



Cedar Grove UMC

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The Beacon March 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

LENT 2019

Have you decided on a Lenten commitment and/or discipline for Lent 2019? Lent is the 40 days prior to Easter Sunday not counting Sundays. The time of 40 days was chosen to match the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted by Satan. It should also remind us of the 40 years Israel wandered in the wilderness before entering the Promised Land. In the early church Lent was used as a time to bring new converts into the church. It has always been seen as a time for spiritual disciplines for all Christians. While nowhere in the Bible are we told to have a season called Lent I believe it is good for Christians at all times to try to grow in their faith and use a time like Lent and Advent to help focus such efforts.

I hope and pray that each of you will take advantage of this season to grow in your faith in three ways. First, by committing yourself to a spiritual discipline each day such as time of prayer, fasting, Bible reading, Bible study, reading of other spiritual books, etc.. Second, that you find a way to do good Christian works during Lent. Find ways each day to love your neighbor in deeds. Third, that you talk about your faith each day and share your faith in Jesus with others. In addition if you want to commit to denying yourself something such as no chocolate or some other food do so, for I think for many this can be a moving spiritual experience as well. In the end, it doesn't matter what you do for Lent to grow in your faith as long as you do it!

By the time you read this newsletter the special meeting of our denomination will have already happened. What this will mean for Cedar Grove UMC will begin to become clear and I will do my utmost to share, explain, and lead our church through whatever it needs to do in response. I ask all of you during this Lent to pray for Cedar Grove and the United Methodist Church as we begin this process.

Please take time to read the church news section as three changes to our worship service beginning in March are outlined. We will stick to these changes for a few months to see how it goes. Often we don't like change initially just because it is different, so as the weeks go by I would like to hear how you feel about these changes. I am committed to not immediately change right back, though, so know that while I will hear you and what you think that does not mean we will immediately reverse these changes.

God has given us this Lent to grow in our faith. May Lent 2019 be a time of Christian growth for all of us.

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

Glen



CHURCH NEWS

WORSHIP CHANGES. Starting in March the following changes are coming to our worship service. We will do these changes for a few months and then evaluate them.

- First, we are going to make a slight change to Holy Communion. While we will still be using the pre-cut bread and little cups, we will no longer form a line up front. We will do one side of the sanctuary and then the other half. You will come up the center aisle, take the bread, put it in your mouth, step to the cups, take the cup and drink it and then by way of the side aisles return to your seat. There will be a place for you to put your used cup and at that time you can also place your Sonshine fund offering if you are giving one. If you feel the need, after partaking of the body and blood of Christ, you may spend time in prayer standing in front of the chancel area. Simply step forward to it so that those who are behind you can proceed to their seats.
- Second, the pastor will no longer read all the announcements. The Pastor may highlight an announcement or two, but they are printed in the bulletin and you can read them when convenient for you. Also, there will be no invitation to share announcements from the floor. If you want to announce something from the floor, let the Pastor know prior to the service and you can come up to the microphone to make the announcement so that all in the sanctuary and those watching from home can hear it. Should you or a group have an announcement to be added to the printed bulletin, please contact the Church Secretary at 410.867.6651 or email at office@cgumc.org. The bulletins are printed at 2:00 pm on Wednesday of each week.
- Third, the pastor will no longer ask for prayer requests from the floor. Please give the pastor your prayer card prior to the service. If you don't get a chance to do this or forget you can still fill out a prayer card and place it in the offering basket and it will then go out to the prayer warriors and be printed in the bulletin the following Sunday.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper is coming up on Tuesday, March 5. Please join us and bring your friends for some homemade pancakes, French toast, scrambled eggs, and sausage. Dinner will be served from 5:00 - 6:30 pm. If you are interested in helping with the dinner, please call Mitzi at 410-474-4696 or Kevin at 410-474-4629 they would love to have you. See you then!

Ash Wednesday. Please join us on Wednesday, March 6 at 7:00 pm for our Ash Wednesday service. Ash Wednesday is the day Lent begins when many Christians take on some sort of Lenten discipline as a way to show and grow in their faith. Imposition of Ashes will be offered but one can attend the service and not have this done. Join us as we as individual Christians and as a church begin Lent. (Note: there will not be a Wednesday dinner that night.)

The Martha Lydia Circle Soup & Bake Sale is Saturday, March 9 at 9:00 am-1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Featuring hearty MLC homemade soups for sale at \$7.00/qt: Vegetable Beef and Ham & Bean. They will also have tasty bake sale items. Soup pre-ordering is available. Order forms are included in the Sunday bulletins now until the sale or you can contact the Church office.

Family Movie Night is Friday, March 8 at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will be showing "Ralph Breaks the Internet." 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.

Daylight Saving Time begins on Sunday, March 10. Don't forget to move your clocks forward 1 hour!

Vacation Bible School Leader(s) 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 21st for this year's Vacation Bible School. We need to have a leader or group of leaders volunteer by no later than March 15th. 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.

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 before the summer break there is a strong possibility that the dinners will not return in the fall.

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

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.

Easter Plant Sale. Easter Sunday isn't until April 21st this year. Normally Cedar Grove would sell fresh Easter plants to members and would use them for Sanctuary decorations on Easter morning. We have talked to a couple of nurseries about buying plants but 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.

Save the Date! Cedar Grove's Annual Community Easter Celebration will be held on Saturday, April 20th at 12:00-2:00 pm. Lots of fun is planned for this day! *Details coming soon.*

† MISSIONS CORNER

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 or Ingrid High at ingrid.quimby@gmail.com.



Sanctuary = A place for refuge and protection, A place to worship.

Greetings Brothers and Sisters, I'm writing today to help explain some changes that you have either experienced or heard about lately in our Church. The Church leadership has decided as one of our goals this year we wanted to develop and implement a Church Safety/Security Ministry. This ministry is being created to take on the process of developing policies and protocol for preparing and training the congregation on emergency situations in the church during worship and community activities. While we all pray that nothing terrible happens in our church, it has been brought to light too many times in recent years that tragedy can happen anywhere at any time. We want to prepare our church for natural disasters, medical emergencies, criminal activity and even technical disasters.

The Board of Trustees, in implementing the church agreed goal to develop better security, have asked me to lead this project and as your brother in Christ I have decided to do so and am doing so in collaboration with Pastor Glen. Throughout this year and beyond I will be building a Church Safety Team that will help the Ushers with their tasks during worship and watch over the church during our events. This will be developed with the size of our church and congregation in mind, and should not cause unnecessary burden on any of us. We have moved forward with implementing some first steps by creating a more secure building with the change of perimeter locks around the church and the execution of a more secure key sign-out policy. We have also started to lock the church once worship starts so we can all worship with our full focus on listening to God's Word. If you arrive late, no worries, we have installed door alert bells and lights so our ushers and security personnel can let you in. I will also be adding signs on the doors to guide you to the locations of the buttons. Each one of us has a part in making our church and our community activities secure and safe for everyone.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to bring them to me or anyone else on the security team. Pastor Glen and I would like everyone to take a proactive roll in this endeavor. If you see something unsafe or unsecure, please bring it to the attention of the ushers or security personnel. If you have keys, please make sure to relock doors that you unlock unless specifically told otherwise because of an activity. Stay alert while in church and always know your surroundings.

Matthew 10:16 says "*Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.*" This world we live in reminds us constantly that we need to be alert and vigilant in our Christian walk. Let us work together to keep our sanctuary a place for refuge, a place for protection and a place to worship our Lord safely.

With God's Grace your brother in Christ,

Kevin Roby



BOOK CORNER



Christianity at the Crossroads

Michael Kruger IVP Academic 2018 256pgs

The title of this book might make you think it is about today because the Christian church faces many crossroads these days. Deciding the future of what we will be as a Christian church, such as the UMC meeting as a denomination on February 23-26 on the Way Forward, is one example of the many crossroads we face. This book is actually about the second century of the Christian church meaning primarily 100-200AD. In other words, the last book of the New Testament was written probably in the early 90sAD, so this book talks about what happened in the Christian movement and church after that. It is an area of our history that many, if not most Christians are ignorant of and it is a fascinating time in the life of the church and what we call Christianity.

One might think that the Bible is complete, all Christians walked in lock-step and the church grew as it did grow so incredibly because of how well organized it was and there were no issues dividing the freshly minted Christian movement. Well, that is not how it was. We must be careful, however, not to believe what critics and enemies of Christianity show it as a totally chaotic time where, what we know as orthodoxy or correct belief and practices only gained supremacy by hook, crook, force, and luck. That is a false narrative and this book shows that so clearly. I have read many books on Christianity after the Bible and this book really makes a great contribution to the church by presenting the story of the growth of the Christian movement/church and the issues it faced.

The book covers the sociological makeup of Christianity, the political and intellectual issues the movement faced in the Roman Empire, how worship was done, some of the diversity of faith and practice and why orthodoxy won out, and the importance of written documents to the faith with particular focus on the forming of the canon. In addition to this there is an introduction, conclusion, bibliography, Scripture index, and regular indexes. It is written in an academic style but is accessible to anyone. For me the only thing the book lacked was a chapter describing geographically how the faith spread which I think would have been helpful in understanding more fully the content of the chapters that are in the book.

I would recommend this book to anyone who really wants to know what the second century church faced. It will certainly put into perspective what we face today as Christians. The book is well written, fair, well researched, and really makes you understand a fascinating time in the life of the Christian faith and church.

Pastor Glen Arnold