

The Messenger

Pastor's Pen:

November 16, 2011

Keeping Pace

My High School Cross Country coaches stressed, among other things, keeping pace. It made objective sense as strategy, run smoothly and evenly with some proximity to the strongest runners; but not so much as a subjective experience. The trained and not so trained eye could see that pace was hardly my primary challenge; the speed of my running was, by all measurable means, my problem. There is the old joke about the woman who sang beautiful operatic arias, but when complimented declared, "I can't sing, but I do know how to imitate those who can". Maybe if I had tried to imitate the one in the front of the pack I could have looked like a great runner, or at least kept pace; oh well, those halcyon days are over. Now I just like to hang out with runners; I may win a marathon vicariously.

I am not totally off the hook with this pace thing though, since I believe it is a spiritual discipline for all who seek to be faithful followers of Jesus. Consider this, last Sunday in the late service we participated again in the Sacrament of Baptism, proclaiming and embracing the covenant we share as brothers and sisters in Christ. Through baptism, Oakley Jane Berry was "initiated into Christ's holy church...incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation...and given new birth through water and the Spirit" (*UMH p. 39*). We the congregation reaffirmed our commitment to Christ and made promises to nurture this child in the faith by our "teaching and example" (*UMH p. 40*) and through "our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the church" (*UMH p. 43*). Something divine and amazing happened, and continues to be happening, because of that sacramental moment.

Prioritizing both the means of grace that nourish our souls and the opportunities presented to us to be a means of grace to another requires commitment, practice, sacrifice, and intentionality. It is the course laid out before us in our journey from life to life, and to keep pace, or to grow in imitating Christ, is a profound calling and a significant challenge.

There is another faith matter concerning keeping pace. We worship a God who is dynamic, active, creative! The same imperative to keep pace as an individual member of the body of Christ is true for the organic whole as well; God is ever about building and calling into being the full Kingdom. It is our task to keep pace with the Holy Spirit as it moves this congregation into the future God has planned for it.

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There is ample evidence of God's movement in this place. The positive energy in worship services, the gift of intergenerational fellowship, commitments consecrated to God, and the vision of our Long Range plan, all reflect the Holy Spirit at work. With Thanksgiving Day on the horizon, I know you will want to offer a special word of gratitude to God for Crievewood UMC. Moreover, with Advent Season upon us we cycle back around to the story that captivates our heart and sustains our faith, "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son". (*John 3:16*)

Drawing strength from God and from one another, may we keep pace with the movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst, and may we keep pace in living the covenant vows by imitating Christ.

Peter van Eys

Poinsettias

This Christmas we will again have the opportunity to remember or honor a loved one by purchasing a poinsettia to be used in decorating the sanctuary. The cost is \$12 per plant. Envelopes may be found in the Narthex or in your bulletin on November 27th. Please place your flower envelope in the offering plate or bring it to the office. The deadline for ordering poinsettias will be December 4th.

You may take your poinsettia home on Sunday, December 18, or after the Christmas Eve service on December 24th.



Hanging of the Greens

Our Crievewood Kids will be offering a gift of service in the decorating of our sanctuary with the Hanging of the Greens. This year we will adorn the sanctuary on Sunday morning at the traditional service on November 27, the first Sunday in Advent. We will also be blessing the beautiful Christmas scrapbooks which were made this past year. Please join us for this colorful worship.

Missions

Jesus Closet

Saturday, November 19th

Nolensville UMC

This project provides children from low income Hispanic families with gifts of clothes and toys for Christmas. Jesus Closet is now collecting new and gently used children’s clothes, infant through size 16. There is a special need of coats. New and gently used toys are also needed. Any donations would be greatly appreciated. Checks should be made out to Nolensville UMC, and items may be left in the Wesley Class. Call Jennifer Bizwell (832-6121) if you need items picked up.

Angel Tree

The Angel Tree is up in the Narthex. If you would like to participate in this Christmas mission, please take an ornament from the tree. Remember to register your selection on the clipboard on the table beside the tree. All gifts should be unwrapped and returned with the Angel tag. Packages are due back at the church before December 4.

UMW Christmas Stockings

Sunday, November 20, the United Methodist Women will be collecting money for the Christmas Toy Store at Bethlehem Center to support families in need. Small stockings will be hanging at the end of each pew in the sanctuary and will be set on the tables in The Gathering. Please place your donation in the stocking nearest you, but please don’t put this donation in the offering plate as it is deposited into a separate UMW fund. Thank you in advance for your support of this mission.



Sweet Treats Notice!

Effective November 20, Charlie’s Homemade Caramel Corn will be available in the narthex once a month. All it takes to enjoy this treat is a donation to the Youth’s Bahamas trip and other projects. The honor system will be in place.

More Missions

The Last-Minute Toy Store

The United Methodist Men are sponsoring this long-standing worthy program that provides toys and other gifts to tens of thousands of low-income children and youth who live in Davidson County. Please bring your unwrapped gifts for the Last-Minute Toy Store and place them in the container at the front door of the church. The greatest needs are for small children (0-4) and for teens.

UMW Annual Christmas Meeting

The United Methodist Women invite the women of the church to our annual Christmas meeting. Our speaker, Myriam Cortes, is the Language Coordinator for Hispanic Methodist churches in Middle Tennessee. She will be sharing her family stories and traditions of celebrating the Christmas season.

Be sure to join us Saturday, December 3rd, from 10:00-12:00 in the Builders’ classroom for a unique look at Christmas in the Hispanic culture! There will be refreshments served at the meeting, but there will be no brunch.

Long Range Planning

Our architect and Long Range Planning group have presented a plan for the expansion of the church to Administrative Council. This plan is printed on a display board which you can view at the church. There will also be one or two sessions scheduled to discuss the plan and answer questions from the congregation. Look for the times of those sessions in upcoming bulletins and newsletters.

Check it Out!

**Our New Website will
come online on November 27**

Stewardship Update

	2011	2012
Commitments	103	129
Amount Pledged	\$382,700	\$486,872

Wednesday Nights

November 16—*Stillwell*

Stillwell reaches out to homeless communities, raising money with benefit concerts and worship services. All proceeds from the sale of their CD, *One Way Home*, go to groups such as Campus for Human Development, Room in the Inn, Habitat for Humanity, CCSI, and Safe Haven. Join us and consider buying a CD as part of your Thanksgiving celebration.

November 23—*Happy Thanksgiving! - No WNF Activities*

November 30—*The Parthenon, Part 2*

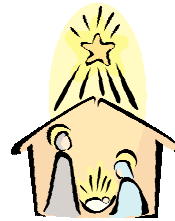
Ms. Libby Robinson will continue her presentation on the Parthenon which gives insights into why Nashville is called the Athens of the South. This program will be held in the Builders classroom. Transportation will be provided to the upstairs classroom as needed.

December 7 —Table Topics

This is a time to get to know each other better. Conversation starters will be provided. This program will also be held in the Builders classroom, and transportation will be provided as needed.

December 14—*Beneath a Shining Star*

Join us for the Christmas musical, *Beneath a Shining Star*. This is our annual children's musical and an evening you will not want to miss.



WNF Dinner Menu

Wednesday, November 16— Pork chops, cooked apples, yellow squash, rolls, and ice cream

Wednesday, November 23— No dinner or activities—*Happy Thanksgiving!*

Wednesday, November 30— *Mexican night:* tacos, Spanish rice, refried beans, chips and salsa, cheese quesadillas, and dessert

Children's Corner

Parents Night Out

Friday, December 2

6:00-9:00 p.m.

Parents' Night Out is a fun evening for the Creeviewood Kids to eat, play games, make fun presents for their parents, and watch movies. Make your reservations for Parents Night Out by **November 28** so that we can properly plan for the evening. Please call the church office or email Kathryn Buffler at kwbuffler@att.net if you wish to participate. There is no fee for the evening, but a donation of canned goods for Second Harvest food bank is appreciated.

Kids ROCK!

We enjoyed an awesome program with Patty Smith and Ann Freeman this past Wednesday regarding our child care center. Through this special night, we had the opportunity to hear the stories of some of the children in our child care center and pray for them and their families. We also learned the many ways we can give our gifts of time and service to all children and addressed the myth of "been there, done that" as far as continuing to work with children beyond when our own kids leave the nest. Many thanks to all who came out to support Ann and this valuable ministry of our church.

Seamstresses/those who can cut in a straight line unite!!

Please contact Leigh Ann Cate at lac723@comcast.net or 833-4528 if you are available to help us cut some fabric for a special Advent project. We need approximately 300 strips of fleece before November 30.

Youth

Mailbox Decorations

Would you like your mailbox decorated for the holidays? The youth will be decorating mailboxes for \$40. If you are interested in getting yours done, please contact Steph by November 23rd. We will decorate the mailboxes on Sunday, November 27th.