

Mt. Carmel UMC News and Encouraging Word

February 19, 2025

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Weekly Schedules

Liturgist - Our February schedule is...

02/23 – Sari McLeod

Narthex Greeters - Our February schedule is...

02/23 – Gail Miller

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.

Churches helping Churches

Magothy United Methodist Church is having a fundraising night at the Texas Roadhouse on March 2nd, 11am-3pm. Attached is the flyer with all the information. IMPORTANT, you must present them with the flyer either printed or on your phone for 10% of your bill to go toward Magothy UMC. Also, they will have a bake table set up in the restaurant, so save room for dessert!! Let's get in the habit of supporting our brothers and sisters in faith!

An Encouraging Word from Pastor Mike

"A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, "Teacher, don't you care if we drown?" He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!" Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

- Mark 4: 37 - 40

I read a comment the other day by a woman describing the way she feels living in the United States in these beginning days of the new administration. She said, "I feel like I'm trapped on a sinking ship". That's her way of saying that she feels powerless in the face of all the change and uncertainty that is a part of life in our nation right now. I'll have to say I've had some moments when I've had to agree with her. Yes, there is cause for concern, and there is a tremendous amount of confusion which just makes matters worse. But there's always one thing we need to remember to do when finding oneself on a sinking ship; put on the life preserver and find a lifeboat.

I was once a boy scout, and I remember the scouting motto to this day; be prepared. So, when I get on an airplane, I expect a smooth trip but plan for the worst. I note where the exits are, and I even count the rows to the exit row. I read the plastic "In Case of Emergency" card that's in the seat pocket. I listen to the flight attendants announcement. I even look around me to see if there are people who might need help if an emergency arises. Yes, that last one sounds a bit unusual, but we need to remember that in any emergency our greatest resources are God and each other, and I might be the other that someone else will need. When I'm on a ship or a ferry I look for where the life jackets are stored and note the location of the exits. When entering uncomfortable situations, I ask myself the "what if" questions and consider my options; I prepare.

Well now it looks like many of us are entering stormy and uncomfortable seas, at least for the next four years. We need to be prepared for anything. So, we need to make sure our life jacket is close at hand and know how to get to the lifeboats. By this I mean we need to keep our Lord close at hand and be engaged in the life of the church which is a community of mutual support. Our faith in Jesus will keep us afloat and this community we call the church will support us through whatever trials may come. Of that I'm certain.

When I begin my days, I make sure my Lord is close at hand. Before I even unlock the church office I go into the sanctuary, sit in a pew, and consider what the day may hold. Then I ask for God's help and guidance as I navigate the day. In this way I prepare myself spiritually for whatever may happen. In times of uncertainty, I maintain contact with my friends – which in my case is mostly the members of this congregation – so that if need arises, I am there for them and they are there for me. I prepare myself for what the future holds by keeping my spiritual life jacket and my spiritual lifeboat close to hand.

The ancient symbol for the Church was a ship or boat. In fact, the central part of the church where the congregation sits is called the Nave, from the Latin word Navis meaning ship. The idea here is that the church is the gathered community of people protected by God and supporting each other as they navigate the stormy seas of life.

So, is our national ship sinking? Probably not. In its 250 years of existence our nation has faced many storms and with God's help survived. Our nation will survive this one as well. There may be trials, but we need to remember that in any emergency our greatest resources are God and each other. So, plan for the best but expect the worst and be prepared. Just remember our Life Jacket is Christ Jesus, and our lifeboat is the church.

That's all for today. Be well, stay safe, care for one-another, and I'll see you on Sunday.
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

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Office Hours – Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 9-2