

## **Encouraging Word and Announcements for June 28, 2023**

**Our first fundraising meeting for the 2023 Harvest Festival will be this Sunday, July 2<sup>nd</sup> immediately following the service.** If you are interested in helping out with the event but can't make the meeting, please email Jen at [mtcarmel21122@gmail.com](mailto:mtcarmel21122@gmail.com).

**From Pam Mertz:** During April, May and June, \$66 was raised for the general fund from the sale of rabbits, hearts, quilted trivets and even an apron, hand made by Nobie Asaki. Her spirit lives on here at Mt. Carmel. Thanks to all for your continued support, with a special thanks to Penny Pelligrini.

**Mt. Carmel Child Development Center is looking for a fun and energetic person to teach in our two year old class, and someone to teach in our school-age class for the fall. If you know of anyone that might be interested, please have them contact Dawn at [mtcarmelcdc2@gmail.com](mailto:mtcarmelcdc2@gmail.com).**

**Our Be More Caring Collection Box is temporarily closed.** If you would like to donate you can find another location at [bemorecaring.com](http://bemorecaring.com) or drop offs can be made Monday-Wednesday, 7am-Noon at their warehouse location of 131 Roesler Road, Glen Burnie, MD 21060. The phone number is 443-300-6292. Lisa with Be More Caring will contact me as to when we can re-open our collection box. Sorry for the inconvenience.

**We now have a "Senior Resource Center" located in our Church Hall.** It contains information to help navigate caring for aging loved ones. It comes to us courtesy of Bright View Senior Living. Please feel free to check it out after church this Sunday.

**Are you following the church on social media?** If not, you should! Our Facebook account is <https://www.facebook.com/mtcarmelumconnection/> And our Instagram account is <https://www.instagram.com/mcumc21122/>

**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](mailto: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.

**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 from Pastor Mike**

“What is wrong with you?!” “You should be ashamed of yourself?!” These are phrases many of us may be familiar with, probably from childhood. I’ve rarely heard them directed at me as an adult, but sometimes they take the form of parental voices in my head when I’ve made a really serious mistake. It is the language of shaming and rarely does it lead to anything positive or constructive. It is, in fact, a form of bullying and bullying never benefits anyone. Unfortunately shaming has become, over millennia, the go to tactic of the church. Shaming is one of the practices of the church that has driven away many a would-be believer. You could say the church has an image problem when it comes to shaming, especially when that shaming is directed at people or groups that follow alternative lifestyles.

Guilt is different than shaming. When we live in the light of God’s love and understand that we are not living the way God intends for us to live we may feel guilt which leads to a change in our behavior. It is an emotion we generate within ourselves that moves us in a positive direction. Shame, on the other hand, is inflicted by one person on another. It can easily become bullying and emotional violence. It plays a roll in eliciting physical violence and is one of the contributing factors in the prevalence of suicide in our modern day.

Jesus declared, “Do not judge, so that you may not be judged. For with the judgment you make you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own?” (Matthew 7:1-3) This was said in response to shaming behavior endemic in Jesus’ time, especially on the part of the religious authorities. Shaming goes hand in hand with judging. In shaming one is pronouncing judgement on another declaring them to be in some way inferior to the one who is judging. However, sin is sin and according to Romans 3:23 everyone sins and falls short of the glory of God. No one is in a position to condemn another, to judge another, or to shame another.

So how do we constructively address others who we feel are not measuring up to our standards or God’s? I would first do so with a spirit of humility recognizing that I, who also engages in sin, am not really in any position to condemn. I would temper anything I say with humility. I would also examine my own motives asking myself this serious question; why am I standing in judgement over another? Am I doing so to draw attention from my own failings? Am I doing so wrongly, in order to feel superior over another? I would also examine the possibility that my own interpretations of God’s word may be in error. I need to remember that when I judge another I am on very thin ice.

Paul has some very good advice on the matter found in the fourth chapter of Ephesians. “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. . . Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.” Advise others gently. Advise others lovingly. Advise respectfully and humbly mindful of our own shortcomings that together we may invite one another to stand in the light of God’s love seeking the life God intends for us all.

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, and please stay connected to each other and to God.

Blessings & Peace, Mike