


# Mt. Carmel UMC News and Encouraging Word

July 17, 2024

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 *The Altar Flowers this Sunday are in recognition and appreciation for all the love and great care Pastor Mike and the congregation has given to Bud and Sarah Jenkins throughout this time.*

## IMPORTANT DATES

**This Sunday we will be having a fundraising meeting after the morning service.** We will be planning for the remainder of the year. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to bring ideas!

**\*\*\*Speaking of fundraisers...It's not too late to contribute to our DO NOTHING Fundraiser this summer.** So, in order to do nothing, you do have to do a little, just contribute \$\$\$. Whatever amount you wish to mail in or drop off, we welcome it!

**Services for Bud Jenkins will be held in September.** More details will follow in the weeks to come.

## ALERT

**We have recently noticed that our mail has perhaps been tampered with or taken.** We have alerted the postal service and have ordered a locked mailbox to replace our current one. If you have mailed a check within the last week to us, please make sure we have received it. You can do this by contacting Jennifer in the office via phone or email.

## NEEDED

**We are in desperate need of a vacuum cleaner for the church hall.** Now that the CDC is closed, the cleaning staff will not be coming in as often. You would be surprised at how dirty this church can get when the regularity of cleaning goes down. As of now, we do not have a vacuum that can do the job. So, if you have one you are looking to unload, please consider donating it to us. Thank you!

## Outreach News

**Happy Summer from the Outreach Committee.** We will continue to collect boxed macaroni and cheese for the food pantry this summer. Just place your donation in the box located in the narthex. All donations are greatly appreciated.

Even though summer has just started, Anne Arundel County is working on their Back to School Program. We will be receiving the names of 10 elementary students in the Pasadena area in need of help with school supplies for the upcoming school year. As soon as we get the names we will be

ready to purchase backpacks and get our project going. Watch this space for more information. Until then, keep cool.

# Help Wanted

**Our search continues for a new accompanist.** Please share our job listing with anyone you may think qualifies. I have included in this email as an attachment a job listing flyer that can be distributed throughout our community. Please, please spread the word!! This same listing also appears on our website. <https://mymcumc.org/index.php/newsletter/> "Great opportunity for piano teachers/students to earn a supplemental income. Small, friendly church in Pasadena, Marland looking for an accompanist to play a baby grand piano on Sundays, one service each Sunday at 9:30 a.m., plus Christmas Eve, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday early evening services. For additional information or to submit your interest, please call the church office at 410-255-8887 or e-mail [mtcarmel21122@gmail.com](mailto:mtcarmel21122@gmail.com)."

**We need 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.

## An Encouraging Word

As I've grown older, I've learned to pay more attention to what my body is telling me. You've probably heard the old line, "I told my doctor that it hurts when I do this, and my doctor replied, 'well don't do that.'" I've come to understand that when my body hurts it is telling me something and I need to stop, take stock, and figure out what the problem is. Last summer when I was doing strenuous yard work up at our house in Frederick County I started fuzzing out. My vision would cloud over and become almost tunnel vision. It was so bad that I would have to just sit down wherever I happened to be. Later that week it happened to me down here in Pasadena and I wasn't even doing anything strenuous! This time I was taken to the hospital and ended up spending the night as I was intravenously re-hydrated. My body had been trying to tell me to drink. I ignored it and got into serious trouble. Now I pay more attention to what my body is telling me.

Sometimes the signals come to us emotionally and signs of stress present themselves physically. That's been happening to me lately - to the point now that I need to pay attention. Pastoral ministry has become increasingly difficult ever since the arrival of Covid, not just for me but for many of my colleagues as well. I didn't realize it, but the stress of ministry has been emptying my tank bit by bit. Now I've come to realize that I have no gas left in my emotional or spiritual tank. Recent crises in our congregation have completed the job, but this emptiness has been developing over the last several years.

This is a common problem, and it happens to many pastors. In the United Methodist Church, there is a remedy for it. It's called Sabbath Leave. The Baltimore – Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church provides for clergy to take up to three months with pay off every seven years as Sabbath Leave. It's supposed to be used to prevent burnout but is also helpful when the tank has run

dry. In consultation with our District Superintendent, Sarah Schlieckert, Mount Carmel's Unified Board has unanimously approved my taking forty days of Sabbath leave beginning on July 29<sup>th</sup> and extending through September 7<sup>th</sup>. The purpose is to allow me to find some renewal and regain some perspective as we prepare to enter into what will quite possibly be an eventful year.

During my Sabbath leave the pastoral needs of the congregation will be resourced by lay ministers and speakers, retired clergy, neighboring pastors, and the District Superintendent. More specifics on this should be available in next week's Encouraging Word.

The scriptural rationale for Sabbath is found throughout the Old Testament. Exodus 23:12 establishes the necessity of Sabbath, *"Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and so that the slave born in your household and the foreigner living among you may be refreshed."* In Exodus 23:10 we find the prescription for a yearlong Sabbath, *"For six years you are to sow your fields and harvest the crops, but during the seventh year let the land lie unplowed and unused. Then the poor among your people may get food from it, and the wild animals may eat what is left. Do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove."* This Sabbath required those who farmed the land to take the year off as well. This was a big deal in an agrarian society like ancient Israel. Then we have the example set by Jesus who spent forty days in the wilderness in preparation for his ministry. Of course, while there he was tempted by the devil. I expect any temptations I have, if any, will be more benign.

I have known for some time that my body and spirit have been trying to tell me something, that I needed spiritual rest. I should have been paying better attention. My prayer is that when I return, I will be better able to effectively lead the congregation through the coming year.

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)**

**Office Hours – Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9-2**