



Heart Beat Newsletter

Zion United Methodist Church

In the heart of Whitehouse



July, 2020

Pastor Carol's Comments

Do you remember the twister scene from "The Wizard of Oz," where uprooted trees fly through the air, doors blow off their hinges, and windows shatter? No matter how many times I watch it, my stomach knots up as darkness and chaos surround Dorothy.

These past few months have felt a lot like that scene. Things that seemed stable proved to be very fragile. A world that looked calm enough (at least for some of us), turned dark and stormy. It's been hard to find a sense of peace. But, peace is what we're promised—not a peace that depends on what is happening around us, but the peace that comes from knowing that, in all things, God is with us.

Sometimes we have to make a space where we can feel that peace. For me, it's sitting on my deck, early in the morning, where I can look up into the trees and sky, listen to the birds sing, and feel the soft breeze. This is when I'm simply silent, allowing God's peace to calm my heart and mind. That calm is also physical: the knots in my stomach loosen, my breathing slows, and my muscles relax.

Since the forecast for the near future calls for continued storms, I encourage you to remember what Jesus told the disciples in Mark 6:31-32: "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while." As the storms continue to swirl around us, may you find a quiet place and time each day to rest in God's peace, which passes all understanding.

Homework!

Earlier this spring, Pastor Carol asked for suggestions about sermon topics. The requests included the books of Ecclesiastes and the Song of Solomon. These are interesting choices, because they are both unusual books in some surprising ways. Since they are rarely included in the lectionary, they don't get much attention during the church year. So, beginning July 12, we will spend some weeks on Ecclesiastes and finish up with a week on the Song of Solomon. **Reading these books in advance will be helpful.** They are both pretty short and aren't hard to read (although you should be prepared to blush at what you find in the Song!).

News Around Zion

Missions Update

Our Food Pantry has been the object of a great outpouring of generosity from the community, so our shelves are well-stocked. Thanks to our Food Pantry volunteers, who have put in lots of hours sorting and storing the many donations.

The Food Pantry now has its own Facebook page (Anthony Wayne Food Pantry) Hopefully, this will help get the word out to people looking for a bit of assistance.

The Children's Food Bag project has grown by leaps and bounds! Each week, more than 100 children receive bags with food for a week's worth of easy-to-prepare breakfasts and lunches. We will be assembling and distributing the bags the week of 7/6.

Worship Review

The Administrative Council met to discuss worship amidst the COVID pandemic. Pastor Carol reported on what she's been learning from other churches, our insurance company, state and local health sources, and the West Ohio Conference. The group concluded that we are able to have a much more "normal" worship service in the parking lot than we can inside at this point. Indoor worship would require masks and distancing, of course, but would also require other limitations, especially in music. The best information seems to indicate that singing together, even with masks and distancing, is a very high-risk activity. Some music professionals believe that, until we have a vaccine and a treatment that is 95% effective, there should be no congregational singing.

Summer heat is the one downside to our parking lot service. A concern was raised about cars becoming too warm for comfort. There was some discussion about options such as beginning earlier. It was decided that a radio will be set up in the Fellowship Hall, which stays cool. Anyone who needs a cool-down break is welcome to go to the Fellowship Hall and listen to the service there. If you're there alone, feel free to sing and speak your heart out! If "two or three are gathered in his name," please wear a mask, maintain at least 6 feet of distance, and refrain from singing. We'll continue to evaluate the situation as time goes on and conditions change.



News Around Zion (continued)

West Ohio Conference News

As a result of the pandemic, the annual meeting of the West Ohio Conference at Lakeside was cancelled. Instead, it will be held in an online "virtual" format on Saturday, September 12. Details to come. Bishop Palmer gave his Episcopal Address online on Tuesday, 6/9. He is a powerful and inspiring preacher. You can watch it here: https://www.westohioumc.org/conference/2020-episcopal-address-bishop-gregory-v-palmer.

General Conference Rescheduled

The General Conference, which will take up the matter of a potential split within the denomination, has been rescheduled to Aug. 29-Sept. 7 next year in Minneapolis. Because of our global make-up, COVID made it impossible to ensure that delegates could participate in a meeting this year.

Freedom School Update

Freedom School will happen this summer virtually via Zoom. It will run as though each child were in the building, with singing, cheers, a guest reader, and break-out classrooms. Each Friday at 2 p.m., parents and scholars will pick up their books, supplies, and healthy snacks for the upcoming week. Then, scholars and parents will get out of their cars and stand in an appropriately-distanced circle in the parking lot. They'll do five minutes of cheers and chants together so the scholars have a chance to see each other and share big, bright smiles!

Please keep these children and their families in your prayers, especially during this time when their communities are being hard hit by the virus and as many continue to face the barriers of systemic racism.



Lee and Pastor Carol joined other community members to accept a \$900 donation to the children's food bag project. Two teachers from Waterville Primary School designed and sold tee-shirts during the pandemic to boost morale and unity. They donated their proceeds to the food bag project.

Photo by Karen Gerhardinger "The Mirror"

Church Information

Pastor Carol Williams-Young
10926 Maumee St. P.O. Box 2457
Whitehouse OH 43571
(419) 877-5820

Worship at 10:25 a.m.
Sunday School at 9:00 a.m.

Zionwhitehouseumc@gmail.com
pastorcarol@bex.net

Find us on Facebook: whitehousezionumc

Website:
http://www.zionumcwhitehouse.org

Upcoming Events

Sundays, 10:25 a.m. Parking lot service on 106.1 FM
Thursdays, 7:00 p.m. Bible Study on Zoom.
Contact Pastor Carol if you need the link.

July 7, 4-6:30 p.m. Food Pantry

July 8, 9-11:30 a.m. - Food Bag Packing,
Waterville Community Church

July 10, 10:45-12:15 - Food Bag Distribution,
Whitehouse Primary School

July 21, 4-6:30 p.m. Food Pantry

August 2 - Communion Sunday. BYOBJ (Bring your
own bread and juice!)