



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)

## The Beacon April 2019



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

*From the Pastor's Desk . . .*

### 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

EASTER 2019

One of my favorite verses in the gospels about the resurrection of Jesus is when the angel says to those who come to the tomb, 'Why do you seek the living among the dead?' On one level, the worldly, we understand why, Jesus has really died and was buried in the tomb. On another level, the spiritual, the Godly, we understand the power of the question. We humans think in worldly terms and in worldly possibilities where as God while not ignoring reality, for Jesus was dead, works the wonders of God. In between these two different perspectives is the question, since Jesus told the disciples He would suffer and die and then be risen, why didn't they believe Him? Or perhaps more to the point, why do we believe?

I have preached about how unfair I think the label 'doubting Thomas' is because none of the first disciples believed without seeing. We as believers never get to see, but rather rely on the witness of all the people, according to Paul (1 Corinthians 15:6) as many as 500 at one time, who saw the risen Jesus. Of course we can look at other evidences of His resurrection and of course by the Holy Spirit and in faith experience in our own lives not just knowing the risen Lord, but by also experiencing the forgiving power of His death, being marked by His blood. But remember the 500+ people who saw the risen Christ, saw what God did, not what the world and/or science says is possible. Our faith is not based on a leap into the darkness or wishful thinking, but upon the power of God and the witness of the first disciples. I proclaim that Christ is risen not because I wish it was true but because God made it true and the witnesses saw it.

Remember there is no empty tomb without the cross. Jesus had to die to be risen. In these two central moments of God's relating to us, He loved us on the cross and in the empty tomb He showed us what that love will do for us, give us eternal life. We are not just sinners forgiven but indeed born again to a new, better, eternal life. It is by the mercy of God we are forgiven and do not get what we deserve, hell and eternal suffering, and it is by His grace we get what we don't deserve, heaven and eternal life with God, and get to look forward to the new heaven and earth that the returning Christ will bring at the end of time, with God.

I am so glad that during this Easter season I am studying on Tuesday in the Bible study Genesis and the beginning of it all. That on Sundays we are studying the Gospel of Mark and the pivotal moment in human history when Jesus walked amongst us, suffered, died, and rose for us! And finally that in the once a month study we are looking at the Book of Revelation and how the current heaven and earth will end with Christ's return and then we will look forward, those who believe to the new heaven and earth, a place with no death or sadness.

On this Easter I hope and pray that all of you have a great Easter and that the words 'He is risen' and 'He died for you,' along with the deeds of His love might fill your days during this Easter season.

Your fellow servant of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ,

*Glen*

**NOTE FROM YOUR PASTOR:** I would like to express my thanks for the loving and caring way our church family have comforted and served the families of **Mike Johnson** (service details pending) and **Sam Keiffer** (service 11am March 29<sup>th</sup> with the hour prior being a time of visitation) during this time of loss. Praise God! Please continue to pray for their families during this difficult time.

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## **CHURCH NEWS**

A **memorial service for Charlie Brown** will be held here at Cedar Grove on Monday, April 8 at 1:00 pm in the sanctuary. Please pray for Janet and their family during this time of loss.

If you'd like to reach out to **Terry Prosser** while he is in treatment in Boston, his address is: Hampton Inn, ATTN: Terry Prosser-Room 811, 811 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02118.

**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.

**Tuesday Morning Bible Study.** We are currently studying Genesis, please join us in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 am on Tuesdays.

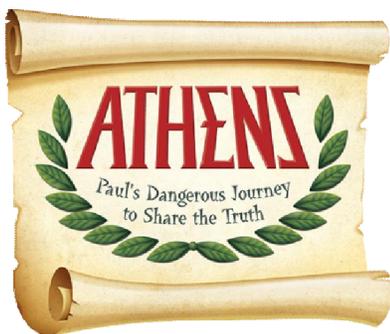
**Wednesday Night Community Dinners.** Please join us at 6:00 pm on Wednesdays for our delicious dinners. Our attendance has been down and if we do not see an increase in this final month of the dinner there is a strong possibility that the dinners will not return in the fall. The last dinner of the season is April 10<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to Bill Kline and all of his cooks and crew for another year of the dinner ministry.

**Holy Week.** Please join us for services on Holy Thursday (April 18) and Good Friday (April 19). Both services begin at 7:00 pm. **Easter Sunday** service is at our normal worship time of 10:00 am.

**Cedar Grove's Annual Community Easter Celebration** is on Saturday, April 20th at 12:00-2:00 pm here at Cedar Grove. *Rain or Shine!* Lots of fun activities are planned including an egg hunt, crafts, egg dying, face painting, games, and lunch. There will also be a drawing for an Easter basket! Volunteers are needed to make this event a success. **We are asking for donations of wrapped candy, stickers, and/or trinkets to be used to fill Easter eggs. Please bring your donations in by Sunday, April 7.** We also need lots of help the day of the event! If you want to volunteer, please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex. If you have questions, please contact Mitzi Roby at 410-474-4696 or by email at [Mitzidawn@verizon.net](mailto:Mitzidawn@verizon.net). Invite your family, friends, and neighbors! “

**Easter Plant Sale.** Normally Cedar Grove would ask the congregation to buy/sponsor Easter flowers to decorate the Sanctuary during Easter. We have talked to a couple of nurseries about buying plants, but because Easter is late in April this year, the typical flowers that we buy will be at the end of their growing season. Therefore we will not be purchasing fresh plants this year. Thank you for your previous support! Instead we will have the Sanctuary decorated with artificial flowers. Please see Betsy Weinkam or Sandy Burns if you have any questions.

**Family Movie Night** is Friday, April 12 at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will be showing “Peter Rabbit!” Movie night is FREE and all ages are welcome! As always, our movie night snack bar will be open selling pizza, popcorn, candy, and sodas. Everything is \$1.00 or less. If you have any questions, please contact Stacy Crine.



**Vacation Bible School!** It's that time of year again, where we start planning for VBS. This year we will return to Athens and follow Paul on his journey. The dates for VBS are June 24-27, 2019.

**To make this a successful event, we will need lots of volunteers.** There is a signup sheet in the Narthex if you can help. We need volunteers for the Marketplace, Tribe Leaders, Game Arena, and we need a Dionysius. Dionysius will be with Paul every day, and this volunteer will also be an assistant to Paul on days Dionysius does not have any lines. Our Paul this year will be Jacob Sears. He is very excited to take on this role! Please think about, pray, and let God lead you however you feel led to volunteer. Any and all help is greatly appreciated! If you have any questions, please contact Courtney Roby, Debbie Huffman, or Mitzi Roby.

**Contact Info:**

Courtney Roby: [courtneyrobby96@gmail.com](mailto:courtneyrobby96@gmail.com) or (410) 474-9548

Debbie Huffman: (410) 474-7626

Mitzi Roby: [mitzidawn@verizon.net](mailto:mitzidawn@verizon.net) or (410) 474-4696



## **MISSIONS CORNER**

The Mission we are highlighting this month is **The Homeless Ministry:**

Let me start by saying that I feel privileged to work in the Homeless Ministry. I hope you approve of all we are doing. Our goal is two fold: one to help those less fortunate and; most of all, to GLORIFY our Lord and Savior.

For years I would hear that the Lord has a place for everyone to help in doing His work. My thought was always I have no talent whatsoever, so I don't know what I could do. I have found that really it is not what I can do but what WE can do as a family who wants to do what the Lord has called us to do. Follow His example of helping all those that need it, regardless of their status in this world.

The stigma that is attached to the word "Homeless" really is not correct. Maybe at one time it was; but, as I have found (and anyone working in this ministry has found) it is not someone who doesn't care about himself or herself. Sometimes circumstances are what has led them to the street like financial (where they have lost everything), military people (who have come back to us from where ever they were and found bad circumstances at home), and mental conditions.

You all have been generous with your help, donations, monetary gifts, and most of all your prayers. Anytime we have asked you to fill a need I have never heard any grumbling, all I have heard is "do you have enough or need anything else." You don't realize how important that is, especially to me. I hate to ask for anything, that is not my strong suit, but you have made it so I don't feel uncomfortable asking for items that are needed.

I feel the Lord would be pleased with what we have done and as long as we continue to do His work I believe He will continue to bless this Ministry. Thank you again for all you do.

***A Servant in our Savior's Army,***  
Pam Morton

***Food for Thought:*** Luke 6:38 says "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

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### **2019 Missions Support**

We are pleased to announce that we have the opportunity to support a new church-planting mission: Redeeming Hope. This particular mission, led by Joshua and Rachel Young, is focused on church planting in Clarksville, TN and they recently celebrated the launch of their church on Sunday, March 24, 2019 (this happened to be the same day as our missions fair)!

Included in this newsletter is a letter from Josh & Rachel to the congregation. Please continue to support them with your prayers and don't hesitate to reach out if you would like any more information.

We also are pleased to continue our support of two local missions--Good News Jail & Prison Ministry and South County Faith Network. For more information on any of our missions activities, please don't hesitate to reach out to anyone on our the Missions committee or email [ingrid.quimby@gmail.com](mailto:ingrid.quimby@gmail.com). God Bless!



## **BOOK CORNER**



### The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments

C. H. Dodd Baker 1980 (orig. 1936) 96pgs

### The Speeches in Acts: Their Content, Context, and Concerns

M. Soards WJKP 1994 218pgs

This Lent I have been preaching on the speeches or as I prefer to call them sermons in the Book of Acts which in our Bible represents the earliest proclamation of the Gospel after Pentecost. In preparing this series I used two books to give me background for the series and to pick the sermons I would preach on. So I thought I would review both books and will refer to them via the last name of each author.

The Dodd book is an old book from a scholar that was at one time one of the great scholars of the Bible. While more famous for a book he wrote on the parables, this book was a very important book for our understanding of the preaching recorded in Acts and what it tells us about the early preaching of the church. The book contains the manuscripts of three lectures he gave at King's College (in England) during the height of the Great Depression in 1935. The lectures focus on what the early preaching of the church shared as the essential truths of the Gospel. While focusing on the preaching Dodd uses the whole of the New Testament to describe the content of the preaching of the early church.

The Soards book is a more recent contribution to this topic and focuses on the Book of Acts. While appearing much longer than Dodd's book, about 20 pages, it consists of outlines of the sermons (speeches) and 10 pages of indexes of which the Dodd book has none. Soards does a great job of describing each sermon (speech) and at the end of the book summarizing the basic points they all seem for the most part to share. Soards begins by framing the goals and issues of the book and then goes through the sermons (speeches) one by one. The middle of the book shows other connections one can make between the sermons (speeches) and other literature including the rest of the Bible. The final portion of the book as I mentioned earlier addresses the common themes of the sermons (speeches)

Dodd and Soards both make clear that at the heart of the message of the early church was that Jesus the Christ was the Son of God and among all the great things He did--teaching, miracles, setting an example for us, and so on--His greatest work and the heart of the message we should take to the world and its people is that He died on the cross for our sins, rose on the third day, and that by believing in Him and in His name you can have salvation and eternal life. I personally believe that church of today, while still believing in Jesus, has been shy and/or hesitant to share this message or at a minimum to put it at the top and center of our message to the world and thus we have seen the church fail to grow and more importantly fail to save more lost souls.

Both of these books are written in an academic style and while easily understood their styles are not exciting. If you want a good, short introduction to this topic I think the Dodd book is excellent. If you really want to get into the sermons of Acts; the Soards book would be a great resource while studying Acts. Together these two books capture an important time in the church and highlight the important truths of the church that I believe were important in helping the church to grow and to see more people are saved.

Pastor Glen Arnold



## REDEEMING HOPE

We live in a brave new world, a new cultural and spiritual terrain where things once considered of value are irrelevant, absolute truth is seen as an archaic myth, and churches look more like monuments than mission agencies. Many long for a more dynamic connection to spirituality, but harbor deep suspicions of institutions. In response to this aversion and their own brokenness, they follow paths of life that take the deepest longing of the soul for God and placate their desires with lesser saviors such as substance abuse, success, security, or religiosity. None of this is new or surprising to God.

In the midst of this brave new world, God tells us He has a mission and we have a part to play in it. He says He has given us to the people in our proximity as a promise to them, a promise that God loves them unconditionally. He has equipped us to be beacons of light that shine brightly in the darkness. We are given the strength and power by God's Spirit to open our own blind eyes to see a closer vision of Gospel truth, and then offer others a peek into the telescope. As we do this, God's glory is certain. His Kingdom expands. He gives us the gift to believe the Gospel, receive His grace, and respond to it with a life lived on mission towards our friends and neighbors where God places us.

Place matters significantly in the Scriptures to God. God places Adam and Eve in the *Garden of Eden*, He calls Abram *out of Ur*, and He sent Jesus *of Nazareth* to be the Savior of the world. And even at the end of time He will renew the New Jerusalem where He will rule and reign forever. If place matters to God, it should matter to us as well.

Clarksville is the 5<sup>th</sup> largest city in Tennessee and is estimated to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest by the end of 2019, growing by 40,000 people in 48 months. One of the primary reasons for this growth is the presence of Fort Campbell, the second largest military base in the world. Another major factor is Austin Peay State University, located in the heart of Clarksville, which currently draws over 10,000 students, and its advanced degrees and cheaper tuition have made it the fastest-growing university in Tennessee. Economic incentives and cheap land are also making Clarksville the technological and industrial hub of Tennessee, landing 19<sup>th</sup> among all US cities for fastest job growth. All of this information is helpful, but the most important thing are the people of Clarksville.

The spiritual landscape in Clarksville is missing a missional expression of church. Over three-quarters of the population are transplants from other areas of the country, especially the West Coast and Northeast. Additionally, 75% of the population are not involved in a church family. I believe these two numbers are correlative. There are many good, established churches in Clarksville, but they are predominantly reaching the narrow margin of people who have an affinity for attending a church or feel comfortable listening to a sermon preached to explore faith. There are few things being done to reach the people who would be resistant to coming inside the doors of the church and who are not from the southern church culture. We need to reach the majority of Clarksville with the Good News of Jesus.

In January 2017, I started a men's group in Clarksville by inviting a few guys to read the Scriptures with me, pray earnestly to Jesus, do what He says, and seek to help others do the same. Less than two weeks after we started, two out of the four men came to faith in Jesus and were baptized. Three weeks later, Rachel and I met five college students who began dialog with us to explore faith. Four months later, our men's group multiplied. Now, six more people have come to faith in Jesus in the past year, with one of the original men in that group having also led someone else to faith. We moved to Clarksville in May, 2018, have seen our immediate neighbors also come to faith, and have a spirit-inspired anticipation of what God is doing. The work in Clarksville is flourishing, and my Rachel and I both feel God's call on us to plant a new family of faith.

This is why He has placed us in Clarksville: to create engaging spaces for people who would never step foot inside of a church to **explore** spirituality, to foster environments to **cultivate** disciples, and to **equip** followers of Jesus to share their faith and live life on the front lines of discipleship, mission, and service in their neighborhoods and the world.

There is a new thing happening and we need help in this Gospel work. Thank you for joining us Cedar Grove!