



The Messenger

Crievewood United Methodist Church

December 14, 2016

Pastor's Pen

Advent Moments

Years give way to months, months to days, days to hours, and hours to moments – that has been my Advent experience with family and faith. Most of you noted that my son David was placed on the prayer list, those who were present for the traditional service on December 4th learned that he has been battling a drug addiction for a few years – he stood in front of the congregation and shared that. He acknowledged it almost got the best of him, thanked those who prayed for him, and said he covets the ongoing prayers and support of his church family.

My learning curve in life remains steep. My older son taught me something about being courageous, being vulnerable, and being church. In a moment of gratitude, humility, and reaching out he gave an incredible witness to the power of life in community and to strength deep within himself. His testimony was holy and hopeful.

David's journey, our family journey, coursed through a hospital stay and a profound encounter with one of the edges of life. From the emergency room to the ICU to a general hospital room to the sanctuary time became a blur, though moments are keenly etched in my memory. I am sure you can imagine such taking root as he responded well to medical care and treatment. Other moments that stand out inform my personal relationship with God, particularly my prayer life.

The woman who greeted us at the hospital and helped us gain access to see David, wanted to first pray with us; it was long and conversational, heartfelt and concerned primarily about us rather than our son. She did not know us but reminded God that God knows us. To be honest my mind wandered. Later by the bedside, I prayed over David as we held hands, including his. To be honest I have been praying for David every day since before he was born, and specifically about his struggle for some years; this time I was fearful and weary, feeling that I was talking to God in the midst of an emergency because my previous prayers were not answered.

Many of our family members gathered in the hospital waiting room. We are blessed beyond measure with a family circle that enjoys and cherishes one another. My longstanding and dear friend, Rev. Pam Hawkins, whose family and mine were intertwined even before her son married our niece, led us all in prayer before people dispersed for the night. To be honest I know of no one who offers more meaningful and helpful prayers. I was truly comforted and sustained. That same evening I received a text message from my District Superintendent Rev. Harriett Bryan which informed me she likes to pray for the pastors under her care and today she was praying for me. It was random and timely; I shared what we were going through. To be honest I was overwhelmed by the serendipity of her praying that day and questioned myself as to why I had never sought her prayers for David before.

And then there was the moment David shared with the congregation in worship. I was moved to tears and felt that a response was needed, one from someone other than his dad, so I asked a visiting pastor to pray over David. To be honest I did not realize that he would offer a spiritual warfare prayer calling forth a verbal response from my son. I am well aware of the biblical charge Jesus places on the disciples to cast out demons (Matthew 10:8), but admit that I approach prayer much differently. After the service, the pastor bestowed a great gift on us in committing to continue praying for David.

On the first day of Advent 2016 my life, our family life, changed dramatically. Waiting, praying, loving, hoping were imbued with new meaning; my experience of time increasingly reduced to moments. And in these moments I have learned much about courage and what it might really look like if brothers and sisters in Christ were open and authentic with each other. I have gained new insight into the efficacy and variety and timing of prayer, and I have heard with new ears Paul's word to the Galatians (4:4) that the birth of Jesus happened "in the fullness of time"; realized in a moment.

Peter van Eys

Up-coming Worship

Lesson and Carols

The Chancel Choir will share a musical gift on Sunday, **December 18**, at the traditional service as the choir presents *Lessons and Carols*. Nursery and Children's Church will be offered. Please plan to attend this special Christmas worship.



Christmas Eve Worship

Join us at 5:30 p.m. in the sanctuary on Christmas Eve. This family friendly service is open to all ages. Don't miss the beauty of fellowship and worship in the candle lit sanctuary adorned to celebrate the birth of Christ.

Christmas Day and New Year's Day

Christmas is a time of family celebrating and sharing. This year the church family will celebrate in one combined worship service at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary on Sunday, Christmas Day, and on Sunday, New Year's Day. Christmas worship will feature the return of hand bells to Crielwood. Please come to hear the bells ring out the joy of Christmas. Refreshments and fellowship time will be available upstairs at 9:30 a.m. on both these special Sundays. But please note that there are no children's Sunday school classes on either Christmas or New Year's Day. Adult classes can decide by class whether they will meet or not. Children's Church is available on New Year's Day, but not Christmas. Nursery is available for those children under three years of age at both services.

Missions

Backpack Snacks for Norman Binkley

The Searchers Class would like your help. They are collecting items to assemble in food packs for children with need at Norman Binkley Elementary School so that the food packs will be available to the children over the holiday school break. A complete list of what is needed is on the PowerPoint slide show. Please bring any donations to the Searchers' classroom.

Response to Tennessee Wildfires

Bishop McAlilly has called us to pray for all those affected by the wildfires in eastern Tennessee including firefighters and emergency personnel, victims and survivors of the fires, tourists, business owners, all those who had to evacuate because of the fire, and the Holston Conference of the UMC as it responds to the needs of its neighbors. At the moment the immediate need for supplies in Holston is being met by the churches within the conference. What are most needed from those outside the conference are prayer and financial donations. UMCOR is assessing the disaster area, but has not yet published a specific UMCOR advance for the wildfires. In the meantime donations are being handled through the Holston Conference. Please send your check to Holston Conference, P.O. Box 850, Alcoa, TN 37701. Write "Holston Wildfire #864" in the memo line. Or go online to www.holston.org/wildfires to donate. Or turn checks into the office, and Crielwood will send them to Holston.

Room in the Inn

Crielwood will be expanding the Room in the Inn mission this winter by hosting two Friday nights a month beginning December 16. Volunteers are needed to perform a number of tasks. If you wish to assist, please contact Joe Buffler

Activities

Tuesday Bible Study

The Tuesday Bible Study will not meet during the holidays on December 20 and 27. The group will meet on January 3 to complete the Advent Bible study from author James Moore entitled *All I Want for Christmas*. Upon conclusion of the Advent study, participants will return to the Old Testament Disciple fast track study. Visitors are always welcome; joining a Bible study would be a great way to start the new year.

Men's Breakfast

The next meeting of the United Methodist Men is on Saturday, [January 14](#), at 8:00 a.m. Come and warm up with the traditional breakfast, program, and Christian fellowship. Share the fun by bringing a friend or neighbor.

CUMC Music

The staff would like to thank the Crevewood musicians who have graced the congregation with many beautiful gifts this holiday season. Our music groups will be taking an earned Christmas practice break and returning in 2017 with their joyful praise to the Lord.

UMW Health Fair

Save the Date

[April 1, 2017, 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 pm.](#)



The Crevewood United Methodist Women are organizing a Health Fair on [Saturday, April 1, 2017](#), from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. They hope that the Crevewood UMC congregation and women of the neighboring communities will take advantage of this opportunity to hear from health care professionals from St. Thomas Health, Vanderbilt Health, and Southern Hills Tri-Star Hospital. Topics will be appropriate for the whole family. Details will follow in January 2017.

JOY Club

On [January 24th](#) JOY Club will sponsor a church and neighborhood meeting with the Metro tax office to hear about the property assessment for 2017. The time of that meeting is 2 p.m. in the church sanctuary. There is a second session scheduled on January 26 at 7:00 p.m. in the sanctuary. Please note these opportunities are open to the public; everyone is invited.

Children's Corner

Nursery Schedule

	1st Shift	2nd Shift
December 18	Bob and Mary Bryan	Blake and Rachel Leyers
December 25	one shift beginning at 9:50 a.m.	Susan and Randy Cortner
January 1	one shift beginning at 9:50 a.m.	Tom and Becky Freck