



**Cedar Grove UMC**

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*From the Pastor's Desk . . .*

**LENT 2014**

# **The Beacon**

## **March 2014**



### **Office Hours**

Monday	9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am to 4:00 pm

I remember when I first became a Christian and then became involved in the life of the church and learned about Lent. The idea of making a special commitment during Lent in terms of giving something up or doing something special for God my reaction was, shouldn't we be doing that all the time. Of course the short answer is yes, but I still think having a few special times to be reminded to make an extra sacrifice and/or commitment is a good thing. I believe that Lent is one of those times and has been traditionally the time when Christians made special efforts to grow as Christians. In the early church Lent was the time when those who wanted to join the church would be led in learning about the faith and what making the commitment to join the church and to become Christians means. I want to challenge all of you, starting March 5<sup>th</sup> and going all the way to Easter Sunday, to make a Lenten Commitment.

What do I mean by a Lenten Commitment? Traditionally it meant giving something up that you like during the season of Lent. (Remember it doesn't count Sundays, so technically if you give up say chocolate for Lent, you can have a piece on Sunday! But it will be a way more meaningful experience if you don't.) Another way to do this is to do something every day or each week of Lent, such as work at a shelter, visit a shut-in, or some other good work. Finally, you can commit to spending some more time with God in prayer, reading the Bible, joining a Bible study, reading a Christian book, and so on seeking to grow in your relationship with God. Regardless of what you decide to do during Lent 2014, do something to demonstrate your Christian commitment and to grow in your walk with Jesus. (I review a book in this month's newsletter that would be excellent to read during Lent and covers the same ground as my sermon series on the Beatitudes or Blesseds as I call them.)

I have challenged everyone to read each day during the Lent (and 1.5 weeks prior) to read the blessed that I will be preaching on the following Sunday contained in Matthew 5:1-12 and mediate upon its meaning. Below is the schedule for which verse that each contains a blessed that I will be preaching upon. (I realize 2/23 and 3/3 have already passed, but I wanted you to have them in case you wanted to go back and look at them. Also, the last two weeks are readings about Jesus' death and resurrection.)

2/23 5:3	3/2 5:4	3/9 5:5	3/16 5:6	3/23 5:7	3/30 5:8	4/6 5:9-11
	4/13 21:1-11&17:45-54			4/20 28:1-10		

I have one more challenge for us all during Lent and that is to pray each day for Christians and churches around the world that are experiencing terrible persecution. I hope that all of you will come to hear the speaker on March 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am in our sanctuary that the Martha Lydia Circle is hosting who will be talking about the Christians in Iraq.

So I hope and pray that all of us take the opportunity that Lent 2014 gives us to demonstrate our faith, grow in our service, and draw closer to our God.

Your Fellow Servant of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ,  
*Pastor Glen*



## Book Corner



### Beatitudes from the Backside

J. Ellsworth Kalas Abingdon 2008 122 pg (including study guide)

I have more than ten of Kalas' books (and almost all of the backside series) and while I don't always agree with everything he writes I always find his writing interesting and thought provoking. Since I am preaching on the Beatitudes during Lent I thought I would read and review his book on the Beatitudes.

The book has two introductory chapters introducing the reader to the topic and the setting of the Sermon on the Mount of which the Beatitudes are the beginning. The book then has a chapter on each of the Beatitudes and concludes with a chapter on what you should do now that you have read the book and more importantly taken a deeper look at the Beatitudes.

Kalas does a great job of walking a narrow line between maintaining the mystery and power of each of the beatitudes while at the same time through his interpretation helping the reader explore it meanings. Some will be frustrated that he doesn't tell you exactly what to do in response to each beatitude, but as he explains it is not for him to tell anyone else exactly how to respond to these 'blesseds', for he believes, and I agree, that the 'blesseds' are meant to be both understood and not understood to constantly bring us back to them and allow Jesus to lead us anew.

The study guide in the back of the book will allow an individual or a group to really explore not only the book's teachings but also the readers' reactions to what Kalas writes and more importantly to these powerful, mysterious, thought provoking, and life enhancing words of Jesus. I would recommend this book to any Christian who wants to grapple with this great teaching of Jesus.

## CHURCH NEWS

The **Winter Meltdown** youth trip to River Valley Ranch was a big success with 26 of our youth and 7 adults having a great snowy weekend of fun, study, growth, and fellowship. Special thanks to the adults for giving up their weekend so that our youth could have a great experience.

We have two important positions in the life of the church to be filled, **Church Council Chair** and **Missions' Committee Chair**. If you would be interested in serving in either of these positions, please contact Pastor Glen.

A big thank you to **Becky Haring** and **Doug Sheidy** for stepping forward and agreeing to be our new Praise Team leaders.

Please continue to pray for our **confirmation class** and be ready to help them with their confirmation ministry project. The class has asked each church family or single person to bring in a package of socks or a knit cap on Sunday, March 9th. These knit caps and socks will be delivered to the homeless in Washington, D.C. when the confirmation class goes on the homeless mission trip.

I hope you will come out for our **Lenten Service** on Ash Wednesday and commit yourselves to go on a Lenten Journey of demonstrating your commitment to Christ and growing closer to Christ. The service will be at 7pm on March 5.

**Scripture Readers!** It has been suggested to me that a lay person read the Scriptures, so starting with the first Sunday of Lent, March 9<sup>th</sup> I am looking for people to read the Scriptures. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in the hallway outside the sanctuary. If you sign-up you will be emailed the Scripture reading before the Sunday you are to read.

### NEW MEMBERS CLASS

Are you interested in joining our church? Please contact Pastor Glen.



## EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY MINISTRY

We have begun a new ministry here at Cedar Grove UMC, an emergency food pantry. Essentially we will keep enough food for a family of 4-5 that would last a day or two until they can get to a regular food pantry in the area. (Those pantries are only open one or two days a week) For a cost of about \$40.00, a volunteer will be asked to go and purchase these items (we provide the list) and bring them to the church. We will try to keep enough food on hand here at the church office to help two families. When one set is given away we will call the next person on the list to go and bring us a replacement for the food taken. Hopefully, no one will be called too often, and of course if you are not able to help at the time you are called you can always say no. This will allow the church staff to tell people who call us for food help that "yes, we can help you today" instead of telling a family who needs food that day that they have to wait until one of the local pantries is open. There is a list of the items and a sign-up sheet in the hallway by the sanctuary. So, please sign-up!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**Join us for Movie Night**, showing "*Turbo*", **Sat., March 8, at 6:00 pm**. Our theme this month is "Movie in the Park." We will be turning our Fellowship Hall into a park! Please bring blankets to sit on and even pillows (if you want to be super comfy). All ages are welcome!! We will have our snack bar open including: Hot Dogs, Pizza, Popcorn, Candy and Sodas! Everything is \$1.00 or less. If you wear SLIPPERS to movie night you will get FREE popcorn!!

**Martha Lydia Circle Presents:** *Discovering Christ's Followers in Iraq*. **Mon., March 10, at 10:00 am** in the Sanctuary. Please join us to hear Darryl Carattini share his unique experiences in meeting and worshipping with the Christian Church in Iraq following the initial conflict.

**Blood Drive.** **Wed., March 12, from 3:00-7:00 pm**, in the church parking lot. The AAMC Bloodmobile will be here. To schedule an appointment, please contact the office or go to [www.mysignup.com/cgumc](http://www.mysignup.com/cgumc). Walk-ins are also welcome!

**Women of the Bible, A Dramatic Presentation by Anita Gutshick, *The Wife, The Witch, the Virgin*.** **Sat., March 22, at 2:00 pm in the Sanctuary.** This is one of America's leading one-woman shows. You will not want to miss this! Men are also welcome to attend. \$10 Donation (included: show, light refreshments and door prizes).