

Mt. Carmel UMC News and Encouraging Word

January 29, 2025

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

Weekly Schedules

Liturgist - Our February schedule is...

02/02 – Warren Magruder, 02/09 – Jeri Hayden, 02/16 – Warren Magruder, 02/23 – Sari McLeod

Narthex Greeters - Our January schedule is...

02/02 – Jennifer Harris, 02/09 – Deb McMurtrey, 02/16 – Ernie Donaldson, 02/23 – Gail Miller

Faith Hope Circle will meet Thurs. February 6th at 12:30. All ladies of the church & community are welcome. Please bring your lunch; dessert will be provided.

Mark your Calendars

3rd Annual Pasta Night, Sunday, March 9th, 4-7. Tickets are \$12 for Adults, \$8 for Children 10 & under. To purchase please contact the office by phone or email or by just dropping in during office hours. Tickets must be purchased by March 2nd. You do not want to miss out on this always **DELICIOUS** event!

Spring Flea Market, Saturday, April 5th, 9-1. Our Fall Flea Market was such a success that we decided to do it again! If you would like to reserve a table, please contact the office. Spaces are \$25, with limited tables available with each space if needed. If you have any questions, please contact us.

A Note from Pam Mertz

From August through December, craft sales earned \$75 for the General fund. I'd like to especially thank Penny Pelligrini for donating the 10 trivets that were sold during this time. Thank you to everyone else for your continued support as we approach the 30th year of this project. I couldn't have done it without you!

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!

An Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike

I've been thinking a lot recently about where I am going from here. In five short months I'll be retired. I'll be entering a whole new phase of my life, so this is a very good question to ask. Of course, I have a general idea of where I'm headed and I've got some short-term projects I want to work on, but beyond that? Well, I'm still working on it. It's probably something we all should be asking ourselves given the very stormy socio-political waters we are just now beginning to enter. We all need to be asking the question, "where do we go from here, given what is happening in the world". What is happening in the world will affect us all and the courses we set from here on out. So, what follows is just a description of how I'm arriving at the answer to the question of where I go from here. Perhaps as you read it you can reflect on your own journey and where it is taking you.

The British fantasy novelist Terry Pratchett wrote in his novel, "I Shall Wear Midnight" this wisdom. *"If you do not know where you come from, then you don't know where you are, and if you don't know where you are, then you don't know where you're going. And if you don't know where you're going, you're probably going wrong."* And Maya Angelou wrote, *"You can't really know where you are going until you know where you have been."* So, as I look to the future, I need to take account of who I am and where I'm coming from.

The answer to this question for me, and for most of those reading these words, is rooted in Christ Jesus. I am a lifelong Christian who has lived, as the old hymn sings, "standing on the promises of God". By that I mean standing on the promises and teachings of Christ Jesus. Ever since my baptism I've been following Jesus on a journey, and he has never led me astray. It hasn't always been easy or a journey free from fear or doubt, and sometimes the path he leads me along is difficult to discern and follow, but I have never felt lost. And I do know the ultimate destination because one of the promises I stand on is Jesus' promise of The Kingdom of God.

I still have a long way to go. On my journey so far, I've tried to avoid the pitfalls. That hasn't been too hard; Jesus warned us of them. So, I've lived trying to love my neighbor as myself – no matter who the neighbor is – Jesus didn't discriminate and neither shall I. I've lived my life following as best I can the guidance Jesus imparted in his Sermon on the Mount. I know I haven't been perfect, but I've never deliberately been un-loving, unforgiving, arrogant, or self-righteous; seeking instead the

righteousness of God. I grew up in a church where meeting the needs of others, especially those who are marginalized, was paramount. I was steeped in the values of the Social Gospel and the application of Christian ethics to social problems and the issues of social justice including economic inequality, poverty, racial discrimination, environmental justice, and the importance of peacemaking.

So that's where I'm coming from. That's where I am now, and this past and present have set the course for my future as well. I may not know the specifics of where I go from here, but I do know the general direction and that is to follow Jesus as I have been following Jesus all my life. Whatever I do in the future I will stand on the promises of Jesus as I serve him in ways that care for those who are struggling spiritually, physically, or materially. I'll still be doing ministry, just in a different way, and perhaps without as many constraints. At least that's the plan. Judging from what's been taking place these last couple of weeks I'll have my work cut out for me. We all will.

That's all for this week. I'll see you on Sunday morning, either in person or on Zoom. Until then take care, love God, love each other, and pray for our world. Blessings & Peace – 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

4760 Mountain Road, Pasadena, MD 21122, 410-255-8887, mtcarmel21122@gmail.com

Office Hours – Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9-2