

# Mt. Carmel UMC News and Encouraging Word

March 5, 2024

Follow MCUMC on social media!

<https://www.facebook.com/mtcarmelumcconnection/> AND <https://www.instagram.com/mcumc21122/>

---

## Critical Appeal for 2024

Dear Members and Friends of Mount Carmel United Methodist Church,

As we come together in spirit and faith, we acknowledge the challenges that have tested us over the past few years. The impacts of economic strains, inflation, and the financial hurdles posed by the pandemic have been deeply felt by all. We recognize the steep rise in the costs of electricity, gas, fuel oil, groceries, and building materials, places additional strains on our community and our individual budgets.

Through the grace of federal assistance, our congregation received vital support that helped us navigate the immediate impacts of the pandemic. This aid provided a much-needed lifeline during uncertain times. However, we must now acknowledge that this assistance has run its course, and even with the assistance of dividends from our Building Fund we find ourselves facing a budget deficit of approximately \$18,000 for 2024.

In response to this challenge, the Unified Board has diligently reviewed the budget, identifying areas where cost-saving measures can be implemented. Despite our efforts, we are confronted with rising costs beyond our control, such as the recent BG&E rate hike and escalating insurance expenses.

While these economic pressures have touched each of us, they have also impacted our beloved church. By coming together as a community, we have the opportunity to rise above these challenges. The Unified Board estimates that if each member and friend can contribute just a little more, approximately \$10.00 per week, we can overcome the current deficit and ensure the continued flourishing of our church.

Your generosity and unwavering support are a testament to the strength of our community. Together, we can weather this storm and emerge stronger on the other side. We thank you for your attention and patience during these trying times. May God bless our little church and guide us as we work towards a brighter future.

With gratitude and hope,

The Unified Board of Mount Carmel United Methodist Church

# Church Happenings This Week

**The Faith Hope Circle will meet this Thursday March 7 at 12:30 in the church hall.** All women of the church and community are cordially invited. Bring your lunch; dessert will be provided. Hope to see you there!

## Easter News

**Easter is almost here!!** A beautiful Easter Lily is such a touching way to remember or honor a loved one and contribute to our church. Please see the attached form to order yours. You can also donate to the Trustee's Fund or the General Fund to honor your loved one. If you have any questions, please contact the office.

**Speaking of Easter...this year we will be having a Potluck Breakfast on Easter Sunday.** It will take place after the Sunrise Service in the Church Hall. All are welcome! Come after the Sunrise Service OR before the 9:30 Service. We will be having breakfast casseroles, fruit and pastries. To get a feel for how much food we will need, please let the office know if you would like to attend.

### **Holy Week and Easter Services**

\*\*\* There will be no Sunday School on Easter. Any children who come that Sunday are encouraged to go to church with their families and enjoy the music. \*\*\*

**Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday)** – March 28, 2024 – Communion – 7:00 p.m.

**Good Friday** – March 29 – Worship Service – 7:00 p.m.

**Easter Sunrise Service** – March 31 - Easter Sunrise Service 6:45 a.m.

8231 Bayside Drive, Pasadena

(Home of Dave Shelton's Sister, Joanne)

### Directions to the Easter Sunrise Service

- The address where the Sunrise Service will take place is 8231 Bayside Drive.
- From the Church continue east on Mountain Road.
- Continue straight onto Pinehurst Road. (Mountain Road will turn off to the right.)
- Continue on Pinehurst past the entrance to Downs Park – Pinehurst will make a sharp turn to the left.
- Continue on Pinehurst.
- Turn Right onto Oakdale Road (the second street to the right)
- Follow Oakdale Road one block to its end.
- Turn Right onto Bayside Drive
- 8231 Bayside Drive will be immediately to your left. (Address on Mailbox – Gravel drive.)
- Park as orderly as you can on the lawn – otherwise park along the street being careful not to block other driveways.

**Easter Celebration Service** – March 31, 2024 – Easter Celebration Service – 9:30 a.m.

**Mt. Carmel Child Development Center is having a Spring Fest and Breakfast with the Easter Bunny Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8am-12pm.** Breakfast includes bottomless pancakes, 2 sausage links

and a drink. Advanced ticket purchase is required. Please see the attached forms. You can also pick up the forms in the church hall.

## *In Other News*

**We are in need of Liturgists for Sunday Mornings.** This is a wonderful and easy way to get involved. You do not have to read every Sunday. We put together a schedule that works with your availability. We would love to hear from you! Just contact the office if you are interested.

**SAVE THE DATE!! Our Pasta Dinner will be on April 21<sup>st</sup> this year.** Tickets are NOW ON SALE. Please contact Jen in the office if you would like to purchase some. We are also looking for volunteers to help sell some tickets, deliver flyers to local businesses, and get the word out. The flyer is attached to this Newsletter.

**The Outreach Lenten project continues.** We are continuing to collect boxed pasta and canned soups for our local food pantry through the month of March. All the food collected so far has been distributed to needy families in the Pasadena area. Store brand pasta and soups can be purchased for less than one dollar each. Let's stock their shelves to help our neighbors!!

## **Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike**



Today I want to continue with my tour of the stained-glass windows in our sanctuary. The window I focus on today is the one over the piano in the left transept of the church as you face the altar. The window was given in memory of Frank and Katherine Welch by their children. So, I guess it's called the Welch Memorial Window. For the purposes of this encouraging word, I'm going to call it the "Victory In Jesus" window.

Perhaps you remember the words of the hymn by that title?

"I heard an old, old story, how a Savior came from glory,  
how he gave his life on Calvary to save a wretch like me.  
I heard about his groaning, of his precious blood's atoning,  
then I repented of my sins and won the victory.

O victory in Jesus, my Savior forever!  
He sought me and bought me with his redeeming blood;  
he loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is due him;  
he plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood."

There are three elements to the central medallion of this window; the palm branch, the bible, and a star which all together proclaim Jesus as victor, the living Word triumphant. We know the window refers to Jesus because of the star that appears above and to the right of the bible and palm branch. The biblical reference here is Revelation 22:16, "*I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star*". The bible appears to remind us that Jesus is God's living Word and the fulfillment of scripture which itself is the record of God's plan for salvation. The palm branch is an ancient symbol for victory. Of course, we remember Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on the day we call Palm Sunday as he began his journey to the cross, the instrument of his final victory. (Matthew 21: 1 – 11, Mark 11: 1 – 10, John 12: 12 – 19) But the Romans also used the palm frond as a symbol of victory. They were waved and laid down along the path of Caesar's triumphal processions into Rome. The palm frond had been used in such a manner nearly two centuries before Jesus' entry in celebration of Judas Maccabaeus, leader of the Maccabean rebellion, victorious entry into Jerusalem. Taken together the message of the window is clear. The way to victory over sin and death is Jesus, God's victorious living Word.

For most of us life is a struggle, some days more than others. We are painfully aware of our deficiencies and struggle against them. We live with our sins, always praying for forgiveness. We live between joy and sorrow, always striving for joy. We struggle for hope and assurance, attempting daily to rise above our fears. We endeavor to celebrate life even though we are consistently reminded of death. We hope to live victoriously in a world where such a victory is hard won. We live hopefully toward a life beyond this one where we are victorious in every measure and beyond such struggle.

This window reminds everyone who sees it where our victory lies in both this world and the next. It reminds us that Jesus has already won us the victory over sin and death and that we may joyfully enter into his Kingdom. It's a done deal! It also reminds us that by living according to Jesus' teaching and example we may live victoriously in this world.

That's all for today. Be well, be forgiving and gracious. Be safe, stay connected, and I'll see you in church or on Zoom this Sunday.

Blessings – Pastor Mike

## Weekly Reminders

**If you have prayer requests**, even if you plan to share them at Sunday worship, please 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.** (Join us in your pj's with a morning cup of coffee) I open the Zoom meeting at 9 a.m. to give people time to sign on. 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.**

**Mt. Carmel United Methodist Church**

**4760 Mountain Road, Pasadena, MD 21122, 410-255-8887, [mtcarmel21122@gmail.com](mailto:mtcarmel21122@gmail.com)**