

An Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike for November 2, 2022

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME IS THIS SUNDAY!! MAKE SURE TO TURN THOSE CLOCKS BACK

Please note that there will NOT be a Zoom Worship or Communion this weekend. Communion and All Saints Sunday will be the following weekend, November 13th. Zoom will also be back for the November 13th service. Communion elements can be picked up in the Narthex the week of communion Sunday. If you have any questions regarding this, please let me know.

Faith Hope Circle will be meeting this Thursday, November 3rd at 12:15. Please bring a lunch and drink. Dessert will be provided.

Tuesday, November 22nd at 7pm we are beginning Advent Study with Prepare the Way of the Lord by Adam Hamilton. The book can be found on Amazon. This will be a Zoom Study. If you are interested, please let Jennifer in the office know.

We are preparing for our celebration of All Saints which will now be on Sunday on November 13th. If you have lost someone dear to you over the past year and would like them remembered during the worship service that day, please contact the church office with details. Our email address is mtcarmel21122@gmail.com or you can call Mon – Wed 9-2pm. We would also like to share a picture which you can forward to the church as well. Then please plan to be present when that person is remembered. **Please do this before Tuesday, November 8th.** Thank you.

It is already time for Outreach to roll out projects for the holiday season. We are doing things a little differently this year. We do not need to prepare the Thanksgiving Fixing bags for our friends at the soup kitchen this year. Those items are being provided by the Food Bank. However, with the cost of groceries, more people are coming to the soup kitchen for help. The shelves are as empty as I've seen them. **For the months of November and December our food collection will benefit the Pasadena Soup Kitchen with shelf-stable items that stretch a meal like pasta, mac & cheese, rice and instant mash potatoes.** We are completely out of those items. The Child Development Center will be helping us with this project. Regular size items are needed, not the super-sized items found in the big-box stores. **For Christmas we will be receiving names from the county for the Holiday Sharing program.** We have requested the names of 5 small families and 5 seniors in our area. We will be asking members and friends to help by providing help with the cost of a Christmas meal and presents for the children. This is the program we have been helping for many years. We should be receiving those names from the county in the next few weeks. We thank everyone for their continued support during this holiday season. -Thanks. The Outreach Committee

CALLING ALL VENDORS – The Child Care Development Center (in conjunction with the church ☺) will be having a Craft Fair on December 10th. We are looking for vendors. The cost of a table is \$20.00 and you can contact Jennifer in the church office if you are interested. **Also, we will be having a bake table (since the Harvest Bake Table was such a HUGE success!)** There is a sign up sheet in the hall on the bulletin board. Please don't wait to sign up!! Or contact Jen in the office 410-255-8887 or mtcarmel21122@gmail.com.

Regular Sunday School has begun for children between 3 years old and students in the 5th grade. Also, we are still looking for a volunteer teacher for the 4th Sunday of the month. If you feel

young at heart, we are looking for you. You can talk to Leslie Fauconnet, Sarah Jenkins, Donna Helowicz, or myself to find out just how much fun you can have one hour a month. -Deb McMurtrey, Sunday School Coordinator.

We want to remind you that we are still using Zoom for our Sunday Services. Zoom allows you to join us from wherever you may be!! (Join us in your pj's with a morning cup of coffee) 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. 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. **If you should have any problems logging in, please alert Jennifer in the office.**

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.

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

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." - Romans 12:2

There are times when life just seems to be a mess. There are times when my life just seems to be a jumble of shattered pieces scattered on the floor. It's as though God took all the parts of my carefully ordered life and tossed them in the air to let them fall helter-skelter into a random pile of puzzle pieces to which I have to restore order. Sometimes it's not just days, it's weeks! Fortunately, these confusing times don't occur often, but they do occur. I have a feeling many of you who are reading this have days like this as well. So, why do they occur?

I don't know about you, but in my case, I believe it happens when I've exchanged my God ordered life for a self-ordered life. What's the difference? A God ordered life is one that is ordered by the guidance of God's word and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. A God ordered life begins in prayer and meditation out of which the decisions that guide our lives are informed. A God ordered life is one that is oriented toward God.

A self-ordered life is none of these things. A self-ordered life is formed around our own wants and appetites, often conflicting and rarely satisfied. In a self-ordered life, there is rarely a consistent theme binding everything together. Rather, it consists of a hodgepodge of conflicting demands, financial,

political, ideological, emotional, and social etc. Without a consistent theme binding it all together it easily falls apart.

So, in those times when it seems that my life is in pieces it's because I've been ignoring God and just trying to do my own thing. Without God imposing order on my life things fall apart. One of my favorite poets is William Butler Yeats and one of his poems, a favorite of mine, opens with words that speak of the confusion that reigns when we lose touch with the ordering influence of God.

Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;

Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, W.B Yeats, The Second Coming

So, what do I do when I recognize that I "cannot hear the falconer", when the voice of God is no longer ordering my life? I make attending to the voice of God a priority above everything else. It does require some discipline and consistency but developing a habit of daily prayer and devotion is key to staying connected to God. There are many different ways to observe a devotional time every day and different routines work better for different people. For myself I find that taking forty minutes at the end of my workday works best. Mornings don't work since I'm eager to get on with my day. In the afternoon I can use my devotional time to review and pray about my day. I also journal day to day, it helps me keep track of how God has been speaking to me through my various circumstances. The important thing is to do it regularly and consistently. It will give order to your days and your thoughts, and that order will more likely be God imposed rather than self-imposed.

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