

Announcements for January 10, 2024

At the Church Conference that was held last October the Unified Board Model was adopted as the organizational structure of Mount Carmel United Methodist Church. The adoption of this model had been under consideration for the better part of the year. This model simplifies our organizational structure and will help us meet our missional goals. This unified board replaced the Administrative Council on January 1st, 2024.

Under this model the nine-member unified board will, as one board, do the work of the Staff/Parish Relations Committee, The Finance Committee, The Board of Trustees, and the missional work of the Administrative Council. Under normal circumstances it will meet ten times a year taking off in July and August. All meetings except those dealing with SPRC issues will be open to everyone with voice but no vote. Only board members have both voice and vote. Board members will serve in classes of three for three year terms and must resign after their third year for at least one year before serving again. The board will commission short term task groups to meet various needs or opportunities as they arise. It will also superintend various ministry teams (i.e. Music & Worship, Education, Missions, Child Care Board and a Building Maintenance Team). The Board membership will be nominated by the Leadership Development Committee which answers directly to the Charge/Church Conference. The Pastor and support staff are accountable to the Unified board.

This structure will enhance efficiency in decision making. Instead of running decisions through several boards, and or consulting with several different boards, decisions can be discussed and acted upon in one meeting. It will ensure that everyone is on the same page and are aligned with the mission and vision of the church. It will encourage a focus on mission outside the walls of the church and discourage an internal focus where all our efforts are on "keeping the machine running". In this model the administrative requirements are met by the members of the Unified Board – freeing everyone else to engage in ministries that make disciples for Jesus Christ. It is believed it will enhance accountability from the Board out. Care has been taken to make sure this model adequately fulfills the requirements of the United Methodist Discipline in regard to numbers of people serving on administrative committees.

Here is the Mount Carmel UMC Unified Board for 2024

Class of 2024

Debbie McMurtrey	T/F/SPR/C
Denise Calabrese	T/F/SPR/C
Donna Woods	T/F/SPR/C/CCB

Class of 2025

Sari McCleod	T/F/SPR/C
Donna Delauder	T/F/SPR/C/LM/LL
Katie Blucher	T/F/SPR/YA

Class of 2026

John Mulkey	T/F/SPR/C
Ernie Donaldson	T/F/SPR/C/CH
Lana Matovcik	T/F/SPR/C

The initials following the name indicate specific rolls the member will be caring for on the Board.

T=Trustee F=Finance SPR=Staff Parish Relations C=Council
CCB=Child Care Board Rep. LM=Lay Member Annual Conference
LL=Lay Leader YA=Young Adult Rep. CH=Board Chairperson

There will be a meeting of the Unified Board on January 22, at 7pm at the church.

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!

The Faith Hope Circle will meet tomorrow, January 11, 2024 at 12:30pm in the Church Hall. All women of the church and community are cordially invited. Future meetings will resume on the first Thursday of the month. We hope to see you January 11th as we welcome in the New Year!!

Giving Envelopes are available in the Narthex. A heads up, some of your giving numbers have changes as we needed less envelopes this year due to people using our e-giving option.

Are you following the church on social media? If not, you should! Our Facebook account is <https://www.facebook.com/mtcarmelumcconnection/> 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

He said to them, "Because of your little faith. For truly, I say to you, if you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you." - [Matthew 17:20](#)



...The picture included here is of a Christmas gift I gave my eldest son Aaron. Aaron is a rock climber. His idea of fun is climbing up sheer cliff faces that could be as much as seventy-five to a hundred feet high. The picture is of an indispensable safety tool required in a rock climber's kit. They are called nuts. These oddly shaped pieces of metal are jammed into cracks on the cliff face. Then the climber attaches his climbing rope to it before he continues up the cliff to another crack where he will place another nut. It provides a solid attachment that hopefully will prevent his falling too far if he loses his grip – that is if the person belaying him below is paying attention. I've been told they are called nuts because in the early days of climbing climbers would actually use various sized nuts that were readily available at a hardware store and attach thin loops of cable to them.

The sobering thought is that a person's life, my son's life, will depend on one of these little pieces of steel. My son will end up dangling eighty feet up a cliff supported only by one of these little bits of steel. It's not something I like thinking about. It's amazing that such a tiny thing has the power to save a person's life if or when they start to fall.

I mention all of this because it illustrates an important point that we Christians sometimes lose sight of. As we attempt to live faithfully through our days, our actions and words, arising out of our faith in

Jesus, have the power to preserve or save a life that is falling. We may not think it's much but simple words of encouragement, as inconsequential as they may seem, can lift a person out of despair. A simple act of compassion, tiny as it may seem to us, has the power to arrest someone's spiritual fall. So, I guess we could call ourselves spiritual nuts. Armed with faith, even a little bit of faith, we can become, through our words and acts, a source of support for those around us whose spiritual (and actual) well-being is precarious. That means we need to pay attention to the needs of the people around us, taking note if they need our support. Whether it be through acts of kindness, great or small, or a kind word delivered at an opportune moment, we can make a huge difference in someone's life. We may even keep them from falling.

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