



Cedar Grove UMC

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The Beacon

October 2014



Office Hours

Monday	10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Tuesday	10:00 am to 5:00 pm
Wednesday	10:00 am to 5:00 pm

From the Pastor's Desk . . .

REPORT TO THE CHARGE CONFERENCE 2014 (Narrative part)

Praise God! Thanks! As has been true for every year I have been in the ministry (currently my 26th), I give God the praise and I am also thankful to Him and to the people of our church for allowing us to continue to serve God and those God has placed on our hearts to serve. For God has led us to serve those people who enter our building each week for worship, Bible study, fellowship, and gather for ministry. God has also led us to support three missions, which means we care for people in Europe, India, and at the detention center in Annapolis. We also reach out to the homeless in our nation's capital and in our state's capital. We feed the hungry right here in the Deale area through our Breakfast Club. We invite the adults, youth, and children of our community to come for food, fellowship, fun, and Christian learning through our VBS, movie night, Bible study, kid's group, and youth group. We support scouting ministries by having Girl Scouts meet in our building during the school year and a Boy Scout Troop during the summer when they can't meet at their regular place. We have established a relationship with two local elementary schools and provide them a few times a year with school supplies and gifts. Our praise team enables us to have a rich and fulfilling worship every Sunday morning. Our women's group does many things each year to enrich our church and our outreach to the community.

This year we have added an emergency food pantry to our ministry of serving people in need. We had a very successful SPY mission trip over the summer, with more adults and youth going this year. Our VBS was better attended this year. The decline in worship attendance that this church has experienced over the last 3-4 years has slowed from losing 25-30 a year to--what I am confident come year's end--a loss of less than 10. We took in six new members, all six of which were by profession of faith. We have come up with a plan to try and get more of our children in Sunday school and we are enacting it this fall. Finally, while it looked like our Wednesday night community dinners might end, we have come up with a plan to continue them and thus continue our great Wednesday night activities!

We do however continue to face several challenges. First, we are not attracting new people to the faith or our church. Second, we continue to have too few leaders and workers to even consider trying to do more, as we struggle to maintain what we are doing. Third, while significantly slowing the decline in worship attendance is good news, we need to see it go in the other direction.

From the Pastor's Desk cont'd. . .

While it is great to list our successes and to desire to do better and be aware of our struggles I believe one thing that we need to continue to work on, in the midst of facing our challenges and trying to grow, is to celebrate the church we are right now. We have vibrant worship. We serve our neighbors in the church, next door, in jail, down the road and around the world. We educate and help grow the Christians of all ages that participate in our ministries. We surround with prayers and acts of love the sick, the dying, and the bereaved. God is glorified at Cedar Grove UMC. And we must, not only, never forget it, we should be joyful that God is in our midst and that we are His servants, and that the Holy Spirit is alive here at CGUMC! AMEN!

In closing I want to thank the staff, leaders, workers, members, and friends of our church whose support and work is so vital to our church being a faithful one. I particularly want to thank that small group of people who are seemingly always here helping us to be the church. I don't need to name you because you know who you are. I do want to thank by name those who have stepped up and took on leadership responsibilities this year, Doug Sheidy and Becky Haring for becoming our new praise team leaders, Pam Morton for becoming the head of our DC homeless trip ministry, Mary Day for taking on the after worship refreshments, and Bill Kline for being our Wednesday night dinner coordinator.

To God be all the glory,

Pastor Glen L. Arnold

CHURCH NEWS

» So what do you think of the **new pulpit** that was built by Kevin Roby and funded by Sam and Norma Baker to the glory of God in memory of their parents? I think it is beautiful and I am very thankful to have a great place to proclaim the Gospel!

» So far our new **Sunday school** (having Sunday school at both 9am and 10am for children k-5) has been a success. More children are learning about Jesus and His love. I am very thankful to our committed Sunday school staff. We continue to have Sunday school at 9am for all ages and I encourage all of you to consider coming to one of our classes.

» The **Wednesday night program** of dinner, kids group, youth group, and women's Bible study are back and doing well. I would encourage everyone to take advantage of a great meal, time of fellowship, and opportunity to grow in our faith.

» **Save the date for our Community Fall Fest!**—Saturday, November 1 at 3:00-6:00 pm, with activities including a Trunk n Treat, Bale Sale, Smores around a campfire, a hayride and MORE! A flyer with additional details will be coming soon. If you would like to help out with this event, please see Sharon Staley or contact the office.

» On November 2 we will hold our **All Saints** service remembering those members of our church who died since last All Saints.

Book Corner



The Darkest Day, Charles Muller University of Pennsylvania Press 2003 (orig. 1963) 240pgs
The Battle for Baltimore, Joseph Whitehorne N&A Press 1997 262pgs
The Burning of Washington, Anthony Pitch Naval Institute Press 2000 336pgs
When Britain Burned the White House, Peter Snow Thomas Dunne Books 2014 320pgs
Through the Perilous Fight, Steve Vogel Random House 2013 560pgs
The Dawn's Early Light, Walter Lord Norton 1972 384pgs

This month I deviate again from the norm and review non-religious books. Two hundred years ago, during the summer of 1814 (one of the hottest summers ever recorded) the British Army came up the Patuxent River, despite Joshua Barney's valiant flotilla, and defeated the American Army at the Battle of Bladensburg. They burned the Capital and the White House (and a few private buildings), withdrew back to the Chesapeake Bay, and then went on to attack Baltimore. They were stopped in the Battle of North Point (fought near a Methodist Meeting House, by the way) by the fortifications on Hampstead Hill and, of course, Fort Mchenry. This battle gave way to the creation of our national anthem.

Since it is the Bicentennial of the War of 1812 and given that many of the battles occurred in our backyard, I thought I would briefly review six books on this campaign in hopes of getting more people to know about and respect the fascinating history of our state and nation. The books cover the battles and the heroes of the war who all deserve to be remembered--not just Francis Scott Key and Dolly Madison, but also Commodore Joshua Barney, a hero of not only the War of 1812 but of the American Revolution; Generals Samuel Smith and John Stricker; Major George Armistead; Clerk Stephen Pleasonton; and Dr. William Thornton. You will also learn in the books about the failures of President Madison, members of his cabinet, General Winder, and others. Finally, you will learn about British heroes (or villains as they are so often remembered here), such as Admiral Cockburn and General Ross, and the fact that they were not the monsters that so much of our popular history paints them to be.

All five of these books cover the exact same story. The early attacks on the Chesapeake Bay, the defense of the Potomac and Patuxent Rivers, the Battle of Bladensburg, the burning of portions of Washington, D.C., the attack on Alexandria, the flight of our government, the attack on Baltimore, the writing of the Star Spangled Banner, and the withdrawal of the British forces. What distinguish the books are style, detail, and length. The good news is you can't go wrong with any of these books. They are all excellent and available.

If you just want the basics, read the oldest of these books The Darkest Day. For the longest time, the only book I knew that was available on this topic was Walter Lord's The Dawn's Early Light which is still after all of these years a good book by an author who has a great gift for telling historical stories in a reader friendly way, as evidenced by his books on the Battle of Midway, Pearl Harbor, and the sinking of the Titanic. (I read a lot of Lord's books as a teen and young adult and he, along with Robert Leckie and John Toland, made history come alive for me.) Like The Darkest Day this book is dated and would not include the research done over the last 40+ years, but it is still a good read. If you want a more academic and military focused book The Battle for Baltimore should be your choice. If you are particularly interested in the National Anthem angle Through the Perilous Fight would be the one to read. It is quite fascinating. The Burning of Washington is considered one of the better books to read on this subject. Finally, the most recent of these books, When Britain Burned the White House is written by an Englishman and I enjoyed it very much. It brings the British perspective to the campaign.



Regardless of which one you start with, don't be surprised if you find yourself wanting to read the others to learn more! If I was only going to read one of these excellent books, it would be Through the Perilous Fight.

I think it bad form when doing a book review to tell all the best stories or give a summary of the events in that one hardly needs to read the book(s), but I do want to give some detail about one of the interesting people you will read about in these books. My first church was right near where Joshua Barney and his flotilla of small ships was stationed and who, for a while, made life difficult for the mighty British navy. After he had to burn his flotilla to avoid having it captured (he blew it up right in their faces by the way) his men with their cannons joined the American Army at Bladensburg which turned out to be one of the greatest defeats by an American Army ever. Most of the American forces ran, but Barney, his flotilla men which included many African-Americans (there is a fascinating exchange between Barney and President Madison about the courage of the African-American flotilla men) along with some US Marines were the only American troops to shine. They stood firm and stopped the British for awhile, with their cannons and by charging the British with the most unusual command for a land battle, 'Board them!' (This is the traditional command to sailors on a ship to jump onto the enemy ship and try and take it over.) So admired by Admiral Cockburn and General Ross that they not only saw to it that when they captured the wounded Barney that a British doctor tended to his wounds, but immediately paroled him and had their soldiers carry him to a place to rest. Some of his flotilla men then went to Baltimore and made an important contribution to the defense of Baltimore. Barney and his flotilla men deserve a place in the common memory with the minutemen, the Green Mountain boys, the over the mountain men, and other great early American military heroes. (If you want to really learn more about the story of Barney and the Flotilla, the book to read is Flotilla: The Patuxent Naval Campaign in the War of 1812 Donald Shomette Johns Hopkins Press 2009 rev. ed. 520pgs.)

As I mentioned above, there are many more interesting characters and stories in these books about our history, but I won't tell you about them. I hope instead that you will be inspired to read one or more of the books to learn their fascinating stories. The War of 1812 needs to be remembered and you will find in these books a very interesting, moving, and exciting tale of historical events.