



# THE MESSENGER

The News of the Centreville United Methodist Church April 2007

## PASTOR'S PARAGRAPHS

*Pastor Grier*

Recently, the Discovery Channel broadcast a program titled, "The Lost Tomb of Jesus." It generated a lot of interest and controversy. Among the facts presented in the program are these: a family tomb, located about five miles from Old Jerusalem and dating to the first century, was discovered in 1980; the tomb contained ten ossuaries--bone boxes--six of which were inscribed with names; among the names on the boxes were: Joseph, Mary, and Jesus--all common names of the period; DNA testing revealed that bone fragments in the ossuary of Jesus, and bone fragments in an ossuary with the name Mariamene (Mary Magdalene?) inscribed on it, showed these two persons were unrelated, which might have meant they were married; Judah (another name-inscribed ossuary) is presumed by the documentary's producers to be the son of Jesus and Mariamene, although there were no bone fragments in that ossuary on which to do DNA testing to ascertain whether or not Judah was in fact related to both Jesus and Mariamene. From these facts and presumptions, and from cited mathematical odds (600 to 1, that a Joseph, Mary, Jesus, Mariamene, etc. would all be located in the same tomb), the producers of the program concluded that they had discovered the lost tomb of Jesus.

Has the "lost" tomb of Jesus been discovered? Did Jesus "rise" from the tomb in spirit only, and his body waste away in the grave so that his bones could later be gathered and put into an ossuary? Could it be possible? There are many in the world who would like to believe that, but it is highly unlikely! For one thing, a good number of archeologists, as well as biblical and non-biblical scholars, have raised serious

academic and theological questions about the conclusion of the documentary that the lost tomb of Jesus has been discovered. Another sound reason for questioning the documentary's conclusion is the record of the Gospels. The Gospels are about nineteen hundred years old. Their unanimous record is that the tomb of Jesus was empty on the first Easter Sunday. A third reason for questioning the documentary's conclusion would be Jesus' enemies. Those who schemed to put Jesus to death, did not dispute that the tomb was empty. They knew where the tomb was. They even put a seal on it, and had it guarded.

If Jesus' enemies knew his tomb wasn't empty they would have quickly pointed to it and declared the Christian message of His resurrection a lie. That Jesus rose bodily from the grave is well accepted Church doctrine attested to by Scripture and ancient creed. Luke records the evening meeting of Jesus with the disciples in chapter 24: *But they were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.* (vs 37-39)

What really matters as we prepare to celebrate Easter? Does it really matter that a documentary on Discovery Channel concludes that the "lost" tomb of Jesus has been found? Not really. Does it really matter that you can go to Jerusalem and visit the Church of the Holy Sepulcher—the purported site of Jesus' tomb? Not really. Does it really matter that the ancient Apostles' Creed affirms that "Jesus Christ. . . was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day he rose from the dead?" Not really. The Discovery Channel program can't prove that they've found the "lost" tomb of Jesus. And the Church of the Holy Sepulcher can't

prove it is the actual tomb from which Jesus rose from the dead. And memorizing and reciting the Apostles' Creed won't get you into heaven. You see, what really matters is that the risen Christ lives in your heart by faith! What really matters is that you know Him, by

### **EASTER LILIES**

Lilies will be displayed on the altar for Easter Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in having a lily on the altar in "memory or honor" of someone, please call the church secretary, Pat, before Wednesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>. The church will be open to received the lilies until noon on Friday April 6<sup>th</sup>. Please pick up your lily after the 11:00 service on Easter Sunday.

### **UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

*Barbara*

*Erickson*

We have just finished serving refreshments to the Lay Academy. We will serve again on May 19<sup>th</sup> following a memorial service for Mr. & Mrs. Carter Hickman.

Our Tuesday morning cut and stitch sessions have been difficult due to construction, but we do have items cut that may be stitched at home - shopping totes, wheelchair and walker totes, bibs and lap robes. Feel free to stop in and pick up a kit to do at home!

April 11<sup>th</sup> at 1:20 we will meet at Corsica Hills Center for our delayed tour of the remodeled facility. All are welcome to join us! At this time, we will have available to present to them - Bibs, walker & wheelchair totes and lap robes.

As soon as possible we will have a work session to move back into the kitchen. Help will be needed! Watch the bulletin for exact time and dates!

Start now on your projects for the Bazaar....it is never too early!!!!

Our Cookbooks are still available ....contact any UMW member or the church office for a copy.

### **UNITED METHODIST MEN**

*Ed Parry*

The Methodist Men have barbecued chicken as a fund raiser for over 40 years. The proceeds helped put in our sidewalks, assist families who were

faith, as your Lord and Savior! What really matters is that, by faith, you follow Him, love Him, serve Him day by day by day. I'm looking forward to Easter! I hope you are, too!

victims of fire, and raise money for the building fund, to name just a few. The Methodist Men have not seen the influx of younger members needed to keep an active roster. Unfortunately, due to a lack of volunteers, the fall chicken barbeque was cancelled.

Currently on the calendar is a chicken BBQ for Wednesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. With the help of the church, the chicken BBQ can continue to be the main fund raiser for the Methodist Men. Volunteers are needed to do prep work and to assemble the final product. There will be evening work sessions on Monday and Tuesday night (April 23 & 24) from 6 to 9:30 p.m. Assembly work will be done on April 25<sup>th</sup> from 9 a.m. til 6:30 p.m. Any help from any gender or age person is appreciated and needed. Please write these dates on the calendar now to keep them free. Any questions (or to sign up in advance) please call Ed Parry at 410-758-1291. Together we can keep this CUMC tradition going!"

### **CHRISTMAS IN APRIL**

*Larisa*

*Thomas*

Christmas in April is scheduled for Saturday, April 28<sup>th</sup>. This is the opportunity for anyone to help local members of our county fix up their houses, repairs these people can not do on their own. There currently are more applications for houses to be worked on than there are crews. VIM is trying to get extra volunteers together so CUMC can take on an additional house repair project. All levels of volunteers are needed, from basic unskilled labor to knows-something-about-repair-work people. An additional crew leader would be wonderful! Anyone interested or having questions can call Robin Pilli at 410-758-1126.

## APPALACHIA MISSION TRIP

*Larisa Thomas*

VIM is getting ready for their mission trip to West Virginia April 12-15th. On Palm Sunday there will be a prayer partner sign up board for the congregation to pair with the trip participants. On Easter Sunday at the 11 a.m. service Pastor Grier will say a Commitment blessing for the participants. The sendoff, open to anyone wishing to see the group off, will be at 7 a.m. in the front church parking lot on Thursday, April 12<sup>th</sup>. Check out the next newsletter for news about how our trip went!

## EVANGELISM

*Ann Harlan*

It is wonderful to see things beginning to grow again and for the weather to be warmer at last. Our spirits are lifted at this time of year by the rebirth of nature and by the Easter promise. It is a good time also with so much renewal going on at our church, to renew our energy to reach out to one another. I see so much love here and I hope we are making our visitors feel that love too. I pray we are reaching out to those we have not seen lately and those who have gone another direction. This is a good time for our church to grow not only in structure but in membership. Please take a few minutes each week to contact someone who needs our love and let me or my committee know if we can do anything to help.

## WOMEN'S MORNING OUT

Our next meeting will be April 26 at 10 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. It will be a very exciting time with a special guest speaker, Jennifer Bodine, daughter of the famed photographer, A. Aubrey Bodine. She will show us his famous work and talk about his life. It should be wonderfully interesting morning. We will have our usual refreshments, child care, fellowship, games, and door prizes. Bring a friend with you! It should be fun!

## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

*Fran*

*Comegys*

**We need an assistant teacher**, someone that can help with the class work and take over the class if a teacher calls out or needs off. **We also need a teacher helper**, someone that takes the attendance and offering, helps to get the crafts ready and hands on help with the younger children. If you feel you can help please call Fran Comegys @ 410-758-1421.

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

*Larisa Thomas*

Grab your sunglasses and beach towels and get ready for some splashing fun at our Take the Plunge VBS! Take the Plunge is a water park adventure, but it is also a Bible Adventure you're going to love. So mark your calendars. Take the Plunge will soak you from Sunday June 24<sup>th</sup> thru Thursday June 28<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Grab your sun block and beach chair and prepare to Make a Splash for Jesus. It will be an adventure you will never forget!"