

Pastor's Pen

Unity

I have learned much over the years from my wife Patti; marriage can be educational. For instance, how to exit a party; I never had a problem checking the time, grabbing my coat, and heading for the door. Patti, however, has always been much more sensitive to social cues and appropriate leave taking. Though my approach may serve me well in the United Methodist appointment system, Patti was right to cultivate some leave taking skills. Grace and graceful are good things.

Ascension Day (this year) is May 25th, the fortieth day after Easter, when Christ ascended into heaven. Bishop Will Willimon has noted that Jesus manages to say good-bye to the disciples in one or two verses in the gospels of Matthew and Luke, while it takes four chapters in the gospel of John. From a prologue that announces the "Word became flesh and dwelt among us" comes the challenge of saying that the same Word is headed elsewhere.

In short, it is not just about social etiquette but theological consistency. The liturgical observance of this event has become an important annual reminder that God is in control, we know where Jesus is, and Jesus left his followers with all the resources needed for being effective disciples.

As the gospel of John tells it, the pending death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus bring him to his knees in prayer. There are times when I have prayed for Patti to be ready to leave, but this is a different type of prayer. After telling and retelling everything he thinks the disciples need to know in order to continue the work, Jesus speaks to God about them, prays for them.

It is a compelling and provocative prayer. The passion he feels for his band of followers is deep, but the implications of his words are sobering. He desires that "they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me." (John 17:23) A unity that in essence would indicate accomplishment of the mission for which God sent him into the world, and that would enable the disciples to be persuasive evangelists.

It can certainly feel awkward to evaluate whether Jesus was successful in his work or efficacious in his praying. Without question Jesus was faithful in everything God asked of him, loved the world unconditionally, and gave his life for our sake. He revealed the Kingdom of God, invited people to live in it, and empowered followers to hasten the day of its full coming. Nevertheless, we cannot avoid the painful reality that this unity does not exist; not just among Christians but even within our beloved United Methodist Church.

It is just a thought, but I wonder if the long good-bye in the gospel of John reveals an inner struggle that Jesus has with the timing of his departure, a nagging sense that the disciples had not yet fully grasped the vital importance of unity. Where my exiting behavior resembles Matthew and Luke, here Jesus is in tune with the nuances of timing (as if he went to Patti's finishing school). In his prayer he outlines his purpose and reflects on his relationship with the disciples, clearly he is taking account of his work for God and with those who will carry the mission forward. The timing seems to weigh heavily on him.

I believe we are all very aware of the divides in our world, our nation, our city, and God's Church. That is one reason the texts that provide transition from Eastertide to Pentecost are much needed, to remind us of the importance and power of unity for the spread of the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ. We can't just wave a wand and remove all that divides Christians. However, we can do our part to model unity at Crievewood. To all be one; claiming Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and living in love and charity toward all people as Christ loves us. May it be so.

Peter van Eys

Up-coming Events

Church Potluck and Senior Recognition

There will be a special worship service recognizing our graduating seniors 10:45 a.m. this Sunday, **May 21st** which will be followed by an all-church potluck lunch in their honor. Our seniors this year are Zach Hardison, Jared Lee, Jillian Lee, Clay Price, Kellyanne Shaw, Maddi Smith, and Celina Torres.

Nashville District Open House

You are invited to an open house for the Nashville District on Thursday, **May 25th** from 2-7 p.m. at Glendale UMC. District Superintendent Harriet Bryan and Assistant to the District Superintendent Carol Ruckman will be honored as the conference closes the Nashville District. After Annual Conference Crieewood officially will be part of the new Cumberland River District.

Tennessee Annual Conference

Bishop McAlilly will preside over the 2017 Tennessee Annual Conference which is scheduled **June 11– 13** at Brentwood UMC. The theme for the conference is entitled *Sent to Serve God and Neighbor*.

Ice Cream Social and Picnic

Join us at noon on **Sunday, June 11**, for the annual ice cream social and church picnic in Fellowship Hall as we welcome back our youth mission team. The Family Ministry will provide beverages and chicken. You should bring your favorite side dish. There will be a homemade ice cream contest with prizes.

Missions

Young Adult Mountain Top Mission

The young adults from Crieewood UMC and Glendale UMC have scheduled a mission trip to Mountain Top **July 6-9** this summer. The trip is open to anyone 18 years or older. Contact Steph Dodge at stephdodge@gmail.com or at 615-832-2897 if you are interested in participating.

Project Transformation

Project Transformation is a program which is designed to achieve multiple objectives which include encouraging young leaders, connecting churches to the local community, revitalizing urban congregations all while continuing to develop discipleship. If you have been involved in the PT program in Nashville, then you know that the program promotes literacy and brings Bible story time, meals, and recreation to children who may not otherwise have such opportunity through the dedication of many volunteers and young adults of the church. Crieewood will be participating in PT Nashville; our dates are **June 19-22** from 9:00 a.m. until noon. Please think about how you might contribute.

Plastic Bottle Caps and Lids

Do you know park benches can be made from plastic bottle caps and lids? It takes 400 pounds of plastic caps to make a park bench—that's approximately 14 large black trash bags. Patti McIntyre has two bags filled and is continuing to collect lids. Do you want to help? Collect and place your lids in a decorative paint can in Fellowship Forum classroom which is emptied weekly. Be amazed at what a village can do by keeping 400 pounds of plastic out of the landfills.



JOIN US FOR FOUR NIGHTS OF FAMILY SERVICE EVENTS
that benefit Crieve Hall and surrounding communities. This VBS alternative is a great chance for families to help the community together (best for ages 4 – adult). Childcare is available for ages 3 and under. Dinner is served at 5:45 p.m. with projects starting shortly after.

ORGANIZATIONS WE ARE SUPPORTING INCLUDE

Local Schools ♥ Green Bean Drop with St. Andrews
Room In the Inn ♥ Project Transformation ♥ Open Table

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Activities

Blessed Are

On Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. through the month of May there will be a worship service in the sanctuary. Each week we will focus on one of the beatitudes spoken by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12); with a meditation and an experiential response. Please join us as we reflect on what it means to say “*blessed are....*”

Bible Studies

After a week off Tuesday Bible study will resume the New Testament Disciple Fast Track at 9:30 a.m. each Tuesday. The youth are meeting at Steph’s house each Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. to discuss elements of the UMC Discipline.

Summer Meet and Eat

Meet and Eat is an opportunity for Crievewood friends to gather on Wednesdays at a local restaurant for dinner and fellowship during the summer months. This summer there is an expanded list of restaurants most within a short driving distance from the church. The schedule for the first few weeks of Meet and Eat is listed below

May 17 th	Blaze Pizza in Brentwood
May 24 th	City Café in Brentwood
May 31 st	Old Chicago in Cool Springs (carpool: meet at the church)

Please gather in the restaurant parking lot of the scheduled restaurant at 4:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Also, please let Nancy Rosdeutscher know if you plan to attend so that there is an accurate reservation count.

JOY Club

On **Monday, May 22**, Shawn Knight will perform *The Way We Were* from Learner & Lowe at Belmont UMC. The event runs from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and includes the program followed by a catered lunch. Reservations are required.

JOY Club will car pool to the performance. Please meet in the church parking lot; the group will leave the church at 10:15 a.m. If you are able to drive, please see Nancy Rosdeutscher; Belmont has reserved three parking places for the CUMC carpool.

Children and Youth

Nursery Schedule

	1st Shift	2nd Shift
May 21	Joe and Chris Carter	Kate Cortner and Josh Cate
May 28	Michelle Hussung & Kathryn Buffler	Adele and Rainey White
June 4	Tracey & Jared Lee	Randy & Susan Cortner

Crievewood Child Care

Summer Fun begins here at Crievewood Child Care on May 30th and runs through August 2nd. We have filled every spot!



Watch for the Big Red Bus as we head out on our field trips each week. We have plans to visit local parks, the zoo, skate, swim each week, and much more. The ice cream truck comes every Friday afternoon for a sweet treat to end each week.

Check out the new boardwalk leading to the playground. Many thanks to the men of the church who gave of their time and expertise.

Other Items

Preaching Schedule

	Crievewood	Glendale
May 21	Chelsey Hedglin	Rev. Peter van Eys
May 28	Rev. Peter van Eys	Brandon Baxter
June 4	Rev. Peter van Eys	Brandon Baxter
June 11	Rev. Peter van Eys	Brandon Baxter
June 18	Rev. Steph Dodge	Rev. Peter van Eys

