace the current concept to a Dutch show *Nummer 28* that aired in 1991, in which a cast of strangers were put together in the same environment for an extended period of time, with the drama that ensued providing the show. Reality shows have an overall script, but the individual participants respond, make choices, and act in both expected and unexpected ways. Part of the narration occurs when participants reflect on what they have experienced.

I recall a few years ago that a Nashville woman participated in a season of the *Amazing Race*. I learned from a newspaper article that she had won several beauty contests, and had come to Nashville to make it as a singer. When asked why she signed on for the *Amazing Race* she replied that she wanted to show people there was more to her than just outer beauty.

I can accept that. She is not the first (or the last) to engage opportunities for corrective realities. I entered Boston University School of Theology for many reasons, including a desire to offer a corrective reality. After matriculating through college and Divinity School without being mistaken for a serious student, I wanted to earn a degree as a diligent and committed one.

All of us can look back over the year and identify moments or encounters or decisions that we wish had unfolded differently. Such is the human experience, even when outcomes are predictable. Too, as a global community we know the realities of violence, war, greed, and exploitation; the breakdown of civility, charity, and compassion. There is a shared existential angst for a corrective reality.

One might approach the Christmas story as that corrective. The incarnation is God's intentional act to change the pattern of our lives according to the script of salvation. It is easy to read the first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke and hear how the realities of life changed for Mary. Yes there were the familiar faces of Joseph, Elizabeth, and Zechariah, and the known names like Herod, but suddenly her life was tethered to a host of angels, shepherds, inn keepers, visitors from the east, and a menagerie of animals. From the moment the angel Gabriel tells Mary she is to bear God's child her reality changes.

When we let her story enter into our life story, we join Mary in the corrective reality of human life according to God's Kingdom. Not that the human condition would be without sin death, tragedy, misfortune, or days of joy and success, but that God acted in such a way to be present with us in all circumstances. And, the corrective reality offered by the birth of Jesus engenders hope that humans will chose to enter into the fullness of God's Kingdom, where peace and justice and righteousness are defining characteristics.

In the end the story of the birth of Jesus is the story of God at home here, with us, as one of us, taking on flesh and bone and submitting to the nature and aches, the limits and the graces of mortal bodies. The story of the birth is one we cherish in song and art; it is intimate and mysterious. It is the provocative insistence that God can and will break into our lives, and the daring proclamation that God's reality is the eternal reality.

I look forward to our Christmas Eve service, December 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. when we will celebrate the past, present, and future of God's love and God's Kingdom and God's peace made known through a child in Bethlehem. And we will pray for the day when all people know that reality. May you have a blessed and Merry Christmas!

Peter van Eys

## Up-Coming Events

### One Worship Service

Please mark your calendar that on **Sunday, December 22, there is only one worship service** at 10:45 a.m. The Chancel Choir will share a musical gift as they present their Christmas cantata *Bethlehem's Child*. Nursery and Children's Church will be offered. Please plan to participate in this 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. Don't miss the beauty of fellowship and worship in the candle lit sanctuary adorned to celebrate the birth of Christ.

### District Training

Do you have a question about what you are supposed to do as a newly appointed committee member in 2014? Or maybe you're a veteran member with some questions as to how other churches handle certain problems. Get some answers at a district training to be held **Saturday, January 11, 9:30 a.m. at Brentwood UMC**. Four classes will be conducted including Healthy Congregations led by Rev. Charles "Skip" Armistead, Connecting with Our neighbors, Financial Reporting, and Staff/Pastor/Parish Committee Training.

### Bible Study

Beginning Wednesday, **January 8, 2014, at 6:00 p.m.**, we will begin a study using Jennie Allen's *Stuck-the Places We Get Stuck and the God Who Sets Us Free*. If you are interested in ordering a book, please let Leigh Ann Cate know by December 28. You may also pick up your own book or order from Amazon. The group will meet weekly for 8 weeks.

### Confirmation Classes

Students who are currently in 6th grade or above will receive an invitation to participate in our 2014 Confirmation class. We will be sending out information and the schedule in the next couple of weeks, so watch your mailboxes. If you know your child is participating, plan on being in the traditional service Easter Sunday, April 20, for Confirmation Day.

### VBS Director Needed Now

VBS will be held June 23-26, 2014, and we are in search of Directors to help us plan and get ready. If you are interested in serving as a co-director, please contact Leigh Ann Cate.

## Missions

### Christmas Tree Project

After the Christmas holiday the youth will be picking up Christmas trees on **Sunday, January 5**. If you would like the youth to dispose of your Christmas tree, please email Steph ([steph@crievewoodumc.org](mailto:steph@crievewoodumc.org)) or leave a message at the church. You may make donations for this service to the youth. All money collected this year will be given to the Building Fund.

### Safe Haven Coordinator Needed

We would like to thank Marjorie Wyatt for her past service as the coordinator for the Safe Haven meals. We need someone to fill this position for 2014. The job involves contacting Safe Haven late in the week before the Saturday that CUMC hosts to determine the number to be served and scheduling and reminding the class that is responsible to let them know how much food to prepare. If anyone can help, please contact Jennifer Bizwell or Blake Leyers.

### Outreach Committee Announcement

Reservations and deposits have been made for 20 participants to serve the **Bahamas Methodist Habitat** mission for the week of **July 27 – August 2, 2014**. The cost to participate will be \$500 per person plus airfare. This mission experience is open to anyone,

though youth who have not completed the 9<sup>th</sup> grade will need an adult family member to accompany them. The 20 spots are first come, first served and you can secure your reservation with a \$100 deposit. Act fast! Historically, the 20 spots fill quickly. Please contact Blake Leyers or Jennifer Bizwell with any questions. For more information about Bahamas Methodist Habitat, check out their webpage: [www.methodisthabitat.org](http://www.methodisthabitat.org).

## 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 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month. Photos taken during the year will be judged in the November meeting and prizes will be given to best in show.

**Because of scheduling difficulties the planned events in early 2014 have been shifted.**

**January, 2014: Thursday, January 23**, JOY Club will tour the Sumner Crest Winery. Meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. Lunch will be included in the day's activities. Please make a reservation with Jean McCurdy by January 19, 2014.

**February: Thursday, February 27**, participants will meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. and travel to Sumner County to hear the history and tour the three buildings at Mansker's Fort, 1779 frontier station. The senior rate entrance fee is \$7 per person. Lunch will be at the Chop House. Please make a reservation with Jean McCurdy by February 23.

**March: Thursday, March 27**, members will meet at the church at 10:00 a.m. and visit the Davidson County Music City Center (not confirmed). Lunch will follow at the Murfreesboro Road Piccadilly. Please make a reservation for the outing by March 23, 2014.

### Lunch and Learn

#### Know the Metro Fire and 911 Center

Please mark your calendar for **Thursday, January 28, from 11:15 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** Over lunch the Fire department will present a program in Fellowship Hall to help us learn about the services that they provide for citizens of Davidson County. Participants will be able to order a boxed meal of either baked ham or turkey from Honey Baked Ham. Please watch the newsletter for further details.

### UMM

The United Methodist Men will hold their next monthly meeting on **Saturday, January 11**, 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.

### WNF Dinner and Program

The Spring session of WNF dinner and program will begin on Wednesday, January 8. Children will begin Children's Choir starting on January 15. See you in 2014!



## Children's Corner

### Nursery Schedule

12/22/13  
12/29/13

#### Toddler Nursery

Susan and Randy Cortner  
Jason and Ali Stoner

#### Infant Nursery

Kim Boyce and Helper  
Chuck and Betsy Bean

### Thank You

Thank you to Ann Freeman, Gwen Morrison, Kristy Thornton, and Jeffery White, as well as all our church members and child care families who came out to support "Christmas at Crieewood," the joint effort between the church and our child care center. Our Fellowship Hall was packed, and everyone had a great time watching the children sing, sharing a meal, playing games, creating crafts, and visiting with Santa. What a gift we have in our child care center!

## Other Items

### Contributions

All 2013 contributions should be turned into the church office by [noon on Monday, December 30, 2013](#), in order to be counted in the 2013 tax year.

### Newsletter

Because of the way the Christmas and New Year holidays occur, the next newsletter will be delayed one week and will be distributed on Wednesday, January 8. We will return to the normal two week schedule after that.

