

Mt. Carmel UMC News and Encouraging Word

May 1, 2024

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IMPORTANT DATES

This Thursday, May 2, the Faith Hope Circle will be meeting at 12:30 in the Church Hall. All ladies of the church & community are invited. Bring your lunch, dessert will be provided.

Sunday, May 5, we will be having a Pasta Night follow up meeting after our 9:30 service. We invite everyone that attended or helped with the event to be there. Any feedback on the event, what went well AND what didn't, how to improve it, all of it is welcome and encouraged. If you can not make it but have thoughts to contribute, please email Jen in the office.

Also, Sunday, May 5, we will be having a very special coffee hour after the 9:30 service. The Wilkerson Family has generously donated many of Fran Wilkerson's paintings and drawings. All of them are very beautifully done. We will have them on display and available to take home if you find something you like. We just want to find a good home for each piece of art.

Let's have Ledo Pizza for Dinner!

The Child Development Center is having a Ledo Pizza night fundraiser Thursday, May 9 from 11am – 9pm. It's so easy! Online, Carryout, and Dine-in options available. Just bring in the flyer **or** show the flyer on your phone **or** enter the code for online orders **or** just mention you are supporting the Mt. Carmel CDC and 20% of the proceeds will be donated to the school! I've attached the flyer to this Encouraging Word. *Tell your friends!*

Graduate Alert

Do you know someone that is graduating high school, college, or graduate school this year? We would love to celebrate their accomplishment! Please email Jen in the Church office with all the appropriate information including a photo.

In Other Important News

The Outreach Committee will continue to collect food for the food pantry. The collection box in the narthex is for any food items you would like to donate. ***Please remember that we cannot distribute any items containing pork products (No pork and beans or Spam, please).*** The Food Pantry continues to send their gratitude to Mt. Carmel for our generous donations.

Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike

"Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God." ~ Corrie Ten Boom

Trust is fundamental to life. Without trust in someone or something, a constant in a world of chaos, life would be intolerable. Life would become a continual and endless battle against paranoia and looming disaster. We all need constants in our lives that we can trust if we are to live well and victoriously. We need a steady rock to serve as the foundation for our lives.

I have Meniere's disease which, happily, is in remission right now. But a few years ago, when it was active, it was a nightmare. I won't get into all the technical aspects of the disease, but the result is that the signals from my vestibular system, my inner ear, to my brain get scrambled. When I have episodes caused by the disease I no longer know where up or down is, what I can see visually doesn't make any sense. I would experience extreme vertigo. My episodes would last up to two hours. All I can do is lay down on the ground, something I know is not moving or shifting, or even vibrating. I have to keep my eyes shut and hold on for dear life. My savior in these moments is solid level ground, something I know wouldn't shift or change under me.

For many of us it's family, friends, and close relationships that provide the solid foundation we can trust when things seem to be falling apart. For some of us it could be our work. Yet even these, as excellent as they are, may prove for some to be fleeting. Relationships change, jobs end, people are fallible, and they are mortal.

Psalm 31: 3 – 5 and 14 – 15 declares that the one in whom we can place our trust is God and God alone.

You are indeed my rock and my fortress;
for your name's sake lead me and guide me;
take me out of the net that is hidden for me,
for you are my refuge.
Into your hand I commit my spirit;
you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.

But I trust in you, O Lord;
I say, "You are my God."
My times are in your hand;
deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

In case you haven't noticed, there is a lot of fear abroad in the world right now, and fear unaddressed, uncomforted, and un-attended to turns to anger which simply generates more fear, like an insidious vicious circle. Much of that fear comes from a lack of trust. There is an absence of trust in the world, trust in something or someone to grasp onto and hold onto when our fears assail us.

As Jesus' people we have an antidote to the seeming absence of things that can be trusted. Jesus! Jesus himself encourages us in John 14:1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me." We no longer have to succumb to the paranoia and looming catastrophe that often is so

much a part of this ever shifting and uncertain world. We can face the confusion and fear trusting in Jesus – the living and very solid stone upon which we can steady our lives.

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 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

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