

## Double Layer Pumpkin Cheesecake

### Ingredients

- \* 2 (8 oz.) packages cream cheese, softened
- \* 1/2 cup white sugar
- \* 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- \* 2 eggs
- \* 1 (9 inch) prepared graham cracker crust
- \* 1/2 cup pumpkin puree
- \* 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- \* 1 pinch ground cloves
- \* 1 pinch ground nutmeg
- \* 1/2 cup frozen whipping topping, thawed

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.
2. In a large bowl, combine cream cheese, sugar and vanilla. Beat until smooth. Blend in eggs one at a time. Remove 1 cup of batter and spread into bottom of crust; set aside.
3. Add pumpkin, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg to the remaining batter and stir gently until well blended. Carefully spread over the batter in the crust.
4. Bake in preheated oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until center is almost set. Allow to cool, then refrigerate for 3 hours or overnight. Cover with whipped topping before serving.

Total Time: 4 hours 10 minutes  
 Prep Time: 30 minutes  
 Cook Time: 40 minutes



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**Please consider remembering Cedarkirk when you are making your estate plans.**



Presbyterian Camp and Conference Ministries of SW FL  
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Winter 2014

### Upcoming Events:

- **Christmas Retreat**  
December 19—21
- **Mission: Encounter**  
January 18—19, 2015
- **Open House**  
January 31, 2015
- **Confirmation Retreat**  
March 6—8, 2015  
March 13—15, 2015
- **Spring Bash**  
March 20—21, 2015  
April 10—11, 2015

Visit our website for more information on these and other programs that Cedarkirk

### Cedarkirk Staff:

- Rev. John Reiter**  
Executive Director
- Mark Orendorf**  
Assistant Director
- Matt Shick**  
Program Director
- Kevin Taylor**  
Facilities Director
- Jackie Butler**  
Food Service Director
- Karin Dale**  
Event Coordinator
- Patricia Holloway**  
Office Manager

# S'mores & More

The Newsletter of the Presbyterian Camp & Conference Ministries of SW FL

## Merry Christmas To All!

'Tis a fortnight 'til Christmas and all through the 'Kirk  
 Staff members are toiling, hard at their work.  
 Amico is nestled, snug in his doggy bed,  
 As armadillos and tortoises dance in his head.

Cedar Lodge is festooned with greenery and bows,  
 And wise men, and candles, even Rudolph's red nose.  
 When it comes to decor, it's Mark's eye for flair;  
 His decorations are hung, well... everywhere.

Matt sits at his desk, his head all aflutter,  
 "Campers and counselors return in another  
 Two weeks," he exclaimed, "I really can't wait!  
 This Christmas Retreat is gonna be great!"

"I'm quite thrilled, too!" Mark promptly chimes in,  
 His face breaking into an ear to ear grin.  
 John overhears their jolly camp chatter,  
 And turns his attention to a more fiscal matter.

"The budget's complete, but for a few things," he said.  
 "Here's good news: we'll not start next year in the red!"  
 "Camp's 44<sup>th</sup> year draws nigh to its end  
 And I simply can't wait for next year to begin."

From hauling canoes to planning retreats,  
 And serving up meals for groups to eat,  
 We're working hard to make camp the best;  
 A place you can come for respite and rest.

Our camp has certainly been blessed this year,  
 God's been good to us and our ministry here.  
 Special thanks are due to all Cedarkirk's friends,  
 And the churches supporting us on the Presbytery end.

We'll close this glib poem with our thanks and our prayers,  
 We hope to see you soon at this camp we all share.  
 All the Cedarkirk staff wish you greetings from here  
 Merry Christmas as well, and a happy New Year!

The Cedarkirk staff wishes for you a joyous Advent season as we prepare to celebrate the arrival of the infant king. We are praying for each of you to experience the love of Christ during this holiday and have a safe and happy new year.

Your Cedarkirk family

## Board Member Corner—Susie Wills

Ursula Goodenough introduces her book *The Sacred Depths of Nature* with the observation that spiritual life is concerned with two fundamental questions: how things are and which things matter. The recent landing of the Philae lander on a comet was a major human achievement in advancing our knowledge of "how things are" in the realms of outer space, helping us understand the origins of God's universe and the fundamental forces that govern matter and life. When it comes to knowing "which things matter," we turn in the other direction, toward our inner space. We worship, study scripture, pray, and open our minds to the really big questions: why God created the world and ourselves in God's image, our understanding of good and evil, and what it means to be human. What better place to explore how things are and which things matter than under a canopy of palms and giant philodendrons, drifting down a tropical river in a canoe or gazing at the starry night sky next to a blazing campfire.

My first weekend at Cedarkirk was in 2006 with First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota Family Camp. We had organized a program of Bible study, crafts, recreation, music and fellowship around the theme of

God's good creation. At the time, my job was on the administrative staff of First Presbyterian, immersed in all the details of church operations. I knew these families as church members, names on a roll, pictures in the directory. I knew the children as Sunday school students and cherub choir singers and confirmands. I knew the adults as elders, committee members, Sunday school teachers, choristers, bell ringers, Presbyterian Women, missionaries, ushers, worship planners, musicians, sound technicians, and faithful servants who turned out for our programs and ministries. But that weekend, I got to know them as God's creatures and fellow stewards of God's good creation. Of course, this kind of experience could take place anywhere that church friends gather to play, learn, worship and pray. But for me it happened at Cedarkirk, and it has now become a special place for me in many other ways.

When the Peace Rive Presbytery nominating committee called me to serve on the Cedarkirk board, I knew immediately that I would love this ministry. I'm thrilled to see Cedarkirk's plans and visions for growing in new directions, serving new populations, expanding

programs, and reaching out to the churches in the Florida Gulf Coast region. As I write this, I am hosting a weekend retreat where I can serve the church and at the same time receive the blessings of the Christian life in worship and fellowship in a natural sanctuary. When I awakened from a restful night (in the beautiful Hickory Lodge with private bedrooms and baths) and walked out into the fresh morning air, the stillness was overwhelming. A spontaneous prayer rose up from the silence: "Thank you, God, for this time apart from the noise and nonsense that we have created, for revealing how things are in the world you created for us."

One of the founders of our Reformed tradition, John Calvin, remarked that God, revealed supremely in Jesus Christ and in Holy Scripture, is also revealed in the splendor of creation, echoing the Psalmist who saw God's glory in the heavens and handiwork in the firmament. Christian fellowship in the open air, close to the ground, in the midst of the buzzing, budding, crawling and flying realm of nature is a wonderful way to get in touch with how things are and which things matter.

## Nuts and Bolts

 With cooler temperatures moving in, we find ourselves outdoors working on clearing our many trails and renewing the mulch footpaths around camp. We also welcomed back our winter volunteer who

helps with much of this work, and we are very thankful for his service. Cedarkirk has many opportunities for small groups to work alongside our volunteer and staff to aid in this ongoing care of the Cedarkirk grounds and buildings. We also have projects for Boy Scouts and

Girl Scouts who are working on their Eagle award or Gold award, respectively. Please contact Kevin Taylor for more details or to schedule a time if you are interested in helping with the ongoing ministry of maintaining this special place apart.

## Making a Difference

We live in a world where a myriad of voices tell us that we are lacking. Voices that say: You are not good enough, do better. You are not rich enough, earn more. You are not popular enough, act differently. Experiences at Cedarkirk speak a different message. You are God's good creation. God provides you with abundant blessings. You are loved. Experiences at camp give God's children of all ages a taste of what is possible. We are reminded that we are created in the image of God. We are affirmed that God loves us no matter what. We are challenged to share that love with others and serve the world around us.

Throughout the summer, we ask many of our older campers who have been coming for years these questions: Why do you keep coming back to Cedarkirk? What does Cedarkirk mean to you? Why does Cedarkirk matter? Over and over

again, the responses speak to the nurturing and transforming work of the Holy Spirit in this place. Campers respond: Cedarkirk is where I can be me. Cedarkirk is where I can see God at work in my life. Cedarkirk is where I am accepted. Cedarkirk is where I am closest to God. Cedarkirk is family. Cedarkirk is home.

Cedarkirk truly makes an impact in the lives of God's children of all ages. Your support is critical and makes a difference in the ministry of this special place! Please consider making a year-end gift of support by sending a check to the camp office or you can give securely online at [www.cedarkirk.org](http://www.cedarkirk.org) (click the Donate Online button). You can also make a recurring gift online to help sustain this ministry throughout the year.

We are grateful for the variety of ways that people support

Cedarkirk and are especially grateful for your prayers. May God continue to bless you and your family during this joyous season!



### CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

Still looking for that perfect gift for Christmas? Consider giving the gift of summer camp! Cedarkirk gift certificates are available for a summer camp experience. Looking for something different? There are lots of new items in the camp store; shirts, water bottles, mugs, stickers, and even Christmas tree ornaments can be ordered and shipped. Learn more by contacting the camp office ([camps@cedarkirk.org](mailto:camps@cedarkirk.org) or (813) 685-4224).

## Challenge to Change

As we enter this holiday season, we focus a great deal on charity. There are Angel Trees in church foyers, Salvation Army bells outside grocery stores, Toys for Tots, and food drives at every opportunity. Charity is a good thing for those who fall between the cracks or just need that little boost through a difficult time. We as a church are good at charity; we have organizations, protocol, and systems in place to assure people are using our charitable donations properly. Most times, we are good at allowing recipients to maintain a sense of dignity in the process. It is something

the church can be proud of.

Justice is much harder than charity. It brings in complexities of society that aren't always so clear. Though it is more difficult, it is still a command from God that we seek. Our Challenge to Change (C2C) mission trips do just that. Groups grapple with the meaning of justice and how to apply that to their lives, churches, and communities. Cedarkirk has been doing these mission opportunities for 10 years and would like you to consider bringing a group in 2015. Days are filled with mission in the community while evenings are filled with activities, worship, and discussion

revolving around Isaiah 1:17 that asks us to "...learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow." Learn more at [www.cedarkirk.org](http://www.cedarkirk.org).

# Save the Date!

**Cedarkirk  
Open House  
Saturday**