

Announcements for August 23, 2023

We will be having another planning meeting for the Harvest Festival THIS Sunday, August 27th after worship. To make this event a success, we need your help! Come to the meeting with any ideas and suggestions you may have to make this year awesome!

We are still 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

CHOIR: Attention all singers! We would like to get the choir going again if we have enough singers. Rehearsals will begin on Thursday, September 28th. (We are waiting until then because our son is getting married the week before!) If you or someone you know loves to sing, please contact me. If you have any questions, please also let me know. Joe and I look forward to making music with you! Shannon Shanefelter, 410-925-3122 scshanefelter@gmail.com

The Child Development Center has an Amazon Wish List to make this year a success!! If you would like to donate, please check out the list and order directly from this link, https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/25GDKJMQRN5EV?ref=wl_share

Faith Hope Circle will begin the fall season with a meeting in the church hall on Thursday, September 7th at 12:30 pm. All women of the church and community are cordially invited. Please bring a bag lunch and drink. We look forward to seeing you!

A Zoom Bible Study will begin on Tuesday, September 19th, at 7:00 p.m. The Study is authored by Adam Hamilton and is entitled Simon Peter: Flawed But Faithful Disciple. This will be a six week study examining the life, faith, and character of Simon Peter. If you are interested in joining, please contact Jen in the office 410-255-8887 or mtcarmel21122@gmail.com

The Pasadena Business Association is hosting an All You Can Eat Crab Feast on September 25th 6-10pm at Twain's Tavern. Includes: #1 male crabs by Seaside, crab soup, pit beef, ham, turkey, Primo baked ziti, mac & cheese, cole slaw, dessert, domestic draft beer and soda. Proceeds go to benefit the Mountain Road Memorial Flag Site. Please visit <https://pasadenabusinessassociation.com/event-5369044> for more information and to purchase tickets.

Community Shred Event at MCUMC Saturday, September 16, 11-1. Come and have your old, sensitive documents shredded for FREE! It's easy! Just pull into the parking lot, a helper will then retrieve your documents for your vehicle, then give you your boxes or bags back. That's it! Sensitive documents can include but are not limited to old checks, old bills, old receipts, old papers, old income tax forms. NO PLASTIC BAGS!! Not sure of what to shred? I found this article online that might help out...<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/personal-finance/financial-documents-what-to-save-what-to-throw-away/>

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 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

"We're Christ's representatives. God uses us to persuade men and women to drop their differences and enter into God's work of making things right between them. We're speaking for Christ himself now: Become friends with God; he's already a friend with you." - 2 Corinthians 5:20

Those who know me know that I chase rainbows. Well, not chase really but actively look for them. If it's been raining and the sun starts to come out, you'll find me outside, even in the rain, looking for a rainbow. Several weeks ago, while I was on vacation, I was doing exactly that. It had been raining most of the day, one thunderstorm after another. As I was sitting on the porch reading, I became aware of a ray of sunlight beginning to break through the clouds. I immediately stepped outside into the rain which was still gently falling to look for the rainbow. Sure enough, there it was, a complete double rainbow stretching across Chaumont Bay. I called back into the house that there was a rainbow. Leslie and Stephen came out to see it and our commotion caught the attention of our neighbors who were soon out on their deck taking in the magnificent sight.

So why am I mentioning this? To me a rainbow is a sign of God's promise to abide with us, even when things are a bit stormy. The rainbow was the sign of God's promise to never try to wipe out humankind again. It is a sign that God is merciful and gracious, and that knowledge gives us hope. The rainbow is significant in other cultures as well symbolizing good luck, new beginnings, promise, equality, and peace. When I see a rainbow, I'm encouraged and hope, which may have been flagging, is restored. So, I look for rainbows and when I see one, I call the attention of others to it.

That is what we are called to do as Christians, especially in dark and stormy times. We are called to look for rainbows, especially in the teachings of Jesus and the promptings of the Holy Spirit. We need to fix our eyes on Jesus, focus on him in the midst of our storms, and call the attention of others to him. We are called to live in ways that remind others of the hope we have.

Here's the thing about rainbows. You can't see one if there is no rain. They are only visible in the presence of a storm, and that's exactly when people need to see them. There can be no doubt that there are an awful lot of life storms going on right now, not only in the lives of individuals, but in the lives of communities and nations as well. Just like we can be sure that somewhere there is a rainbow visible in the presence of a rainstorm, we can be sure that Jesus is present in the midst of all of our storms. We just need to remember to look for him, and when we see him point him out to others, that they may have hope as well.

So I encourage you to chase rainbows, to seek them out, to point them out and so let others enjoy their beauty and ponder the hope they symbolize. I encourage you, in the midst of whatever storm you are facing to seek Christ Jesus, you can be sure he's there. Share the joy and hope you gain in the knowledge of his presence with the people around you.

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