



**Cedar Grove UMC**

5965 Deale-Churchton Road  
Deale, MD 20751  
410-867-7417  
[office@cgumc.org](mailto:office@cgumc.org)  
[www.cgumc.org](http://www.cgumc.org)

*REACHING OUT, GROWING CLOSE, CHANGING LIVES THROUGH JESUS CHRIST*

## **The Beacon Summer Edition June/July/August 2016**



### **Office Hours**

Monday	10:00 am to 4:00 pm
Tuesday	10:00 am to 4:00 pm
Wednesday	10:00 am to 4:00 pm

### *From the Pastor's Desk . . .*

GENERAL CONFERENCE, ANNUAL CONFERENCE, MEMORIAL DAY

Well, it has been quite a month for me as I have watched from afar our two week General Conference of The United Methodist Church; attended the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference for three days; and enjoyed a wonderful Memorial Day service here at Cedar Grove UMC.

First, I want to thank the Deale Historical Society for the excellent Memorial Day service. Many members of our church put on this great event and often; sadly, some are remembered by name who have died since the prior Memorial Day. It's an honor that Cedar Grove UMC is a part of this important annual memorial event.

Second, General Conference has come and gone. The good news is that on the issues that could have impacted me and our church they were either handled to our benefit and/or deferred for another day. The big issue of this year's General Conference was the issue of homosexual sex and whether or not it is compatible with the Bible. While this issue has come up at every General Conference since 1972, the vote to normalize homosexual sex in the church has been coming closer and closer to passing until the last conference or two as the rapid growth of the UMC in Africa have seen the African UMs consistently voting on the denial of such normalization in the church. This year after rumors of secret meetings surfaced about having a schism, the new head of the Council of Bishops said that was not happening and that we were committed to be united. The pro-gay forces rightly voiced their unhappiness with the unity we have and wanted something done about it. (The rest of us are fairly unhappy with the way we are operating in our unity right now where pro-gay people violate our current rules without any real penalty.) The Council of Bishops and the General Conference has agreed to set up a two- to three-year commission, with all regions and views represented, to discuss this issue and whether we can remain 'united' when we as a global church are so divided. The pro-gay groups were very upset that it appeared that the African UMs were seemingly voting as a block against all pro-gay legislation. It is ironic to me that they see no problem with the pro-gay lobby voting as a block for all such legislation; but, such is the tension and dysfunction of our denomination.

I am of course glad that no change was made as it allows me to work a number of more years as a United Methodist pastor here at Cedar Grove UMC which was and is my desire. Also, I must admit that I personally think that this commission must seriously think about our denomination having a parting of the ways because I think that would stop the obvious damage we inflict on ourselves all the time by being divided, by appearing to be a denomination obsessed with this issue, and seeing people on both sides of the issue, out of frustration, leaving the church due to either our refusal to normalize homosexual sex or the ongoing flagrant ignoring of our current position on this matter by bishops (one did a same-sex marriage just days before General Conference), clergy (many came out of the closet and others signed a letter opposing any discipline upon these clergy), and laity who simply act as if the rules do not exist. (There is no point in having rules that are not followed or that there is no real penalty for violating.)

Third, I attended the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. on June 1-3. Look for my report on this conference in another section of this newsletter.

This newsletter is our summer edition, covering June, July, and August. Our September edition will be sent out in late August. Have a great summer, enjoy your vacation, keep coming to church, be ready for an active autumn at our church starting in September, and may God bless you this summer.

Your fellow servant of Jesus Christ,

*Glen*

---



## **PRAYER VIGIL**

### **September 6, 2016**

Prayer is an integral part of our Christian lives. We are charged to devote ourselves to prayer. We should bring our requests to God with thanksgiving and pray without ceasing. Our world is a sinful place with troubling events happening nearly every day. Our country is on the verge of choosing a new president to lead us through these uncertain times. Even our own denomination is making some decisions that could impact our church. Perhaps you are facing your own giants in your life. We need prayer more than ever before. Prayer is a mighty weapon that can help us in all things. On Tuesday, September 6<sup>th</sup> we will hold a prayer vigil here at Cedar Grove UMC from 7 am to 7 pm followed by a short service to focus on praying for all those areas in our lives that need God from the world to our country, community, family and our own personal lives. Please sign up to pray for 30 minutes in the sanctuary for all these things especially for our county as we approach election time. Pray that God's will be done and lives are changed and drawn closer to Him. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex later this month. Please come join us. In the meantime as you enjoy your summer, please remember to continue to be in prayer for our world, our country and your families. And to God be all the glory, honor and praise.



## CHURCH NEWS

**Scripture readers on Sunday mornings!** It has been great having some different voices read the Scripture on Sunday mornings. We would love to have even more voices. If you are interested there is a sign-up sheet in the narthex and if you do sign up we will send you the reading electronically or inform you over the phone as to what the reading is. If you find the reading to be too difficult (length or hard to pronounce names) you can always let Pastor Glen know you have changed your mind. So please sign-up.

While **Sunday School** for children and youth takes a break during the summer, Bill Kline and Pastor Glen continue to teach their classes at 9am during the summer.

**Vacation Bible School** will be Monday, June 20, 2016 through Thursday, June 23, 2016. We will "travel" to Ancient Egypt this year! Get the answers to questions such as, What was it like to live in Bible times? How did they make Mummies? What happened to Joseph (the guy with the colorful coat)? Explore Pharaoh's Palace. Please register early. You can contact the Church office at 410.867.7417 or by email at [office@cgumc.org](mailto:office@cgumc.org). You can also visit our website at [www.cgumc.org](http://www.cgumc.org) to download a form or pick one up from the table in the narthex of the Church. Spread the word about VBS! Also, as mentioned in the May Newsletter, **for the VBS mission campaign we are collecting the following items for the homeless:** Dark-colored Wash Cloths, Toothbrushes, Bars of Soap, Travel-size Toothpaste, Travel-size Shampoo, Travel-size Shaving Cream, Travel-size Deodorant, Combs, and Razors. **There is a box in the Narthex in which you can leave your donations.** *Thank you!*

Pastor Glen will teach a **class after Sunday Worship** on reading the book **A Hop, Skip, and a Jump Through the Bible** by J. Ellsworth Kalas. The class starts on Sunday, June 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am in the Parlor. The class will last 30 minutes, we will discuss one or two 8-10 page chapter(s) of the book, discuss it briefly, consider the study guide questions, and Pastor Glen will point out key Scripture passages pertaining to the chapter that every Christian should be familiar with. This book gives one a brief overview of the whole Bible's message. While it is important to study individual books of the Bible in depth, it is also important to have an understanding of the overall message of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The class will meet for 10-12 Sundays and we realize due to vacations many will have to miss a class or two but that is okay, the book is easy to read and the study guide will allow you if you miss to keep up. Pastor Glen asks that you purchase your own copy of the book, which you can get at Amazon.com.

Please pray for the adults and youth who go on **SPY** July 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>. Pray not just for travel mercies, safety, and health but that they might be ambassadors of the love of Jesus.

Wednesday dinners, Youth Group, Kids Group, and Ladies Bible Study will be on **summer break after June 8<sup>th</sup>. They will resume in September.**

**Family Movie Night will continue through the summer.** The dates for movie night are Friday, June 10, Friday, July 8, and Friday, August 12. It starts at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. See what new releases we will be showing on the posted Movie Night Flyer. All ages are welcome! Our snack bar will be open, selling items such as: pizza, popcorn, candy and soda. Everything is \$1.00 or less. If you have questions, please contact Stacy Crine.



## **MISSIONS CORNER**

(We are highlighting three missions in this summer newsletter: The Breakfast Club, International Outreach Support, and the Martha Lydia Circle.)

***The Breakfast Club.*** Please pray for this mission and also prayerfully consider if you can support it with your time, talent or tangible gifts. The Breakfast Club is a feeding ministry whose simple goal is: "to nourish the body & spirit of those we serve". We do this by providing breakfast during the summer months to area children/families who typically rely on the free or reduced meal programs at school. The program was started at Cedar Grove UMC back in 2009 and has expanded to other area churches and mobile home parks serving as many as 15,000 meals in a summer!! At Cedar Grove UMC, we will provide a weekly food bag every Wednesday from June 29 to August 10. We are looking for volunteers to help between the hours of 5pm and 7pm with packing and distribution. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Ingrid Quimby-High at 443-404-8354 or email at [Ingrid.quimby@gmail.com](mailto:Ingrid.quimby@gmail.com).

***International Outreach Support.*** In addition to all the great missions that our Cedar Grove congregation supports locally, we also are proud to provide our support in sharing God's Word and love to other areas of the world. Through our support of the Lannings and their church planting efforts in India, as well as the Malovics with Cru International in Croatia, we are pleased to support these wonderful missions and we ask that you continue to pray for their efforts in making new disciples for Christ.

***The Martha Lydia Circle.*** This women's group gets things done! They support the church in so many wonderful ways! They hold soup, bake, craft, vendor, and yard sales throughout the year. They faithfully donate their time and money to the church's events, missions, youth trips, and many worthy causes! They lead and serve in a caring, generous Christ-like way. The Martha Lydia Circle meets the second Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m. in the Church Parlor. For information, please contact Linda Keiffer at 410-867-8302 or by email at [lskeiffer@comcast.net](mailto:lskeiffer@comcast.net). Stay tuned for details on their Yard & Bake Sale on September 17<sup>th</sup> and also their Soup, Bake, & Crafts Sale on November 19<sup>th</sup>.



## **BOOK CORNER**



As many of you know, I read a whole book during Annual Conference and I often half-jokingly say this because I want to make sure I get something out of the three days. This year I read an old book by a liberal Old Testament scholar Walther Zimmerli, *The Law and the Prophets: A Study of the Meaning of the Old Testament* Wipf and Stock Publishers 1965. I bought this book as part of my preparation for my sermon series this summer on the minor prophets and it fit the criteria for my choosing a book to read at Annual Conference because it was on a topic that I was currently working on, it is written by an author I want to read, and it is short, just 101 pages total with only 96 pages of text.

Essentially this book tries to do two main things, one valuable and the other not so much. The valuable thing is to consider how the message of the prophets, meaning from Joshua to 2 Kings and then the named prophets, differed from the presentation of the Law in the first five books of the Old Testament in how they portray the nature of the relationship between God and Israel. Within this discussion looking at the issues of how the prophets words and the Law was interrelated with the history of the people and the covenant between God and Israel. The less valuable thing this book wants to focus on is which was first, the Law or the Prophets. Much of this discussion is dated since this book was published originally in the 1960s and is in the end un-provable and denies the rule the Canon plays in fixing the final version of all the Biblical books. Regardless of the shifting sands of historical and textual research into the Bible, the Bible places The Law earlier then the prophets both in the way the books of the Old Testament are arranged and its final view of the narrative.

I can't recommend this book to the average Christian because it addresses issues in a very academic manner where knowledge of various issues is assumed and beyond the interesting discussion of The Law and The Prophets it doesn't offer much for the average reader and Christian. I will say, however, that the first chapter does a great job of tracing all the places the New Testament uses the phrases in some combination of, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings (the writings would be the books of the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, and Job). The book is short and if you want to see what the writings of Biblical scholars are like this book would serve that purpose. I am glad I read the book. I enjoy the 'inside baseball' of the world of biblical criticism and this book is an excellent example of such writing at its best and worst.

*Pastor Glen Arnold*



## **BALTIMORE WASHINGTON ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2016**

Well, evidently the Bishop is retiring. That really sums up this year's annual conference because we spent a lot of time talking about that. We did pass some new rules about pastoral transitions and some other minor policy but other than that it was a snooze fest! Now you might think that is a negative start to this summary of the conference but it is not. Sometimes the conference is uncomfortable, maddening, distressing, boring, and many other negative things but at least we had three fairly pleasant days of being together as UMs. If you go to the conference website at <http://bwcumc.org/sessions/2016-session/news-and-updates/> and click on the "Conference Dailies" you can learn more about it.

One big issue that came up was that of the commissioning of a deacon to be in the process to be ordained as a deacon of a woman married to another women. I am not permitted to share with you what went on at the executive session where this issue was addressed, all I can share with you is that she was voted down and will not be commissioned this year. Even though our Book of Discipline makes it clear that a self-avowed practicing homosexual cannot be ordained, the Board of Ordained ministry does not believe that a woman married to another woman means she is a self-avowed practicing homosexual. They even refused to ask! In my nearly 30 years of being an Elder she was the first person to be turned down by the executive session of the clergy. She has said she will return.

Here are the highlights of the other business we conducted such as approving a conference budget; the conference endorsing a candidate for bishop--the Rev. Cynthia Moore-Kolkoi; trying to help clergy couples with a health insurance issue when both husband and wife are full-time UMC pastors (By the way, the conference claimed they have no way of knowing how many clergy couples we have! Unbelievable!); and, we passed some policy about how the conference and local church should proceed when an active pastor dies under appointment. The awful 'circles of grace' where the conference leadership makes sure that the tension in our conference over the social issues does not show up and only, in particular, the pro-gay forces have a voice to the whole conference. (It is interesting to me that the General Conference opted not to use such a process at the General Conference for the same reasons I oppose it at our Annual Conference.) The attempt by the conference to make this a normal part of our way of operating was defeated after the motion to have circles of grace supplemented by the normal order of three voices for and three against and the opportunity to amend the legislation was successful as an amendment, these people who claim the value of the circles is including more voices, voted against it. And that is because their real goal is to stop those opposed to their agenda from having the opportunity to speak to the whole conference.

Something wonderful happened this year, a policy change was made that was well over due. It was moved and approved that all the business that is before the Annual Conference must at least be started before the final day of plenary sessions. This year typifies what conference has been for the last 20 years, meet and greet, giving of gifts, reports that don't need to be voted on and then with 2 hours to go, we get to work on all the rest of the business. We don't have time, we feel the press of time, and usually we do not get to all the business before we adjourn. As one Twitter commenter wrote, 'Good news but why hasn't this been the rule for the last 20 years.'

Another great thing at annual conference this year was the bishop from Virginia who did the Bible study on Thursday and Friday mornings. It was quite good and it is too bad he can't be our next bishop.

The hotel was okay but not as nice as the Baltimore Waterfront Hotel that we have stayed at the last number of years. It was more difficult to get to this Washington DC hotel and it didn't have a view of the Inner Harbor. As usual, I had my meals in my room, not to save money but to save time, and reached my goal of reading a whole book during this Annual Conference (see the book review in this newsletter).

I want to thank my Dad for taking me to Annual Conference and I really want to thank him for bringing me home! If you have any questions about this conference or anything I have written here or of anything else you have heard or learned about the conference, I will be happy to try and answer your questions.

*Pastor Glen L. Arnold*



## ONCE A MONTH CLASS CHOICES FOR FALL 2016 to SPRING 2017

There will be a sign up sheet in the narthex of the Church listing four options for the once a month class during Fall 2016 to Spring 2017. Pastor Glen will teach the class and it will again be offered twice each month, on the third Tuesday at 7pm and the Monday prior at 10am to the third Tuesday of the month. The four options are listed below. (You can vote for as many of these options as you want, but only the highest vote getter will be taught. So if you are interested in all four classes, I would only vote for the one you most want as only one of these classes will be taught (unless no one signs up at all!). If you only like two you might want to vote for those two so that at least one of the two you want will get selected. I think you understand the strategy now...)

**Apocrypha** - This class will be a study of the books the Roman Catholic Church consider semi-canonical but that the Protestant churches and the Jewish people do not. These writings add chapters to some of our Old Testament books; tell stories of the time between the Old and New Testaments. You will need to have the Apocrypha to participate in this course. Some Bibles have it included and you can also buy just the Apocrypha. If this course gets the most votes I will provide the information needed to purchase the Apocrypha.

**Apostles** – This class will look at what the Bible says about the Apostles and what history/legend says about them after the Bible ends. You will learn in this course what the word Apostle means, what are the qualifications to be an Apostle, and learn there were more than 12. If available we will use the book *The Thirteen Apostles* as a text and it will be your responsibility to pay for the book.

**Parables of Jesus** – This class will look at not only every parable Jesus taught but what is meant by the word parable, why Jesus used this teaching form, and how to classify the parables by theme. We will also look at other parables in the Bible.

**Women of the Bible** – Each month we will look at one or two stories of a woman in the Bible and discuss the meaning of each story. We will look at women in the Old Testament and the New Testament and include un-named women as well as named women. I might choose a book to use to teach this class with and it will be your responsibility to pay for it.

If you have any questions about these class possibilities please don't hesitate to ask me about them.

*Pastor Glen Arnold*