

An Encouraging Word and Announcements for September 27, 2023

Harvest Festival Soups are now available for pre order!!! Homemade Chicken Noodle Soup, Potato Cheese Soup, Chili and Apple Dumplings are all available! **(and they are all DELICIOUS!!)** Orders need to be in by October 6th! The order form is attached to this Encouraging Word. If you have any questions please contact the office. **The Harvest Festival will be on Saturday, October 14th 9-2!! We can't wait to see everyone there!!**

CHOIR: Attention all singers! We would like to get the choir going again if we have enough singers. Rehearsals will begin **THIS** 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

Faith Hope Circle will be meeting in the church hall on Thursday, October 5th 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!

The Child Development Center is having a Joe Corbi Fundraiser. Shop for delicious pizza's, calzones, hot pretzels, cakes, pies, cookies and more!! Visit <https://joecorbi.com/> click on shop at the top of the page, click on the START SHOPPING under the heading of "I'm Shopping To Support A Group", our participant code is **636623** and Start Shopping. We will also have a catalog and form in the church hall. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

SAVE THE DATE ALERT!! MCUMC and MCCDC will be presenting a Nativity Play Dinner Theater on Wednesday, December 20!!! Keep an eye out for additional information in the future.

It is time for the Outreach Annual Autumn Food Drive to benefit the Pasadena Food Pantry (formerly the Soup Kitchen). We are starting a little early this year due to the very empty shelves at the Pantry. The Food Bank is doing a good job of supplying frozen meat and some staples but not enough to fill one bag. The Pantry must purchase or depend on donations for the rest.

There have been approximately 100 families served each month since June at this location. One of the new families explained that they started coming to the pantry because during the Covid Pandemic their family received \$250 per month in food stamps. Federal funding has been cut and they are now receiving \$25 per month to feed their family. It doesn't matter how you feel about food stamps, you can't feed a family on \$25.

We will be asking for certain items each month through November so you can help stock the shelves. For the remainder of **September we are asking for pasta products and canned soups.** You can bring your donations to church and place them in the box in the narthex. Please keep in mind that the Seventh Day Adventist do not eat nor distribute pork products when choosing soups. The Outreach Committee thanks you for your help with this local mission

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

In our Zoom bible study, we've been learning about Simon Peter and of how Jesus invited Simon to take his boat out into deep water to catch fish. This was a request which Simon reluctantly accepted. He was tired, the fishing had been unsuccessful, and he had just cleaned and put away his nets. Yet he did accept and was rewarded with the largest catch of fish he had ever had. He would go on to the super difficult job of fishing for men.

Ministry in Jesus' name is difficult. It can be frustrating, exhausting, and sometimes scary. Yet Jesus asks it of us every day; to go out into the deep water and engage in the work of fishing for people. That is what we are called to do: "to go make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world". (The mission statement of the United Methodist Church). It's deep-water work and sometimes it can seem beyond our capabilities. Sometimes we can be overwhelmed by the work that is before us. Sometimes it may seem intimidating and completely outside our comfort zones. Yet Jesus calls us to the task and when we lean into the task with faith, we'll find the work affirming and rewarding. We'll discover that we have the capacity within us to do amazing things in Jesus name.

Philippians 4:13 declares, "I can do all this through him who gives me strength." Christian ministry is an act of faith. Engaging in ministry is an act of faith. Whether it be chairing a committee that is responsible for directing ministries or being engaged directly in those ministries accepting Jesus' call to go out into the deep-water work of ministry is an act of faith - believing that Jesus will supply whatever strength we need.

One of my favorite bible stories when I was a child was the one about David and Goliath. The story takes up an entire chapter – 1 Samuel 17. You probably remember the story. Goliath was the mightiest of the Philistine warriors. He would continually go out onto the field of battle and challenge

Saul's army to send out a man to champion Israel and fight him man to man. Yet no man felt up to the challenge of meeting Goliath in single combat. Goliath seemed to be beyond formidable. He is described as being 6 cubits in height (approximately 9 feet tall). He was armed with impressive weaponry and was undefeated on the field of battle, a truly daunting and terrifying foe.

David was the youngest of Jesse's sons. While his oldest brothers joined Saul's army David remained at home watching the sheep. He was barely a teenager! One day Jesse sent David to the encampment of Saul's army with supplies. While there David heard Goliath's challenge bellowed across the battlefield and was dismayed that no one would accept the challenge. David declared that he would accept the challenge. Saul protested saying that David was a mere youth and not up to the challenge, but David responded, "The Lord who rescued me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will rescue me from the hand of this Philistine."

We all know the rest of the story. David met Goliath's challenge and killed Goliath with a well-aimed stone let loose from a sling. I'm sure that Goliath looked just as frightening and formidable to David as he looked to everyone else in Saul's army. Yet David had faith in God that gave him the confidence to take up what seemed a truly daunting task. Armed with that faith David went into the deep water of serving the Lord and was victorious. David would go on to be the greatest king that Israel ever had and the ancestor of our Lord Jesus.

We don't have to meet the challenges we face in life alone. Whether they be the challenges of accepting Jesus' call to make disciples in deep-water ministry, or any of the other formidable trials we face in life, we don't face them alone. Accept the challenge trusting in God to supply your need. Know that God is with you as you face those challenges and with God's support you will be successful.

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