



Cedar Grove UMC

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From the Pastor's Desk . . .

The Beacon June 2015



Summer 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

Pentecost 2015

As I write this article, Pentecost Sunday is the Sunday I am preparing my sermon - the coming of the Holy Spirit, the third person of our Triune God that indwells in us, guides, and empowers us. The Holy Spirit is just as much God as the Father and Son and we should rejoice that God desires to be with us in this way.

By the time you read this I will have gone to Annual Conference and next year the denomination will be holding its General Conference 2016. I will report on what I learned at Annual Conference this year in the next newsletter and also give you a sense of what we could be potentially facing next year with the General Conference 2016. Please pray for our denominations as important decisions are being made and directions being set.

We will soon receive the date of our next Charge Conference and I will soon be getting the Nominations Committee together to begin to fill committees for 2016. Please if you are asked to serve prayerfully consider your answer.

At the end of this month we will hold our Vacation Bible School from June 28th to July 1st. We need everyone to do four things for our Vacation Bible School. First, pray that all who come to our church that week are touched by the Holy Spirit. Second, invite the kids in your neighborhood to come. Third, collect items for our hygiene kits and bring them in by June 28th. Fourth, consider volunteering to help us have a great Vacation Bible School.

While the church does decrease its activities a little during the summer, we still must strive to be the best church we can be.

Your fellow servant of Christ in the Holy Spirit,

Glen



Book Corner



The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate Michael Kruger IVP 2013 256pgs

You might think that given that the canon has been around for a long time that there wouldn't be any question about it. But there is and I am very grateful that Michael Kruger has written this excellent book. Perhaps you don't know what is meant by the word 'canon'. I remember the first time I heard this word and I thought immediately about a cannon on a battlefield. But this not what is meant. The word canon means a group of texts that are set aside and seen as authoritative for a religious body. While we might often use the words Bible, Scripture, and Canon to all mean the same thing, while similar they are not all the same.

Currently there is much debate over why the Bible was formed and in particular why the New Testament was formed. The key to the debate is discerning whether the reason for the forming of the New Testament canon was external to the Christian movement or was it internal or natural (I use the word natural a little ironically as what I mean by this is 'God intended') part of the forming of the early church. Much has been written by people lately trying to make it sound as if political factors, particularly Emperor Constantine forced the Canon, The Bible on the church. What is ultimately at stake here is the authority of the Bible or to put it more exactly is it a good or could I say 'Christian' thing that we have a closed New Testament Canon. Before I move on to outline the contents of the book, the New Testament Canon is a historical fact and even if we ever undid it, the history of that canon would continue to impact the Christian faith.

The book seeks to answer the five main tenets of the external position about how the canon came about. Each chapter addresses each tenet. The tenets are: We must make a sharp distinction between the concept of Scripture and Canon, there was nothing in early Christianity that would have led to the forming of the canon, early Christianity was adverse to written documents, the writers of the New Testament documents were unaware of their own authority, and New Testament writings were not seen as Scripture until around 200AD.

What makes this book particularly good is that it clearly and fairly lays out the side that it is arguing with and then respectfully gives its answer. I must admit that I agree with the internal view while certainly recognizing that the external view makes some important contributions to understanding why and when the canon was formed.

This is a serious book but one that is easy to read. The detail it goes into means that you need to be interested in this topic or you might be tempted to read the summaries at the end of each chapter. I would say that if that is all you do you will still learn quite a bit. Given how important I believe the Bible is to the Christian Faith, the church, and to every Christian I would encourage everyone to read this book.

CHURCH NEWS

The Ladies Spring Brunch was well attended and I hear that Janet Brown gave an excellent talk.

The **Tuesday Morning Bible Study** continues to study the Gospel of John. There is room for more people so come and join us.

Continue to **pray for our SPY trip** this July. We have over 30 people going!

Vacation Bible School (June 28th to July 1st) is coming up and we need your help. Invite children in your neighborhood to come, volunteer to help us put on the VBS, bring in items for the **VBS MISSION PROJECT** making the hygiene kits for our homeless trips (toothbrushes, bars of soap, travel size toothpaste, travel size shampoo, travel size shaving cream, travel size deodorant, combs, and razors) by June 28th, and pray for a great week.

The Wednesday night dinners, youth group, kids group, and women's Bible study **end for summer break on June 17th**. Sunday School for children ended May 31. Adult bible study will continue on through the summer.

On Saturday, June 20th we will hold a special **School's Out Family Fun & Movie Night** to celebrate the end of school for summer break. Please join us at 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall for a Parents vs. Kids Dodge Ball Game. Then at 6:00 pm we will be showing the movie: "The SpongeBob Movie: A Sponge Out of Water." We will have pizza and cupcakes, as well as popcorn and all the other movie treats we normally sell at our snack shack. All items are \$1.00 or less. Should you have questions, please contact Stacy Crine or the office.

MISSIONS CORNER

The mission we are highlighting this month is the **Breakfast Club**. Please pray for this mission and also prayerfully consider if you can support this mission with your time, talent or tangible gifts.

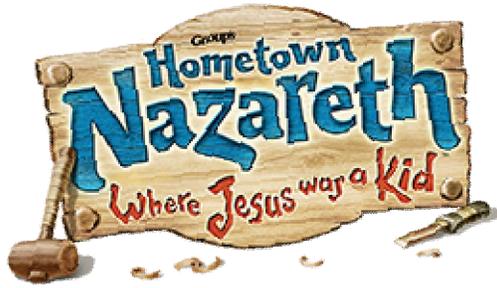
The Breakfast Club is a feeding ministry whose simple goal is : "to nourish the body & spirit of those we serve". We do this by providing breakfast during the summer months to area children/families who typically rely on the free or reduced meal programs at school.

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 provide a weekly food bag every Wednesday from July 8 to August 19 and are looking for volunteers to help between the hours of 5pm and 7pm with packing and distribution. We were blessed this year to receive a generous donation which covers the cost of the food!

For more information or to help, please contact Ingrid Quimby-High at 443-404-8354 or email at Ingrid.quimby@gmail.com.





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Vacation Bible School (VBS) will be held Sunday, June 28th through Wednesday, July 1st. We will be traveling to Hometown Nazareth-Where Jesus was a kid. This amazing experience will help children (and adults) explore Jesus' hometown through the eyes of his mother, Mary.

If you have not experienced VBS at Cedar Grove, let me tell you a little about our time during VBS. We begin each night with Celebration-music and dancing! Children are divided into small groups (the tribes of Israel) with two leaders. There is small group time--called Hometown Huddle--where the Tribes get their daily schedule, have discussions, get their Banduras and prepare to learn about God's Love. The Tribes then rotate to the Marketplace, Fun and Games, and Mary's house; then back to closing Hometown Huddle and closing Celebration.

At Hometown Nazareth **everyone** puts God's Love into action. In the past few years we have had about 60 VBS participants and 50 volunteers! Our volunteers include tribe leaders and assistants, celebration leader, sound room, decorators, costume makers, marketplace shopkeepers, volunteer dinner preparation, "Mary", fun and games leaders, our mission leader (Pastor Glen), advertising, registration, photos, ironing decals, child care and other jobs. Many of our youth help with VBS and have been helping for many years.

VBS will be held from 6:30pm-8:30pm for children entering K-6th grades. Volunteers will be served dinner Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 5:30-6:15pm.

Our VBS is a community outreach--a chance to tell others about God's love. If you would like to be a part of this adventure, please let us know. We pray that Hometown Nazareth VBS will allow God's Word to come to life--touch lives, change hearts and draw children and adults closer to Jesus Christ. We, at Cedar Grove, may be the only Bible some children read.

Thanks to all that make our Vacation Bible School a great time!
Sharon Staley