

An Encouraging Word for January 18, 2023

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 church email is mtcarmel21122@gmail.com and our phone number is 410-255-8887.

Prayer Cards are also available in the Narthex on Sunday morning. If you have a prayer or concern, we encourage you to fill out a card and it will be collected and read that morning.

BE ON THE ALERT!!!! Scammers are getting mighty clever these days. A member of our church received a text from a person posing as Pastor Michael Fauconnet. (the cell phone number was NOT Pastor Mike's number) In the text the person claimed to be in a meeting and in need of a favor. The favor was to pick up some Apple gift cards for "some women battling cancer in the hospital."

Thankfully our member knew enough (having a son-in-law in cyber security) not to fall for the scam.

Please be aware that NO ONE at the church will ever text or email you requesting money OR gift cards at any time. Here are some online articles that can help better explain the many scams that are going around

Scam Text Message Examples and How to Identify Them

<https://www.textmagic.com/blog/spam-text-message-examples-and-how-to-identify-them/>

10 Spam Text Message Examples (& How to Identify Them)

<https://blog.textedly.com/spam-text-message-examples#a-family-member-needs-help>

End of Year Giving Statements - Once again, to save paper and postage, the church will not be doing widespread printing up and distributing annual giving statements. Everyone can now easily generate their own statements from their Realm account whenever they like. **If you do require a hard copy done the traditional way, please just let the office know and we can provide one.** If you haven't accessed Realm and need a new invite sent, just let the office know. You can also see all your current giving and history all the way back to 2008. Below are easy step by step instructions to print your giving statements.


Accessing Giving Record & End of Year Giving Statements

To generate and print out giving statements from your Realm account-

- Log into Realm
- Click on "Giving" on the left side of the page. It will automatically show your gifts for *this* year, to date, to verify your gifts.
- For Yearly Statements, click the Filter button (that droopy triangle symbol) and change the Gift Date Range to "Last Year". then click the blue "Filter" button.
- To print, simply click the Printer Icon. A report will generate, and you can click the Printer Icon in that window to print your statement.
- Done! 😊


Respectfully, The Church Office & Finance Committee

AMAZON SMILE - A fabulous opportunity to continually raise funds for our church is to turn your Amazon account into an Amazon Smile account. NOTHING CHANGES! Your account remains intact (your previous orders, wish lists, everything is the same) By signing into Amazon Smile – you are directing Amazon to give a portion of your purchases to Mt Carmel UMC and in turn, our center. Please follow the directions below... and ask your friends to join us!! Thank you, as always, for supporting our church and child development center!



Qualified purchases on Amazon could benefit Mount Carmel UMC! It's so simple:

1. Visit [smile. Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com/smile) and sign in to your regular Amazon or Amazon Prime account.
2. Choose "Mount Carmel United Methodist Church in Pasadena, MD" as your charitable organization.
3. As long as you are logged into Amazon Smile when you shop, a percentage of all qualified purchases will benefit the church.



2023 Giving Envelopes are now available in the Narthex.

If you are visiting the church during the week, please be careful of the children at the school. We ask that if you are driving in during drop-off or pick-up hours that you wait behind the cars as to not endanger any of the children getting in and out of the cars. These lines move rather quickly. Morning hours are typically 8:15-9:15 and then afternoon is usually 11:30-12:30. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

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.**

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

"Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand."

- *Proverbs 19:21*

I've probably mentioned this before, but I don't like the feeling of not being in control. I prefer driving over being in the passenger seat. When I am in the passenger seat, I've been accused more than once of being a backseat or side-seat driver and my constant application of imaginary breaks some have

found to be quite irritating. Rather than go through my days in a haphazard fashion I create lists outlining in order everything that needs to be accomplished. I think the lists give me the illusion of being in control. So yes, you could say I'm a bit of a control freak.

Which brings me to the horror of the last sixteen days that were completely out of my control. I came down with Covid and all the wonderful symptoms that go along with it; cough, fever, sore throat, nausea, and headache. But as terrible as all of this felt, the worst feeling of all was of having absolutely no control over anything that I was experiencing. I was just along for the ride, still am for that matter, and I hate that.

Once again I have been reminded that we all have to face times in our lives when we have very little control over the situations we face. Chaos can break into our lives at any time and wreak havoc with any illusions we may have of being in control. In those times it helps to be able to place our trust in someone that we know has absolute control, God who is our dependable strength and shield. As much as I love being in control of my situation there have been times when I've needed to simply surrender control to God.

A few years ago, I was afflicted with a debilitating illness. I developed Meniere's disease. This illness involves the degeneration of the nerve bundle that serve the structures of the inner and middle ear. This condition results in episodes of extreme vertigo and gradual deafness in the affected ear. One moment I could be fine and in complete control, then in the blink of an eye I would be thrown into a chaotic world of not knowing where up or down was and not being able to make any visual sense of my surroundings. When that happened the only comfort I could find was in laying face down on the floor and trusting in that solid reference point until the episode was over. The only control I could find in that situation was trusting in something outside myself, in this case the floor.

In the same way, when chaos overtakes our lives, and we find ourselves no longer in control we can find comfort in surrendering control to God and trusting God to support us. God will hold us, God will support us, and carry us through all those moments when our illusions of control are shattered.

"Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." - [Isaiah 41:10](#)

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