

"WE ARE OUR FUTURE"

CELEBRATING OUR VISION TOGETHER, TEN YEARS LATER

FALL 2016

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This Fall we are celebrating ten years with Matthew Dyer, Lead Pastor. We hope you enjoy this edition of The Quarterly as we dive right into our Inside Story with an interview by Melinda Anderson, Board Chair, with Matthew himself, as we reflect on the progress we've made toward our vision at Cedar Ridge.



What drew you to Cedar Ridge Community Church? Tell us about your journey.

While serving as a Pastor in Cincinnati, I developed a friendship with Brian McLaren, the founding pastor of Cedar Ridge. I had known Brian for about 20 years, during a time when he was beginning to write and travel. While I didn't know much about his church, it was clear that we shared a lot in common—how we saw life, the world, and the church—which anchored our friendship. After moving back to England and returning to my original profession as a medical doctor, Brian reached out to me with the news that he was stepping down from leadership, and Cedar Ridge was looking for a new pastor. I was not leading a church anymore, and initially I was very unsure about uprooting my family and moving across the Atlantic again. But we visited the church and were overcome with the wonderful community of people at Cedar Ridge. The rest is history, as they say!

What were your first impressions when you arrived?

What struck me immediately was that the church was quite different in its culture and structure from Brian. I was most familiar with the latter, so that took a little adjustment. Brian had been on his own spiritual journey as reflected in his books, and this had clearly influenced Cedar Ridge as a very open-hearted, welcoming community with a genuine passion to make the world a better place. But the church was also still rooted in a traditional evangelical approach with a fairly conservative theology. Respecting where Cedar Ridge was philosophically, it did make me think there might be some challenges in leading the church forward since I personally was in a different place. It was also very apparent that within the community itself there was a diversity of opinions and perspectives, some even diametrically opposed. But underlying it all there was a wonderful spirit of love—so the future was very hopeful.

Soon after your arrival, you led Cedar Ridge through a visioning process. What was your motivation in embarking on this effort?

Simply, I saw a pressing need for the Cedar Ridge community to have a unifying vision. While recognizing and valuing the wonderful things that were happening, the church seemed to be moving simultaneously and actively in lots of different directions. And the leadership—both staff and

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Farmed & Delivered

by: Violet Mather

The following is an article written by Violet Mather for a third-grade, class assignment about working on the farm this summer at Cedar Ridge. It seemed a fitting tribute to close out the summer on the farm!

Over the summer I was at my church. My church is special, for two things. One, we don't believe some things normal churches do. Second, we have a farm. Yes, a real, 65 acre farm. We grow veggies and strawberries. So there is this woman named Ruth, and she is in chare of farming, and she keeps trying to get people involved in farming, and kept asking, so my parents FINALLY broke down and said ok. "Violet, please, it will be fun," my parents coaxed.

I didn't want to come, but come I came, and just as I though, it was hard. Sweat, work and water, as the person who worked the least, of COURSE it hurt. Ruth was very nice about my predicament. She kept saying things like, "I can do the spiky weeds for you," "let me find something for your to do," "take a break," "you can pick peppers." I felt like a five-year-old. The sweetest part was the lollipops. I had like five. I helped weed, water, and pick. I picked a perfect peck of perfect pecked non-purple peppers. Me & another girl had a water fight. We were "supposed" to water the tomatoes, but we ended up getting more water on ourselves than the tomatoes. More fun than watering the tomatoes that way. (I don't even like tomatoes, or by that matter, any other vegetable.)

We have tire swings there so I spent a good TWENTY MINUTES swinging. I was sad to go home, that was a surprise. I almost wanted to deliver. That reminds me, if you were wondering "where do those veggies go? Do you eat them?" The answer is no. We deliver them to homeless shelters, nursing homes, and Greencastle Elementary School. And I usually don't help, but this time I did. I tell you, I



Photo: Violet Mather has been helping on the farm for most of her young childhood, pictured here with Ayla and Xavier Wendt in 2013 preparing vegetables for delivery.

don't like it! I always, always come if it's a big load. ALWAYS rely on sensible Violete to DROP WHAT SHE DOES ALWAYS to help you do something, RIGHT as she starts something she likes. This time we went to a homeless shelter. (I don't like doing the drive) I took one bag, and my brother and my mom took trips. Back and forth, and back and forth AND BACK AND FORTH!! The owner thanked us, he knows my mom well, "hello, what are you're names?"

"Violet," I told him. Bye! And we went to get ice cream. Delicious! THE END (but we still farm.) ■



Photo: Violet Mather is the daughter of Tinica who serves on the Pastoral Team and Steve who serves as Board Treasurer.

CEDAR RIDGE HARVEST festival

SATURDAY, OCT. 15, 4pm-7pm

Cedar Ridge Community Church
Harvest festival!!!!

by: Jack and Lucy Follis
(10 and 8 years old)

A few weekends ago we went to the Cedar Ridge harvest festival. There were a lot of things to do like bouncy things, candy apples, live music and so much more! There were food trucks and you could pick a pumpkin and paint and carve it. One of our favorite things was face painting. There were lots of volunteers who helped make everything fun. If you didn't get to come, be sure to come next year. We welcome you to Cedar Ridge!

Thank you to all those who helped make this year's Harvest Festival a success. Some 5-600 people were in attendance, enjoying the festivities which included live music, a pumpkin patch, face-painting, inflatables, food trucks, and more. Tinica Mather reports that we ran out of 300 pumpkins halfway through, and food trucks were completely sold out!



Photos: Beginning with the Burtonsville Day Parade at the end of September, Cedar Ridge reached out to invite our local community to join in the festivities of our annual Harvest Festival.



WE ARE OUR FUTURE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Photo: Matthew speaking about the new vision during September of 2007, after a year-long revisioning process with Cedar Ridge.

volunteers—was having serious difficulty in sustaining this level of activity. So we needed a cohesive vision. One we could all agree on and commit to, as well as one that would inspire us to action, give us a guiding frame of reference for everything we do, and also healthily restrain us (by showing us what not to do). It was a wonderful year-long process involving our entire church community. Everyone was able to contribute in some way, through large all-church facilitated discussions, writing projects, small group feedback, and leadership retreats. The result was the robust vision statement we have today. Most significantly, it's much more than a written statement; the meaning and essence behind the words is what guides our activity as a community.

What inspires you about our vision?

Admittedly, I am a little biased, but I really love our vision. Whether I was lead pastor—in fact, whether I was even part of this community—our vision statement is how I would wish to live my life! Above all else, three things stand out for me:

First, **JESUS**—the simplicity of following Jesus. We're dreaming of what life would be like if we followed Jesus. Our vision is not some kind of corporate statement up on the wall that dictates to us. Rather we follow our vision because our vision is following Jesus! It keeps us centered by stating that we are "daring to dream of heaven on earth" which acknowledges that we are seeking something beyond

ourselves. We need something more than just good ideas, good teaching, or good principles. We would call that the Holy Spirit or the resurrected Spirit of Christ.

Second, **HOPE**—Our vision essentially refuses to give up on anyone. We don't give up on ourselves, on others, on the world, or on God. It's so tempting at times to give up and withdraw into the false safety of the space we create for ourselves. But our vision inspires us that no matter how dark it may be, no matter how dark our own situations, there is always hope. Change is always possible and we never give up.

Third, **LOVE**—This is the essence of our vision. God is love. Love is God. Love is the greatest force in the universe, and our reason for hope. Everyone is accepted here. To be part of our community simply means being willing to work at loving better. That means loving one another better, modeling what a new kind of humanity could look like, and reaching out into the world with that love. That's just what Jesus did—fully embodying love and bringing love to the world.

And how is it going? How would you describe progress with our vision?

If I were to use one word to describe our journey, it would be a healthy "struggle"—the tension between the present



Photo: Matthew and his young family moved to Maryland in 2006 to join Cedar Ridge. Left to right: Megan, wife Lisa, and Lois with sons George and Oliver (front).

(or the past) and moving into the future. I think perhaps the most amazing progress we have made with our vision is that we have made it the norm to struggle. God invites us to struggle. Perhaps faith and spirituality by its very nature is a struggle. I know I struggle: to be a better person, a better friend, a better husband, a better father—and yes, a better pastor. I also struggle against my own selfishness, prejudice, and unwillingness to change. One way or the other we are all engaged in an active process of change. We are looking at ourselves and accepting that change needs to begin with us, and we are doing something about it. That's pretty amazing really. It is the exercise of hope. It is love in action.

That's very inspiring. It's also very personal. How do you see this struggle working out in our community as a whole?

I think we have struggled toward all kinds of positive things related to our vision: our embrace of diversity and racial justice, and what that means for us in our culture and in our community; our ownership of 63 acres of land and farming it for the poor; and our desire to make a difference in our world through partnerships with Greencastle Elementary School, local homeless shelters, and Ipala in Guatemala. We're also struggling to be a community that breaks down barriers between young and old, with all ages tackling the same subject matter and worship services that truly engage all ages. In talking to leaders from other progressive churches, I'm continually amazed by our church community for embracing this way of doing church and making progress!

Still, there is also a painful and challenging aspect to this struggle. After the vision process, as we clarified that Cedar Ridge openly accepts and affirms our gay brothers and sisters, that was hard for some in our community and after lots of discussion many felt they needed to leave. Likewise, our community has struggled with interpretations of the Bible, our approach to theological issues, social justice, and racism. And we experienced financial struggles, due to the recession, major repairs to our barn, and fluctuating membership. At times we weren't sure if we'd make it. But we have! God has been incredibly faithful to us. And this community has been incredibly faithful. For all our struggles we are a community full of people who do want to be this kind of church, who do want to follow Jesus in this way, and who are really excited about our vision. Becoming this kind of community has sustained us through all this. All of us here have played such an important part in this journey. We are our future!

Speaking of the future, what are you most excited about? And what's the biggest challenge that lies ahead?

In many ways I think these are the same! We are a church that embodies a certain paradox. People who are into organized religion often aren't attracted to Cedar Ridge. Whereas people

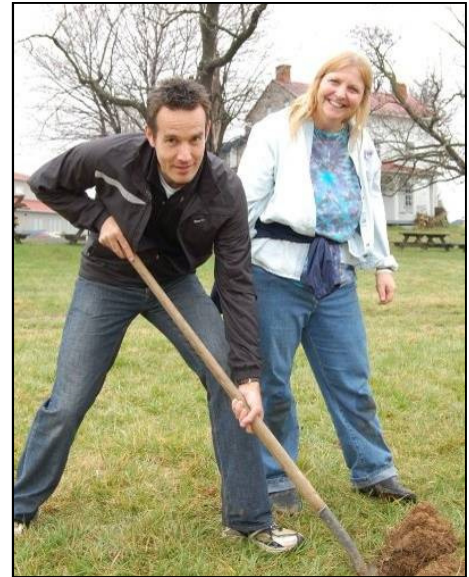


Photo: Matthew with Melanie Griffin, before she served on the pastoral team, at the 2009 Farm Ground Breaking Service.

who are not looking for church, people who are very skeptical about organized religion, or people who have perhaps given up on church really like us and what we are doing. Many of our greatest fans in the local community—and probably among people we know personally—fit into this mold.

We attract people who are least likely to join a church. But I really believe we can overcome this, and we will. That's what most exciting about the future for me. With our vision, our way of following Jesus, and our approach to spirituality we can reach out and embrace everyone who dares to dream there is another way. We can cross religious, ethnic, racial, and social barriers to join hands with everyone who wants to build a more inclusive, loving, and hopeful future. We can give hope to people who have given up or are close to it. We can offer love as the answer to the fear, hatred, and darkness that is so toxic to our culture religiously, politically, and socially. We have this beautiful, compelling challenge to be reconcilers and to invite those around us to join us on this journey. Moving forward with confidence and intention, all of us together get to be part of this future. And that's what's most exciting! ■

GETTING TO KNOW . . . Caroline Ferrante



Hi, I'm Caroline. I think I've been coming to Cedar Ridge for about 9 years. I grew up on the south side of Chicago. My introduction to spirituality was in the Lutheran Church. I soaked in Luther's hymns; tucked in the pew with my dad's bass, brother's tenor, mom's soprano, and sister's alto. Music and God have always been inextricably linked. On weekdays there was the music of my friends, my neighborhood. It seemed more authentic and real. There weren't the stratified ranges, and I could pop between tenor and soprano. Well, until 5th grade chorus.

I started to sing outside the lines. My inner picture of God (who looked a lot like

Luther, in a brown robe) was scowling. That's when I started songwriting. I found beauty there, in the creativity. Janis Ian was a revelation. I wrote myself windows of hope. It was there, in the writing, where God spoke and sustained me through many storms. I didn't know it was God, though. I still thought God was scowling.

I live in Olney now with my husband Ken, a software engineer. My daughter Olivia is part of Cedar Ridge and often helps me lead worship. She is in dental school. My son, Nick, is headed for the Air Force. My step-son Archer is a 6th grader at Sandy Spring Friends School. And I am a full-time songwriter and musician. I advocate on behalf of survivors of assault and founded Songwriters Against Sexual Assault last year.

I am so grateful for Cedar Ridge. In my time here I have struggled and been a grand mess at times. But week by week, year by year, I transform. The inner false ideas of a

scowling, disapproving God that held me ransom fade. This is a journey of discovery. It is like finding out all your fondest wishes of a loving God were true all along. It is coming home.

Right now I am learning to be more brave by letting silence speak. I take a little time each day to watch the three trees outside my windows. I unplug and simply BE. This terrifies me. Am I alone in this? I don't try to write, though often I will get ideas. Mostly, I find in that place the extraneous layers of me peel away, and I am more honest. Then I can pray unpeeled prayers. Not because it is right or good, but because I remember how small and finite I am in all this.

Thank you for embracing this broken, singin'-outside-the-lines, southsider at CRCC. I am finding family here. I love hearing your beautiful bass, tenor, soprano, and altos around me on Sundays. With a God who smiles. ■

Photo: Caroline (center) with husband, Ken, and daughter, Olivia



Is anyone else a little wary of the Holy Spirit? I am. It gives me wild ideas, like inviting homeless folks to stay with us or fostering-to-adopt without a financial plan. It tells me to stop caring about 'getting ahead' in life or how much we accumulate towards retirement. It's constantly nagging me to eat more mindfully or hold off on buying clothes until I can save for some that have been ethically made. The Holy

Spirit pumps me up, encourages me, tells me I can do anything; but I get so disappointed when instantly, hypocritically, I discard its impulses as insane or impossible and go about life pretending not to have heard. And I remind myself that I've failed to listen in the past, and I remember the psychology, economics, and business literature that explains that our past behavior is the best predictor of our future performance. And I wonder if I'll ever move forward.

The Fruit of the Spirit sure sounds nice: love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. But the entry fee is steep: trust. We have to believe that our needs will be provided for even if we don't leave ourselves a cushion. We have to take the first step into a different relationship with God and one another. If we live comfortably, we have to accept that, except through grace, we are homeless, lost, frightened, and exposed. We equally have to accept that those we reach out to are not without

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grace, that they are not forsaken, that instead they are anointed to be blessed if only we would listen. Hardest of all, if we are suffering, we must feel that help is on the way.

Each new season can feel like an opportunity. I feel a special energy entering the holiday season. It's the promise of spending time with family, of taking time off to relax. But it's also the promise of the narrative we're about to enter: of reunion, of comfort, of birth, and as we reach the warmth of Spring, of sacrifice and rebirth and salvation. It's the season of the joy, love, and peace of an infant growing into the demeanor of the Son of God. I think we get a taste of the excitement the disciples must have felt getting to know Jesus. We can imagine being called by name, walking in his footsteps, learning how to exist in a new kind of community. We can imagine feeling his loving presence. And we can

imagine the heartbreak of being left behind and the hope of hearing about the Holy Spirit. I'm comforted that the same Holy Spirit that came to the disciples comes to us. It confirms that even though none of us have walked in Jesus' footsteps, we have the same opportunity to be called, to follow, to obey, and to belong.

I pray that this season we'll give trust another chance. I choose to trust that we are loved and that we are saved for something. We are set aside for the direction of the Holy Spirit; may we grow under its care. ■



An Inside Look at Cedar Ridge's Property and Mortgage

by: Dan Wendt, Board Member

Our property is beautiful and diverse. Our church acquired the property in 1995 from the estates of Gilbert and Clara Carr for \$630,000. It is part of Spencer Farm (not a surprising name), and the old farm house is recorded as the Spencer House, although there is also a Spencer House on Oursler Road to the west. The land was first cultivated by Hiram Spencer in the 1850s, as far as I have been able to learn, and the farmhouse was constructed around the same time.

The property borders Spencerville Road to the south, the Spencerville Adventist Academy to the east, and private property to the west (along the readily identifiable boundary). But it goes much further north than perhaps most of us know, unless you have walked back into the woods. The borders do not progress straight north either, but jut to the east after an initial distance, and the northern boundary is the stream that runs between our property and the private residences to the north. In addition to our farm and soccer fields, our property includes a storm-water management easement for the nearby Patuxent River as well as 18 acres of a forest conservation easement. It is a lot to be proud of.

Although I do not know the entire financial history, here's a summary of the information I have gathered. We purchased the land in 1995 and refinanced the mortgage for the property in 2010, and again in 2013, as interest rates continued to fall. The 2013 refinance had a term of 11.25 years. That irregular period

would have kept us on an original 30 year mortgage schedule, with the mortgage being paid off in the middle of 2024, or perhaps one year early. The interest rate was 5.50%, and the monthly payments were \$16,120 per month, or about \$193,000 per year. By last year, the balance was down to approximately \$1.25 million.

In 2015, the Board received an audit of the property – or more specifically, the buildings – and what needed repair or improvement. As we looked at the list, the Board knew we would need special funding for the improvements – approximately \$200,000. We recognized that we had substantial equity in the property, which is valued at about \$3 million, and we went to the Church's bank (Sandy Spring Bank) to see if we could get a line of credit. As discussions progressed, Sandy Spring offered that it would be better to refinance the loan with a cash disbursement. And this is what we did. Our new interest rate is 4.65% for a 10-year mortgage, so that the loan will be paid off in 2025 (just one year later than planned). Even though we would increase the balance by \$200,000 (to fund improvements), our monthly payments decreased to \$15,100 per month, or \$181,000 per year (a cash flow savings of about \$12,000). We thought this was a great deal from Sandy Spring, and we moved quickly to finalize the arrangement. Last summer, we refinanced and received the \$200,000

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Praying for the People of Ipala, Guatemala by: The Guatemala Team

We continue to celebrate the partnership between Cedar Ridge and the town of Ipala, Guatemala. One of the ways we can show love to our friends there year-round is through keeping them in our prayers. Together, we can ask God to bless each family, church body, school, and community with God's love. Would you join us in praying for the following specific areas?

Research has shown that **preschool education** can produce substantial gains in children's learning and development. In rural communities in Guatemala, most children do not attend preschool or have any experience with formal learning at a very young age. Our Cedar Ridge – CIDHER partnership seeks to fund projects that will increase participation and improve the quality of preschools in Ipala. Please pray for the availability and growth of preschools and early education programs in Ipala, for financial support to establish and sustain these programs, and for funding to acquire qualified teachers and staff. Pray that the parents, care givers and families get the support that they need in order to send their children to school, and that the children get the support they need to thrive in school.

Many families in Guatemala struggle to provide the basic necessities for daily living, and many can't afford the expenses associated with school. Cedar Ridge and CIDHER have partnered to provide **scholarships** for secondary education, funded by generous donations from members of Cedar Ridge, to children from low-income families in Ipala. Join us in praying for the continued success of the 51 scholarship recipients. Pray that the education they receive will transform their lives and help them to achieve their career goals. Pray that God will provide for the needs of their families so that each student can complete their education and help break the cycle of poverty. Also pray for the six scholarship recipients who graduated in October, that God will give them wisdom and bless them in their future goals.

Many families in Guatemala cook using open fires in their



Photo: CRCC scholarship recipients who graduated in October, 2016

homes that are poorly ventilated, and create lots of smoke. Breathing in the toxic fumes while preparing food puts women and children at risk for respiratory illnesses, blindness and burns on a daily basis. For several years now Cedar Ridge has donated funds in partnership with CIDHER to provide **smokeless stoves** to families in Ipala. The stoves have drastically reduced smoke, burns and carbon emissions in homes where they have been installed. Thank you to all who made Christmas-time donations to make this possible. Pray that many more families can receive smokeless stoves, that they will experience immediate improvement in health and quality of life and that they can save money on fuel for the stoves.

Guatemala and other parts of Central America are experiencing the worst **drought** in decades. Drought is affecting food security for a third year. More than 1.5 million Guatemalans are food insecure, and Ipala is in the "dry corridor" and its people are suffering major crop losses due to these prolonged drought conditions. Please pray for rain and ground absorption of that rain, and that those struggling with hunger will be provided with the food they need.

Please pray for the Ipalteco **immigrant** community in our area, which is centered in Langley Park. Many in this community, along with other Latino immigrants in the area, are experiencing anxiety and concern about an uncertain future. Pray that they will feel supported and welcomed by those who seek to express the love and compassion of Jesus. Pray also for newer immigrant families in need of food and winter clothing.

We are so grateful for the volunteers who give much time and energy to be a part of **CIDHER**, our partner committee in Ipala. They do numerous socioeconomic interviews to identify the greatest needs, make proposals, monitor progress, keep records, make deliveries, and do many other things as our agents on the ground. Pray for wisdom, energy, and safety for Lusvin, Mynor, Rosa Alydia, Edgar, and Cesar as they serve the people of their community in this self-giving way. ■



Photo: Children and parents in a PAIN preschool classroom

NEWS & NOTES

A Letter from Steve Mather, Board Treasurer

In more ways than one, we find ourselves in the midst of change. Again! With each season that passes, it seems to me that all of these transitions—personal, social, natural, relational—they somehow feel more dramatic, more important than they used to. Is it just me? Even getting accustomed to the fact that I now look upwards to make eye contact with my own kid has been, to me, a big deal for some reason.

I am grateful to have served as our Cedar Ridge Board Treasurer for more than a few seasons. (And I do have a few more in me, I believe.) Like many of you over the years, I have had the honor and privilege of seeing our church community face its own transitions; reaching new milestones, pursuing important opportunities, and facing significant challenges. Financially speaking, we are at a moment where we have before us all three!

REACHING NEW MILESTONES: Over the last several months, the Board and Pastoral Team have collaborated with a few partner organizations to bring expertise with current technology and progressive business practices to our community. We have implemented improvements to all of the following: public website, internal database, tools for book-keeping and internal reporting, and digital giving options. We now have capabilities for anyone to give a financial gift via a text message or our smartphone app. Yes, the Cedar Ridge Community Church app—I never thought that day would come! Our goal is to create multiple convenient and secure ways for those who want to join with us and financially support our ongoing work toward our precious vision. We were overdue for some updates, and we are excited for these changes to come.

PURSuing IMPORTANT OPPORTUNITIES: In this year alone we grew and gave away healthy produce to local organizations; we invested scholarships, stoves, and other resources into

our Ipalan partner organization (CIDHER); we partnered with Greencastle Elementary to reach students and families in need; we welcomed members of the local community to our property at our Annual Harvest Festival; we created space for prayer, conversation, and personal reflection around racial reconciliation in our culture; we hired one of our unpaid Pastors to a full-time paid position (Ruth Campbell), and much, much more! Looking ahead there are new, important opportunities for us to reach out a hand to people who are left behind, marginalized, rejected, broken, and overlooked. This means spending more of our time and our money towards change, healing, support, and love. Following Jesus seems to lead us outwardly, out of isolation, toward others, and into new relationships.

FACING SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES: As exciting as all of this is, we face real challenges. As of November 6, 2016, our overall financial giving level was at 80% of our budgeted giving goal. At that level, we will not be able to carry out the plan we have for the remainder of this fiscal year (through August '17.) Within the last month we have observed a relatively quick slide, down from 87% in early October to our current 80%, a trend that needs to be reversed. Many of us will recall last year, when we were in a similarly difficult position and we proceeded to have one of the most incredibly generous (I would go so far as to say miraculous) outpourings of giving in our history. That outpouring moved us to and above our target as of early January and sustained for the bulk of last year. At this time, we are calling the community to, again, see this season of gratitude and generous gift giving as a very important time to support the vision, the community, and the work of Cedar Ridge Community Church. Between now and December 31st, would you prayerfully consider making a generous financial gift to sustain our community?

With deep gratitude,

Steve Mather

Board Treasurer

DID YOU KNOW?

TEXT CEDARRIDGE TO 77977
and follow the link provided
to make a one-time or recurring gift.

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from Sandy Spring Bank--lots of love to Sandy Spring!

We have been using the cash from the refinance for various projects. The most visible are the repairs to the roof and the snow guards (to prevent any large piles of snow from sliding off the roof onto any passerbys below). We have repaired some electrical systems, and we expect upgrades to other, less glamorous parts of the property. We have Mark Hartley and Bryan Peterson to thank for managing these improvements.

So now you know that we have a beautiful, large property; we have a beautiful and not-so-large mortgage (2025 is not that far away); and we have a fairly large pool of

funds dedicated to improving and maintaining the property. I encourage you to walk it this winter and enjoy what it has to offer. ■

Dan, originally from Michigan, is married to Julie, and they have three kids - Emma, Xavier and Ayla. Dan is a lawyer at Miller & Chevalier, a Washington DC law firm, and he specializes in international trade and anti-corruption work.



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Imagine a community that dares to dream of heaven on earth; a community where **everyone is accepted** and respected and their journey cherished, regardless of their background, beliefs or place in society; where **everyone looks out for the concerns of others** and **no one is alone**. **Imagine a community of peace and safety** where it's possible to shelter from the frenzied pace of life, in order to **slow down** and **explore the mystery** and meaning of our existence; where we can **take time to address the roots of our anxieties and pain**; a place of **hope** where we can find help and healing and the power to change, no matter how desperate our situation. **Imagine a community of people devoted to following Jesus together**, learning to live like him and **helping one another grow** in their relationship with God; where we are gradually **transformed** to become better people: better friends, better family members, better workers, better neighbors; **becoming people who enjoy life to the full** and who can also deal with adversity well, **learning to grow through failure and suffering**. Imagine that community scattered throughout the region around Washington, Baltimore and beyond **working as agents of love, peace and hope** wherever they are: **serving** our neighbors, **caring** for the poor, **helping** the oppressed. Imagine a community of people who **live simply** and ethically, who **share their land and resources** with their neighbors; a community that treasures the Earth and **reaches out** beyond global, cultural and political barriers to **offer friendship** and practical support.

Imagine a community of people who make the world a better place.



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Services at 10 AM For All Ages
www.crcc.org

