



Cedar Grove UMC

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The Beacon December 2013



Office Hours

Monday	9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Tuesday	9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Wednesday	9:00 am to 4:00 pm

From the Pastor's Desk . . .

GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY

Without a doubt one of my two favorite 'Christmas' verses is Luke 2:11, which reads 'To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.' In this one verse we are told that something begins – is born, that we are not just telling a story but rather reporting real history for – in the city of David is a real place and that this beginning is a person who is the Messiah (Christ), Savior, and Lord – He is God incarnate, the same as the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David. So while something is beginning, it is also the continuation of God's plan.

And that it is God's plan is the key point for us. Because it is a part of God's plan for us to take the good news of the birth of Jesus, the Lord and Savior of all who believe in Him to every person in our world. It doesn't matter how many times you have told the people in your life that the importance and true meaning of Christmas is that God so loved us that He sent His only Son to save us. We can't silence all the other voices who point to the true meaning of Christmas being family gathered, gifts, Santa Claus, a big dinner, parties, snow, and so on, but that fact shouldn't allow us to think God is okay if we are silent about the birth of our Lord and Savior.

So lift your voice this Holy, not holiday, season with the true meaning of Christmas. Don't share 'season's greetings' but instead give Good News of Great Joy (Luke 2:10) to everyone that a Savior has been born for them. Don't just look under the tree at the gifts we give and receive, but look to the tree turned into a cross where the only eternal gift was given, for yes that new born babe will one day be crucified for us. We needn't worry which list of Santa's we are on, but rather is our name on God's list in the Book of Life. And finally remember that what every home needs is not a visit from old Saint Nick, but rather the presence of Christ, the light of the world.

Each Christmas we have the opportunity to talk and sing about the birth of Jesus. We should do so loudly to honor Jesus, to praise God, and to share this good news with all who need to hear it and because we cannot help but praise and thank God for this great gift.

It is my hope and prayer that all of you have a happy Christmas and a blessed new year.

Your fellow servant of the Christ Child,
Pastor Glen



UPCOMING EVENTS

Weekly Community Dinner and Activities	Wednesday 6:00 pm (We will not meet 12/18/13, 12/25/13 and 1/1/14)
Children and Youth Program	12/22 at the 10:00 am Service
Christmas Eve Services	7:00 pm and 9:00 pm (Services will be identical with the exception of a children's message at the 7pm service and a slightly longer regular message at the 9pm service.)
Christmas Day Service	9:30 am

CHURCH NEWS

We want to **rename the Education Center** since now it's use is much more varied. We have Sunday School, Youth Group, meetings, and the offices in this building. If you have a suggestion please email me with it, and the Trustees will vote on which name they like the best.

Please remember that the **Sonshine Policy** has changed and we are now only helping members in need or if a member knows of someone who needs help they can sponsor that help. All you have to do is contact the Pastor. Let us share God's love with more people by helping the church find people to help.



Book Corner



Since this is the month of Christmas I thought I would talk about three little books that make great gifts and are fun reads. All three books are by Ace Collins and their titles are: Stories Behind the Best-Loved Songs of Christmas, More Stories Behind the Best-Loved Songs of Christmas, and Stories Behind the Great Traditions of Christmas. If you have ever wondered how a candy cane became a Christmas symbol or why Silent Night was written or any other such question you will most likely find an answer. The chapters on each song or tradition can range from as few as four pages to more than twenty pages. I have found these books to be well written and accurate. Each book is around 200 pages.

PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

I want to ask all of you to **help me** serve our church. One way you can do that is by letting me know that someone is sick or in the hospital. Don't think I already know, give me a call or send me an email or text. I would rather be told 10 times that someone is not doing well then to not hear at all. Also, remember if you are sick or in the hospital, and I call and ask if you would like a visit, you will not hurt my feelings if you no. My goal is to help you in trying times not make them worse. And remember if you want to talk or meet with me, please call the office Monday through Wednesday 9am to 4pm on the church number or you can reach me at any time on my church provided cell phone.

Well, as you read this newsletter we are beginning to try **our new order of worship**. A few of the reasons of the changes were as follows: first, not have the children have to sit in the service so long; second, move the non-worship elements of our service to the beginning before we begin worship so that once we start being focused on God in prayer, song, reading of the Scriptures, giving our gifts, and proclaiming the Gospel that is where our focus will stay; and third, singing more songs allow us to get more into the Spirit worshipping God. I knew when I proposed these changes there would be people who like them and those who don't like them. My prayer is that we will all realize that our worship service strives to reach the needs of many people and that inevitably means that most people will not like everything we do in worship together. But remember, that part of the service you don't like, is someone else's favorite part!

Stewardship in 2014: While Cedar Grove UMC does not do an annual stewardship campaign, it is important for every member and friend of this church to think about not just how much money they will give in 2014 to our church but also how much of their time, talent, prayers, and witness they will provide as well. I hope and pray that every one of you will prayerfully consider what you will share with your church in 2014 to help us be the best church we can be.

Finally, we **need more leaders and workers**. Is there something you would like to help with in the life of our church? Trust me; we can use your help. Have a new idea of something we should be doing as a church and are willing to work with me and the church leadership to make it happen, we want to hear from you.