



**Cedar Grove UMC**

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## **The Beacon February 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

### A WAY FORWARD

Hopefully you are aware that our denomination is having a special General Conference session at the end of February (23<sup>rd</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup>) to consider the report of the Commission on a Way Forward to lead the church in addressing its conflict on the issue of homosexual sex. I hope and pray that you will join me in praying that God might guide this meeting and that God's will be done. Rest assured that whatever decisions they make I will try and do my best to explain the results and what they mean for us here at Cedar Grove UMC. All I can say at this point is that we should not delude ourselves in to thinking, regardless of what decision they make, that it will not impact our church.

We here at Cedar Grove UMC also need to be thinking about what is a way forward for us as a church. What is God asking us to do this year to better bring the Gospel and its power to the people of our community? This is more than thinking about what is going well for us and what is not going well, it is thinking about what God is calling us to do as a church. Churches will always have strengths and weaknesses, but what I am trying to address here is what does God want us to be doing right now? We can't move forward with God if we don't know where God is leading us.

During Lent this year, I think I am going to preach about evangelism. About how we share our faith in words and deeds in our community. We do this not just to get more people to come to church but rather to save souls, to impact our world through the Gospel, and to make a clear witness. We can't do anything to make people come to church or to save their souls and so on, but we can be faithful in sharing our faith in every way we can. Who responds is determined by them and by the power and presence of God.

Don't get me wrong, some people will respond if we are faithful and they will come to our church. And, when they do we need to make sure we are ready to greet them, teach them, support them, lead them, and listen to them and realize that they will bring new ideas to our church. Being the church is more than having a witness it is also about being a place and group of people who will support those who respond to that witness.

Other than praying for our big denominational meeting there is not much else for us to do, but for our church's way forward there is plenty we can do. Pray about it, study the Word of God about it, talk about it, and then be ready to do something about it. God put this church here to bring the Gospel to the people here in our community. And remember, don't just pray for what other people in church should be doing, also pray for where God is calling you to help us be the church that we can only be when all of our members do their part.

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

*Glen*

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## CHURCH NEWS

**Vacation Bible School Leader Needed.** After many years of great and faithful service Sharon Staley will not be leading Vacation Bible School this year. We are tentatively looking at the week of June 21<sup>st</sup> for this year's Vacation Bible School. We need to have a leader or group of leaders volunteer by no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>. If no one steps forward by then we will not have a Vacation Bible School this year. If you are willing or have any questions please contact Sharon Staley or Pastor Glen.

**Reminder of our Church Weather Policy for Weekday Events.** In the event of inclement weather, Cedar Grove will follow Anne Arundel County Public School's policy. If schools are on a two-hour delay, all morning activities will be cancelled. If schools dismiss early, all afternoon and evening activities will be cancelled. If schools are closed for the day, all activities scheduled for that day will be cancelled. *Note:* If a specific group makes the decision to not follow AACPS's decision—this can be to either not meet if they are open or meet if they are closed—you will hear directly from your group leader. Otherwise, please adhere to the policy set forth.

**Tuesday Morning Bible Study.** We are currently studying Genesis. If you would like to join us, please do! We meet in the Fellowship Hall at 10:00 am every Tuesday.

**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.

**Wednesday Night Community Dinners.** Join us for delicious food and Christian fellowship on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Invite your friends and neighbors!

**The Women's Bible Study** meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:45 pm in the Parlor. They are doing a series on the Ten Women of the Bible. If you have any questions, please contact Diana Seen at [dianaseen4@comcast.net](mailto:dianaseen4@comcast.net).

**Family Movie Night** is Friday, February 8 at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will be showing "Hotel Transylvania 3". Anyone wearing RED will get a special sweet treat! 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 at [sweetbooboo16@aol.com](mailto:sweetbooboo16@aol.com).  
*Hope to see you all there!*



The **Church Office** is open Monday-Wednesday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. **If you need assistance when the office is closed**, please contact Pastor Glen at [pastor@cgumc.org](mailto:pastor@cgumc.org) or by cell at 443-699-3645. The office emails will not be read until the office admin is back in the office. So if you have an immediate need, please reach out to the Pastor.

**The United Methodist Baltimore-Washington Conference is offering college scholarships for the Fall 2019 semester.** Interested students can apply January 3 – March 7, 2019 through an online application system. Scholarships are available to students attending or enrolling in accredited colleges and universities in the United States. Students must be an active member of a church for at least one year and be attending (or will attend) an accredited college or university within the United States full-time. Students will need to provide their official transcript (high school or college) and contact information for two church references (pastor and another member of the church). In addition, the student must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale. For additional information and to apply, visit [www.bwcumc.org/administration/local-church-resources/scholarships/](http://www.bwcumc.org/administration/local-church-resources/scholarships/).

**SAVE THE DATE – Cedar Grove Missions Fair – Sunday, March 24.** Pastor Glen has been preaching on the book of James and the message to not just listen and remember what the Word says, but to DO what it says! Also, with the Lenten season approaching, you may be considering an act of service in addition to, or instead of, giving up something. The Missions committee is delighted to advise that we will be hosting a **Missions Fair immediately following worship service on Sunday, March 24.** Come and share some fellowship and learn more about opportunities to serve - whether you have just one day, one hour or much more time, we have an opportunity for you to plug in to a mission. Please join us to learn more and make 2019, the year you "reach out, grow close, and change lives through Jesus Christ." For more information or to sign up for a missions fair information table (no cost), please contact the church office at [office@cgumc.org](mailto:office@cgumc.org) or Ingrid High at [ingrid.quimby@gmail.com](mailto:ingrid.quimby@gmail.com).

*"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." -- 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)*



## When God Speaks

-Sunrise on the Chesapeake Bay.

*Photo taken by Pam Morton.*



## MISSIONS CORNER

The Mission we are highlighting this month is Cedar Grove's **Emergency Food Pantry**.

**Our Emergency Food Pantry is a success!** Since we began this ministry, we have provided groceries to over 50 families and individuals in need. For those unfamiliar with this ministry, we keep on hand at the church enough food to feed a family of 3-5 for a few days until they can get to a regular food pantry in the area. This pantry serves all who contact Cedar Grove with an immediate need for food, and does not replace our support of the SCAN Food Bank (if you have donations for SCAN you can leave them in the bin in the hallway from the Narthex to the Fellowship Hall and we will take them to SCAN).

If you have an emergency need for food or know someone in need, please call the office at 410-867-7417 or stop by during office hours which are Monday-Wednesday, 10am – 4pm.

Those who volunteer to purchase the groceries are contacted by the Church office on a rotating basis to purchase a list of grocery items and bring them to the church. The cost of the groceries is about \$40.00 and would be donated by the volunteer. We will e-mail you the list of items needed or you can find it on our website at [www.cgumc.org](http://www.cgumc.org). When one set of food is given away we contact the next person on the list to shop and bring us a replacement for the food taken. Of course, if you are not able to help at the time you are contacted you can always say no and we will go to the next person on the list.

Thanks to all who have supported this ministry and purchased groceries for the pantry. If you would like to be added to the volunteer list or would like more information, please contact Pastor Glen or Carla Hultberg at the church office at 410.867.7417 or by email at [office@cgumc.org](mailto:office@cgumc.org).





## **BOOK CORNER**



The Rule of Faith: A Guide  
Everett Ferguson Cascade Books 2015 104pgs

Most Christians are familiar with the words Creeds and Canon (meaning the Bible) and that these are given to us as guides to help us believe correctly and live correctly. There was also in the early church something variously referred to as the Rule of Faith or Rule of Truth. This book by Everett Ferguson explores and attempts to pin down what was meant by the early church when it used these phrases Rule of Faith and/or Rule of Truth. I have read enough and studied enough to know that this book was not going to be able to give a simple definition or produce as text that is the Rule of Faith so when the book did not do this, I was not surprised or disappointed.

The first part of the book does a good job of showing how often these phrases were used and giving examples of it being used by many of the leaders of the early church. One quickly gets a sense of how they rely on the Canon, the Scriptures of the early church, and share similarities with creeds such as the Apostle Creed. If the Rule of Faith were meant as 'little creeds' or some other thing, why wasn't this made clear and/or why didn't they say 'as our creed' confirms rather than the Rule of Faith.

The next section of this short book retells the history of what scholars have thought was meant by the Rule of Faith. Finally the book concludes by suggesting as best as it can what the Rule of Faith was and why it is still important today.

The strength of this book is that it gives you the best information for you to get a sense of what the Rule of Faith is and how it was used and how it can still be used. The weakness of this book is that at least for me, no matter how many times Ferguson said the Rule of Faith is not identical with a creed, the information he provided suggests that it is. Do not misunderstand, Ferguson does show that for the early church leaders they meant something different than creed. I am not sure the book gives you enough to understand exactly what that means and to be fair to Ferguson I doubt whether the evidence is available to us at this time to do so. Perhaps one day a writing will be found that talks about exactly what the Rule of Faith is and how it was used but until that day this book does the best any book can do to inform the modern reader about this important phrase, the Rule of Faith, and the vital role it played in the development of the Christian church and faith.

The Rule of Faith was used by the early church to remind people that they were not free to make up whatever they wanted and call it Christian. The Rule of Faith functioned to remind people of the creeds, the Bible, and the basic tenants of the Christian faith from which we cannot move away from. The following doctrines/beliefs would be a part of the Rule of Faith: one creator God, God speaks in the prophets and Old Testament, Jesus is the Son of God born of a virgin, Jesus is creator, Jesus came to bring salvation, Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, and that Jesus will return.

While I enjoyed reading this book it is probably not for everyone given the obscure nature of its topic though it is written in a style that is easy to read and understand. Anyone who is interested in learning about this allusive concept of the Rule of Faith and its role in the early church and today's church will benefit from reading this book.

Pastor Glen Arnold