

## Encouraging Word and Announcements for July 19, 2023

**Please note that the next Communion Service will be held next Sunday in order for Pastor Mike to administer it. That date is Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>.**

**We Need Your Help!!** *Our Harvest Festival is scheduled for Saturday, October 14! (it'll be here before you know it!!)* To make this event a success, we need your help! We are requesting donations of the following

- Old, used children's clothing we can use for scarecrow stuffing
- Volunteers to help prep Thursday and Friday before the event
- Volunteers for the day of the event
- Baked Goods
- Monetary contributions to the event
- Attendance!! – Please come and have fun!

Mt. Carmel United Methodist Church and the Child Development Center are working hand in hand to make this a fun, successful, family fundraising event! We hope you can join us! If you are interested in helping, please contact Jennifer Harris 410-255-8887 or [mtcarmel21122@gmail.com](mailto:mtcarmel21122@gmail.com)

**From the Outreach Committee:** "The Outreach Committee is alive and well. After the last meeting our feeling was that we were asking the congregation for too much last winter and spring. So, we have been donating to some organizations on your behalf and making plans for the upcoming months. We hope you have enjoyed your Outreach vacation. Now it's time to get back to business.

We are currently waiting for the names of 10 children from the county for the Backpack- Back to School program. We will be rolling out that program in the next few weeks. Get ready and line up.

In October and November, we will have a food drive for the local soup kitchen - food pantry. Supplies are low and demand is greater than ever. Not much help is coming from the food bank. More on that later.

We will be helping 10 families at Christmas through the Holiday Sharing program. Watch this space as time goes on.

We hope you have enjoyed your Outreach vacation and feel refreshed and ready to dig into both local and global projects in the coming months. We are gearing up."

**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).**

**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**

In the world of quantum physics there is a somewhat mysterious influence called "the observer effect". What physicists are talking about here is the unavoidable reality that any attempt at measurement taking place in an experiment changes the outcome of the experiment. The simple process of observing an experiment can change the outcome of an experiment. For instance, if someone were to try to measure the location or state of an electron the very act of observing would itself change the electron's state or location. Yes, I know, I'm not a physicist so I've probably not described this well, but I hope you get the idea. The mere presence of an observer changes things. Well, that's the world of subatomic physics. What's that got to do with normal life and getting on in the world?

I believe that a sort of "observer effect" operates in our daily living as well. Being present in the world changes the state of the world. There is no such thing as a neutral or "innocent" bystander. The very fact that I am alive and live in the world, or that you are alive and live in the world changes the world one way or another. My presence might cause positive change or negative change, that's up to me, but one way or another my life makes a difference. A great example of this can be seen in the classic movie, "A Wonderful Life" starring Jimmy Stewart. If you remember that movie its protagonist, George Bailey, is contemplating suicide. He is shown by the angel Clarence what the world would be like if he had never existed. The point being that every life is precious, each life making a difference in the world.

This is the idea reflected in the John Donne poem,

*"No man is an island entire of itself; every man  
is a piece of the continent, a part of the main;  
if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe  
is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as  
well as any manner of thy friends or of thine  
own were; any man's death diminishes me,*

*because I am involved in mankind.  
And therefore never send to know for whom  
the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."*

Every act we engage in, every word we utter, has an effect on the world around us. We live in an interdependent system. Even if we were to isolate ourselves from all others, our presence or our absence would make a difference. We affect the world around us by the positive or negative things we say or do, or by not saying or doing anything at all.

Environmentalists tell us that each of us has a "carbon footprint", in that we each contribute in some way to the level of carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming, emitted into the atmosphere. In this instance our presence has a negative effect on the overall state of things, but we can mitigate that by adjusting our lifestyle.

In most, if not all, of Jesus teachings the fact that we each, in one way or another, have an influence on the world is understood. Jesus encourages us to have a positive effect, to be a positive influence, recognizing the far-reaching results of even the smallest positive influence; for example "The Parable of the Mustard Seed" (Matthew 13 31 – 52 – the scripture I'll preach on in two weeks.) Much of the behavior Jesus encourages in "The Sermon on the Mount" is aimed at making our lives positive rather than negative influences.

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." - Matthew 5: 14 – 16

We are not observers in this world so what I'm talking about here is not really a form of "observer effect". We are participants one way or the other, so let's just call this the participant effect and endeavor each to be a positive presence in Jesus' name.

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 please stay connected to each other and to God.

Blessings & Peace, Mike