

## **An Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike for June 1, 2022**

**The funeral services for Pat Greene are scheduled for this Saturday, June 4<sup>th</sup> here at Mt. Carmel. Visitation will start at 10am and the service will begin at 11. Masks WILL BE REQUIRED. We encourage you to bring your own but will have a small supply of disposable masks here if you forget.**

**We will start Summer Sunday School this Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>.** This means you can come to Sunday School in your play clothes and enjoy some crafts, maybe outside activities, and some videos. So if you are between the age of 3 and 10 or 11 (just finishing the 5<sup>th</sup> grade), come join us for a fun time during our church service at 9:30 am starting June 5<sup>th</sup>. Hope to see you there!  
Deb McMurtrey and Mt. Carmel Sunday School

**The United Methodist church has two locations for summer camp opportunities for children and youth.** Manidokan is in the Maryland mountains near West Virginia and West River Camp is on the water south of Annapolis. Both locations have week-long camps for children from grades 3-5, middle high students from grades 6-8 and high school students. Our church will provide up to \$500 total in campership aid for children or youth from our church interested in attending this year. For more information about the camps please contact the Camp Office directly at 800-922-6795 or check out the schedule at [bwccampsandretreats.com](http://bwccampsandretreats.com).

**We need to train, and have available, several individuals to operate the technological aspects of our Sunday Worship services on those days when Shannon and Joe are unable to.** Please let us know if you are interested in helping in the ministry of our church in this way. You can contact either myself or Shannon Shanefelter.

**The early planning stages for our October Harvestfest have begun!** Pat Mulkey has a good start on the event but is looking for some eager volunteers. If you are interested in helping make this event a success, please let us know. Contact the office and Jen will point you in the right direction.

**If anyone is interested in volunteering to staff our nursery on Sunday mornings please let me know.** We may not be able to staff every Sunday morning, but we can let our young families know those Sundays when nursery will be available.

**If you have prayer requests,** even if you plan to share them at Sunday worship, you may forward them ahead of time to Jen at the church office and she will compile a list to be used on Sunday morning.

**Signing On For Zoom Worship Services.** As most of you who Zoom our worship services know, I greet Zoom attendees as they sign on, take Zoom attendance, and assign names to phone numbers as phone callers sign on. I open the Zoom meeting at 9 a.m. in order to give people time to sign on. I encourage you to sign on early to avoid the crush of people signing on at the last minute. The earlier you sign on the easier it is for me to attend to the greeting responsibilities. It also gives us a chance to chat, and share prayer requests

**The Announcements and Bulletin for Sunday's service are included as attachments to this encouraging word.** Please feel free to print them out and either bring them with you to the service or to use them as your guide as you Zoom the service.

### **An Encouraging Word**

"When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability." - Acts 2: 1 – 4

Happy Birthday Church! This Sunday we will be celebrating Pentecost, the day when the Holy Spirit was imparted to the church and the church empowered for ministry in the world. This time around our celebrations of Pentecost arrive in a world overwhelmed by fear, prejudices both ancient and new, division, violence, economic convulsions, a pandemic, and – lest we not forget – the increasing risks of war. None of this is new, but our connectedness makes all of this more noticeable in our daily lives. What is the meaning of Pentecost in the face of all this?

As I said, Pentecost is a birthday of sorts. Birthdays are the celebration of new life coming into the world and Pentecost is certainly that. The gift of the Holy Spirit brings the possibility of new and renewed life and hope. It is God's gift to us. As with all birthdays, gifts are usually involved. What are the gifts that we should bring to this celebration and to whom shall we present them?

If the disciples on that first Pentecost thought they would be able to return to Jerusalem, lay low for a while till the heat was off, and pick up as though nothing had happened, they would have been greatly disappointed. What happened in the upper room where the disciples waited could not be hidden. Evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence tends to be pretty obvious. Contagious excitement and joy fill the air, barriers of misunderstanding disappear, amazing and often miraculous events take place, and lives are transformed. From that moment of the Spirit's arrival on the disciples carried the marks of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit. When one was in their presence there could be no doubt that one was in the presence of a member of the divine family.

You and I have received the same gift. We have received the Holy Spirit by virtue of our baptisms. We have been empowered to bring something precious into the world, the good news of salvation and hope. We've been empowered to bring healing to the wounds of the world we witness every day! What a wonderful gift to present to the world as we celebrate Pentecost! The world really needs that kind of gift. The question is - are we offering it?

Here's something we need to think about. When someone is in our presence do we leave no doubt in their minds that we are members of the divine family? Do our words and actions reflect the love, forgiveness, healing and hope of Jesus – the unique marks of membership in the divine family? If not, what will we do to change this? Does our living reveal the excitement, joy, and

hope that the Holy Spirit ignites? What are we doing to stay connected, or re-connect with the power of the holy Spirit in our lives so that our lives reflect the presence of the Spirit? What is it about you that identifies you as a member of the divine family?

If you're not sure about the answers to some of these questions I invite you to pray. May the Holy Spirit descend upon each of us in such a way that there can be no doubt in the minds of others that something wonderful has happened in our lives. May God grant us the boldness to live with the Holy Spirit not only inside us but exuding from every pore. May evidence of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit be seen in every facet of our lives. It's something the world really needs right now.

That's all for today. I'll see you on Sunday either on Zoom or at in-person worship. Until then be well, stay safe, make good decisions in this Coronavirus environment, and in please stay connected to each other and to God.

Blessings & Peace, Mike