



Heart Beat Newsletter

Zion United Methodist Church
In the heart of Whitehouse



April, 2020

Pastor Carol's Comments

From a friend's Facebook post: "This is the Lentest Lent I've ever Lented!" Wow, is that the truth. If ever we've had a time that both encouraged and provided the time for self-reflection, this is it. It has been a time to think about what is really important in our lives, partly as a result of some things we value being withdrawn from us.

But, as we make our way through this most unusual Lenten season, we should remember where the word "Lent" comes from. It comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *lencten*, which means spring. So, even when days are dark, we live in the hope and expectation of new life. As our public officials keep reminding us, we will get through this pandemic. We will get through this season of Lent. On the other side is the resurrection and the promise that it holds for us, now and forever.

Closed Doors and Open Windows

There's an old saying that when a door closes, a window opens. That has certainly been the case here at Zion during the pandemic as we learn how to use technology in new ways to "be the Church."

Pastor Carol has been preparing a weekly worship service on our web site. Zion members read and record the scripture. Linda has begun recording music for an "offering time" of reflection. There are links to videos for the hymns with the words and music. (These videos do have ads in them, since all the resources we are using are free.) Pastor Carol has been creating a video of the sermon on her lap top and adding the link. The service can be found on our web site www.zionumcwhitehouse.org/online-worship/. The service is usually available by Saturday evening and remains up for the next week. The sermon link remains available via the "Sermons" page.

Food Pantry will continue next week (4/7) at our new hours (4:30 – 6:30). However, we have adjusted the way we pack and distribute the food, all with an eye to limiting contact and staying safe. We continue to evaluate the situation and will make a decision about the 4/21 date closer to that time.

News Around Zion

Closed Doors and Open Windows (Continued)

We tried a "virtual meeting" using a service called "Zoom." From a computer or smart phone, we can spend 40 minutes seeing and talking with each other.

Pastor Carol has been using a group email to get the word out about these opportunities. They are set up with "Reply to All" disabled, so you won't be inundated with extra email, but you can still respond to Pastor Carol. Do please check your email regularly for these updates. It's the easiest way to get important information out to everyone who has an email address. (Those without email get phone calls as needed.)

Holy Week and Easter

First of all, Easter is not cancelled! At Easter, we celebrate not merely the event of the resurrection but the fact that Jesus is risen—*is* alive now and forever! In fact, every Sunday is a considered a celebration of the resurrection—a "little Easter." (That's why Sundays aren't counted in the forty days of Lent.) That said, our Holy Week and Easter services will be different this year.

Holy (Maundy) Thursday: Pastor Carol will post a video reflection on our website.

Good Friday: A "Virtual Tennebrae" service will be posted on our web site. This "service of shadows" will offer a reflective retelling of Christ's Passion through Scripture and music.

Easter Communion Service: This will be quite an experiment! All are invited to park in our parking lot by 10:15 on Easter. Bring your fully charged cell phone, and enough bread and juice for everyone in your car. (You may want your car charger as well.) Everyone will receive a phone number to call and a meeting ID number to enter, which will connect us all in a big teleconference! Turn on your speakerphone feature, and share the service with your Zion family from the safety of your car. If you want, decorate your car to provide a festive Easter atmosphere as we gather!



News Around Zion (continued)

Mission

AW schools were concerned that at-risk students might not have enough to eat on the weekends during the school closure. In partnership with other AW churches and the AW Community Food Ministry in Waterville, Zion and our AW Food Pantry are filling weekend bags with single-serve fruit cups and main dishes, and cookies, chips, and granola bars. Each bag provides each student with enough food for two meals for two days. Our Food Pantry has pledged up to \$1000 towards the cost of purchasing food, but the single-serve fruit and mains are hard to come by. Plus, the first distribution had many more students than expected, and the number is expected to grow. If you can donate single-serving fruits and mains, contact Pastor Carol.

Lunchbox Collection: During Lent, we had begun collecting money to erase the lunch debt for students at AW schools, in partnership with the AW Alumni Assn. Before the pandemic closed our physical doors, we had already collected more than \$200! This is more than 20% of the total amount needed to erase the debt!

General Conference Postponed

The UMC's General Conference, originally scheduled for May of this year, has been postponed as a result of the coronavirus. It will be held sometime in 2021. According to the Commission on the General Conference, many factors made it unfeasible to reschedule the international 10-day gathering this year. (The local informational meetings have also been cancelled.)

Masks: Some of our members have been busy sewing masks for use during the pandemic. Guidelines for their use is still under discussion by health authorities, but most say that they can help reduce the spread of disease by covering the wearer's coughs and sneezes and also by preventing us from touching our faces—a prime way disease spreads. One popular source for directions is the Deaconess Hospital website: <https://www.deaconess.com/How-to-make-a-Face-Mask>.

Annual Conference at Lakeside

As of right now, Annual Conference will be held 6/7-10 at Lakeside. All are welcome to attend to observe and to participate in the wonderful worship opportunities. (This is also a great chance to enjoy Lakeside for free.) You can also participate as a voting at-large member of the Conference. If you are interested in representing the Maumee Watershed District as an At-Large Member (with voting privileges), please complete the form to found at <https://files.constantcontact.com/9db01b6a001/2e5bb75a-cded-4cc5-90c4-e05dc8ca387b.pdf> or contact Pastor Carol to get a printed copy. Have Pastor Carol sign your form and return it to the District office as soon as possible.

Church Information

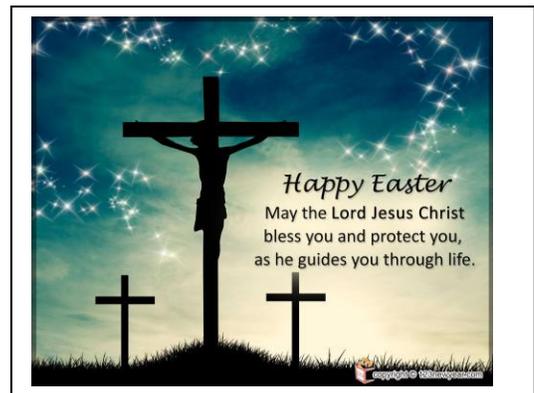
Pastor Carol Williams-Young
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Worship at 10:25 a.m.
Sunday School at 9:00 a.m.

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Find us on Facebook: whitehousezionumc

Website:
<http://www.zionumcwhitehouse.org>



Upcoming Events

- April 7 - Food pick-up from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.
- April 9 - Holy (Maundy) Thursday online video
- April 10 - Good Friday online service
- April 12- Easter Communion Service (gather in cars in our parking lot at 10:15 a.m.)