



Cedar Grove UMC

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From the Pastor's Desk . . .

The Beacon April 2015



Office Hours

Monday	10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Tuesday	10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Wednesday	10:00 am to 5:00 pm

EASTER 2015

Christ is Risen! Of all the many miracles in the Bible and all the questions about are they possible, science can't prove it, how do we know, how can we be sure, for Christians it all comes down to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. All the other miracles really do not matter if Jesus did not rise from the dead. The Apostle Paul under the guidance of the Holy Spirit makes this so clear in 1 Corinthians 15. In addition to what Paul says we know that being healed of a disease, being freed from demons, experiencing a miraculous feeding or water walking, in the end is meaningless if when we die, we are just dead, either non-existent or cast into hell. The only miracle that ultimately matters is Christ's rising, letting us know two things, that His death on the cross has atoned for our sin and that those who have faith in Jesus will rise to eternal life with Him.

We all strive as Christians, or should strive, to learn and grow, to help and serve, and be the best people we can be. That as a church we should strive to be a loving community, helping people in need, and trying to have a positive impact on our world. But not only does the death and rising of Christ give justification of the Christian truth, it also reveals that there is an afterlife, that is eternal and depending on your faith it can either be horrible or great. Thus the most important thing we can tell anyone in terms of the Christian faith is that Christ died for you and rose for you and believing in Him is vital to your, eternal, future.

Last month I wrote in this newsletter that I hope that we are all people of the cross, this month I write with the hope that we are all people of the empty tomb and the words, Christ is Risen! It is my hope and prayer that all of us will share the Good News, the Gospel, that Jesus Christ died for us and rose for us that we might be forgiven our sins and rise with Him to eternal life.

Let me close with my prayer for all of you that you have a blessed Easter with our Lord and Savior being the greatest source of your joy and at the center of your Easter celebrations.

Your fellow servant of the one who died on the cross for us,

Glen



BOOK CORNER



Cross-Shattered Christ: Meditations on the Seven Last Words
Stanley Hauerwas Brazos Press 2004 108pgs

Final Words from the Cross Adam Hamilton Abingdon Press 136pgs

This month I briefly review two books that I used in preparing for our Good Friday service on the seven last things Jesus said while He was on the cross. I remember in seminary being told not to do this kind of service. I can't remember why we were told this, but like much of what I was taught at Wesley Seminary I ignored it. I have done a 'Seven Last Words' service several times and it has always been well received.

The two books on this topic; one by Hauerwas and one by Hamilton are both excellent. Hamilton's is probably a little easier to read and has little additional articles on interesting side topics of no more than two pages each and Hauerwas' has some interesting artwork to go with his excellent text. The seven last words, in the order they are believed to have been said are: Father forgive them for they know not what they do, today you will be with me in paradise, behold your son...behold your mother, my God my God why have you forsaken me, I thirst, it is finished, and Father into your hands I commend my spirit. (None of the four Gospels have all seven sayings.)

I would recommend both of these books for any person who wants to know more and think more about what Jesus meant from Cross.

CHURCH NEWS

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Please attend our Holy Week Services and activities (Remember that all church activities that normally occur on Wednesday, are cancelled on April 1)

Holy Thursday April 2 at 6:30pm

Good Friday April 3 at 7pm -- THE SEVEN LAST WORDS

Holy Saturday April 4 from Noon to 2pm Community Easter Event

Easter Sunday April 5 10am worship service

Scripture Readers – I am sure some of you have noticed that we now have members of the praise team reading the Scripture. We would love to have anyone else who would like to read them do so. Please let Pastor Glen know, at least by the Wednesday prior to the Sunday you would like to read.

Genesis 1-11 Bible Study – Thank you to the 30+ people who attended this Bible study on Monday evenings and Tuesday mornings. We often had weather issues but we finally finished on March 23/24.

SPY Mission Trip – We have a large group going to SPY the week of July 18-24. Please pray for them and we still could really use one or two more male chaperones.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study 10am – Would you be interested in a regular 10am Tuesday morning bible study taught by the pastor? A few people at the Tuesday Genesis class expressed interest in such a Bible study. If you are interested in attending, a sign-up sheet is in the narthex. The first book to be studied will be the Gospel of John.

World Religions Class – We appear to have interest in a class on the major World Religions, so now we need to figure out when is best to hold it. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex with two options listed—a weekly Monday night and/or Tuesday morning class (like we did for Genesis 1-11) or a once a month Monday night and/or Tuesday morning class. If you are interested, please note your preference.

Confirmation Sunday – The Confirmation class of 2015 will be confirmed on April 12 at the 10am worship service. Please pray for them as they get ready to answer the most important question any of us ever answer, do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? Let them know how proud you are of them as they become members of our church!

Big Thank You – A big thank you to Wendy Bernard, Mitzi Roby, and all those who helped lead and support our Easter community event!

Give Up Something Bad for Lent – Pastor Glen would like feedback on how much you enjoyed or didn't enjoy our supplementing our Lenten Season with a book. Obviously, if this was much enjoyed we will probably do it again in Advent.

MISSIONS CORNER

Greetings from your 2015 Missions Council. As we said in January, we are going to try and provide more information for you on the great work being done or being supported by all of you at Cedar Grove. One way in which we will do that is to highlight our Mission of the month via this newsletter. You will hear about this same mission during the Missions Update on the 3rd Sunday of the month and we will also ask you to be in prayer for that mission and if you feel called, to support that mission with your time, talent or tangible gifts. Our Mission for the month of March is:

The Homeless Ministry.

Note from the Homeless Ministry Leader:

Our Homeless Ministry travels to DC the third Sunday of every month to deliver meal bags, toiletries, clothing, blankets, coats, shoes, etc., to our homeless brothers and sisters. I thought I would give you an idea of how our Ministry works. We pack meals for the homeless we visit after Church on the third Sunday of every month (as this is when we go out on our Homeless trip). Usually we pack about 80-100 meal bags. If you find you can help after church on the third Sunday, please find us in the kitchen. Many hands make light work. The items for the meals are purchased with donated funds.

Missions Corner cont'd

We take clothing for the homeless and when we receive donations we put them in the Homeless Ministry Room and fold and size them so that when we get ready to pack for our trip we know what we have. We then put everything into bins according to size so that when our Brothers & Sisters ask for something it can be easily located. It also makes managing items better for loading into the van.

If you are interested in donating clothes, I have posted a list of what is needed on the bulletin board, highlighting those items in red that are most requested. Everything that you donate: money, clothing, prayers (especially), etc. is greatly appreciated not only by us but most of all by our Brothers & Sisters on the street. They have told us that we are the only organization that they can count on. They know we have not forgotten them.

We also hand out Health kits. Below you will find a picture of what we put in them. If you travel, most hotels (motels) put sample shampoo, soap, etc. in your bathroom. It would be appreciated if you would bring those items home with you and donate them to our Ministry; or, if you see samples on sale in the drug stores, pick up a few and donate them.

To give you a picture of the evening of our trip: At 6:15 p.m. on the third Sunday of the month (5:45 from November through March) we load the van up with what we are taking with us. We meet Chuck (the driver of the other van from Accokeek) at 7:15 in D.C. and load as much clothing as we can into his van leaving the meals, health kits, and any other items in the Cedar Grove van. Usually there will be 2 people in Chuck's van to distribute those items. As we get to a stop our Brothers & Sisters get in line and come up to the vans one at a time to get what they need. If they are bedded down for the evening, we walk the meal over to where they are and put it next to them and tell them we have done so. We distribute as much as we can until we run out of meals. That determines when we are finished for the evening.

I can tell you from experience, if you go on one of these trips it is a "life changing" event. It will make you appreciate what you have all the more. This is great for young people as they see firsthand what it is like to live on the streets. If you would like to go on a trip, please see me so that we can set you up on the schedule. We would love to have you!

All this is done to "Glorify the name of our Lord and Savior." We are following His teachings by helping those less fortunate.

"So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7)

*Thank you again for your generosity and Prayers,
Pam Morton*

