



Cedar Grove UMC

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REACHING OUT, GROWING CLOSE, CHANGING LIVES THROUGH JESUS CHRIST

From the Pastor's Desk . . .

ASCENSION 2017 & THANKS

We have for most Christians gone through the key story--back in December we remembered the Old Testament prophesy about the coming of Jesus and Jesus was born; on Palm Sunday He enters Jerusalem; on Holy Thursday He has the Last Supper; on Good Friday He dies for our sins; and then on Easter Sunday He rises and proclaims the victory. But there are three more important stops in our story, one of which we will remember in May, the next we remember in June and the last we simply must wait for. But I mean an active wait, a watch, a working hard waiting upon the Lord.

The event we remember in May is the Ascension. After the resurrected Jesus had been with the disciples for 40 days (Acts 1:3) He ascended into heaven. The Letter to the Hebrews tells us that Jesus is our high priest in heaven (Hebrews 1-10) advocating for us, caring for us, a high priest who offered Himself as the sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins.

Jesus leaves us but not empty handed. In June we remember Pentecost--the day God gave us His Holy Spirit. That Spirit of which Jesus said it was good for us for Him to go away, be ascended, because in His place the Holy Spirit comes in dwells in us. With this ascended high priest and the Holy Spirit with us we are to be at work here on earth following Jesus' example, being led and empowered by the Holy Spirit, learning and living by the Word of God until the final event, the true end of the story, when Jesus returns.

I want to take a moment to thank Mitzi Roby for leading and all of the volunteers for helping us to have the Community Easter event on the Saturday of Holy Week where about 150 children and adults enjoyed all of the festivities. I also want to thank those who helped me during Holy Week with the three services--Debbie Huffman for the communion bread I like; Bill Kline for assisting me on Good Friday; Andrew Wood for taking down the wall hangings and Kevin Roby and Paul Seen for putting them back up; the praise team for Easter music and singing; the sound room people for allowing me to be heard and for you all to see the words; Spike Deale for ushering; Lacie Roby for being the acolyte; Alyssa Rose for reading the Scripture; Cindy Rothhaas and helpers for doing children's Sunday school during the worship service; Carla Hultberg for getting the flowers and preparing the bulletins; and finally all of you who come and participate in our services.

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

Glen

The Beacon May 2017



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

UMC JUDICIAL COUNCIL DECISION PENDING

According to our conference's website, the Judicial Council of The United Methodist Church will be deciding an important case at the end of May. The case is about whether or not, as the conference puts it, an openly gay woman who is married to another woman is thus a "self-avowed practicing homosexual" and therefore ineligible to be a bishop in our denomination and in fact should not even be an ordained minister. (*Discipline* Paragraph 304.3)

Regardless of where you stand on the issue of homosexuality, this decision will have an impact on our denomination and thus Cedar Grove UMC. This is true regardless of how the case is decided. For me, it is embarrassing to be in a denomination that goes through the charade of a judicial case for what is obvious. Our judicial council is not trying to decide if this bishop is a self-avowed practicing homosexual as she obviously is, what it is deciding is whether or not our rules apply to all. And what I mean by this is often the rules in an organization are not always applied fairly or consistently based on who you are, who you know, or what side of an issue you are on. We have The Book of Discipline for a reason, if we are not going to enforce it fairly and evenly what is the point? Please be in prayer for the council as they make this decision, for our denomination, and for our own little part of it, Cedar Grove UMC.

Pastor Glen Arnold



CHURCH NEWS

A memorial service for Stacey Witte will be held here at Cedar Grove on Saturday, June 3rd at 10:00 am. Please pray for Greg and Melissa and the rest of their family during this difficult time of loss.

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 followed by Kid's Group, Youth Group, and Women's Bible Study continue to meet so come and have some food and fellowship. And then if you are a kid, a youth, or a woman stay for our various after dinner activities.

The **Tuesday morning Bible study meets at 10am** and is studying the Gospel of Luke and if you would like to come please do. We have usually 14-16 people present and have room for more. If you have any questions contact Pastor Glen.

Family Movie Night is Friday, May 12 at 7:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. We will be showing "Rogue One, A Star Wars Story." 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. Wear your favorite Star Wars gear and you will get a free treat! *Hope you can join us for a fun evening!*



Hey kids, are you ready to travel back in time? **Join us in Rome for Vacation Bible School.** You'll explore the caves of the Underground Church, meet the Apostle Paul, create cool Bible-times projects, experience thrilling real-life dramas, play high-energy games, sample tasty Mediterranean snacks, and hear unforgettable music. Plus, you'll meet lots of new friends! **Our Vacation Bible School begins on Monday, June 12 and ends on Thursday, June 15 at 6:30-8:30 PM each night.**

To **register for VBS**, please pick up a registration form from the table in the Church narthex and return it to the office by either drop off (Mon-Wed, 10am-4pm) or mail it to 5965 Deale-Churchton Rd., Deale, MD 20751. You can also contact the Church Office at 410-867-7417 or by email at office@cgumc.org to have a form sent to you. **We will decorate for VBS on June 7th** after the 6pm Community dinner. **Help is needed & appreciated.** Please see Sharon Staley or Pam Foster if you need more information or would like to volunteer.

Events Around Town:

~ **Southern High Sports Boosters 8th Annual Golf Tournament.** May 22 at Renditions in Davidsonville! If you'd like to golf or sponsor the event, please see our website at: southernathletics.org/hq/boosters-golf-tournament/

~ **UMM Workday at West River Camp & Ministry Center.** May 13. Skilled and unskilled labor are needed. Contact: 443-517-3084 for info and to let them know if you can help.

~ **Mt. Zion UMC Golf Tournament.** May 24 at Renditions. Contact: 410-867-4035

~ **Friends of the Light House 14th Annual Golf Tournament.** Thursday, June 15 at Renditions. Contact: www.friendslhs.org/golf-tournament for info and to register.



MISSIONS CORNER

The Mission we are highlighting this month is
Vacation Bible School's Mission Campaign



Each year at Vacation Bible School Pastor Glen leads a mission campaign. The campaign we have done the past couple of years of collecting hygiene kits for the homeless has been a great success, so we will do it again this year! Our brothers & sisters on the street are so appreciative of the food, clothing, and hygiene kits that we take to them each month. We will be collecting the following items for the hygiene kits during VBS: Dark-colored Wash Cloths: Toothbrushes, Bars of Soap, Travel-size Toothpaste, Travel-size Shampoo, Travel-size Shaving Cream, Travel-size Deodorant, Combs, and Razors. We will begin taking donations of items on the first day of VBS which is Monday, June 12th. We will ask the kids during the week to bring in at least one item each night. We will keep a count of how many kits we complete with these donations. If you would also like to contribute, but you will not be at VBS, please bring your donations in on Sunday, June 11th. As always we thank you for your generosity!



BOOK CORNER



The Parables after Jesus: Their Imaginative Reception across Two Millennia

David Gowler Baker Academic 2017 301pgs

The once a month study will be doing in the Fall of this year in four sessions is the Parables of Jesus, so when I saw that this book was going to be published early this year I put it in my Amazon shopping cart and waited. I bought it the moment it was available and started reading it not to long after with one of my clergy friends. The history of how books of the Bible, types of teachings such as the parables, doctrines, and anything else involved in the Christian faith are interpreted is one of my favorite types of books. You can learn a lot about, for example the parables of Jesus the topic of this book by how interpretation of them has changed over time. Before I go any further, I want to make clear that this does not mean that there are unlimited interpretations, that we can't judge good from bad interpretations, or that interpretation changes so much you wonder if they are reading the same parable. It does mean that we can benefit from past interpreters, particularly as we see how their circumstances impacted their interpretations. This will be helpful by putting us on notice to guard against letting the circumstances of our lives cause us to misinterpret a parable because of our historical and personal situation.

As I mentioned when I saw the book on Amazon I couldn't wait to get it because I thought it would be great. When I got the book and leafed through it I was discouraged. Then when I started to read the book I was very pleased because it turned out to be very well written and interesting. Deeper in the book I had some problems and the last chapter of the five chapters in the book was weak, but overall I am glad I read it and it will be an aide to me in teaching the parables of Jesus in the autumn.

As I mentioned the book has five main chapters bracketed by an introduction and conclusion. Each chapter covers a period of history, 30AD to 550AD ancient times after death of Jesus, 550AD to 1500AD the middle ages, 16th and 17th centuries the renaissance, 18th and 19th centuries early modern, and 20th and 21st centuries the modern and present time. While early in the book the focus is primarily on church interpretation of the parables as the book moves forward in time Gowler includes a secular interpretation of the parables. While most of the focus is on written interpretation of the parables Gowler also includes artistic depictions of the parables as well, such as paintings, plays, stained glass windows, etc. (The book has pictures and it also directs you to where you can find the images not depicted on the Internet.) Finally, the book has an appendix which gives a summary of each parable of Jesus covered in the book (33 of them) and which interpreters interpreted that parable in the book and a Scripture index (great resources for when you are reading your Bible and come across a parable you would like to see what someone thinks about).

The variety of people Gowler selected ranges from well known Church Fathers such as Augustine and Aquinas, to famous civil rights leaders such as Frederick Douglas and Martin Luther King Jr., to artists such as Rembrandt and Thomas Hart Benton, to writers/poets like Leo Tolstoy and Emily Dickinson, to great Bible interpreters like Adolph Julicher, and finally to a few people I have never heard of before. All of whom Gowler briefly introduces to you and then goes about showing how they understood the parables of Jesus.

With only one or two reservations, I recommend this book to anyone who is interested in the parables of Jesus and how they were and are interpreted. Note, it is from Baker Academic so while it is easy to read, it is written in the academic style which you all know I like. It is a serious book and one which gets all the better if you don't try and rush through it but contemplate the parable of Jesus being addressed, the interpretation being given, and the place in history from which the interpreter wrote. Finally, reading it and discussing it with someone else really added to my enjoyment of the book and what I learned from it.

Pastor Glen Arnold