



Heart Beat Newsletter

Zion United Methodist Church
Loving God, Loving People, Serving the World

December, 2021

Pastor Carol's Comments

At a retreat I recently attended, the leader guided us in meditation on the angel's visit to Mary, Mary's visit to Elizabeth, and the birth of Jesus from the perspective of the women—one often missing from our theological reflections. She read a poem that described Mary's pregnancy as "nine months of eternity." Isn't that a lovely idea—that any period in our lives is a segment of eternity? I've often said that eternity doesn't start when we die. It's happening now. Our years, months, days, and minutes are all pieces of eternity. Our lives are part of something much greater than ourselves.

Mary's "nine months of eternity" ended with the birth of Jesus, who offers us a way to experience abundant, eternal life—life that we can have now. "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly," Jesus said. As many retail ads say, "Why wait?!" Accept the gift of the Savior, born of Mary's nine months of eternity. Have a blessed Christmas!

Decorating for Advent and Christmas

Thanks to all who helped decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. You'll see that our windows have a new look this year, thanks to Annette Petree.

Annette writes: "Most of us feel comforted by the thought of angels among us. We picture them as beautiful, and many believe that God created them for us. Those are some of the reasons my mother collected them. My mother passed away almost ten years ago, and I kept her angels. As Ron Myers says, angels are always on the sidelines; they're never the "main event." Thus, we've placed my mother's angels on the sides of our church for the Advent and Christmas seasons. There are angels of Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy (to coincide with the four weeks of Advent), along with a few others, including one focused on children. My mother would be very pleased to know that this congregation is enjoying her angels, and it is a way for me to enjoy her memory. Like all the decorations for Advent, these are meant to honor our Father in heaven and rejoice at the birth of Jesus, our Savior.



News Around Zion

[Agricultural Missionary Speaks at Thanksgiving Eve Service](#)
Our Community Thanksgiving Eve Service was a lovely time of worship and was extra-special for several reasons. This was the first time Hope UMC hosted the service, and they topped off the evening with cookies and coffee. We had a chance to hear a message from Retired Bishop Marcus Lohrmann (interim pastor at Community of Christ) on his first Thanksgiving at CoC. And, we had the blessing of hearing Linda play Hope's organ.

Another special aspect was that, this year, we had an additional speaker. Lorraine Charinda is a UMC missionary in the district of Kamina in the North Katanga province of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Kamina is among the poorest areas in the province and is predominately rural. Most people depend on small-scale farming for a living, yet few understand the need for sustainable farming methods.

Lorraine, a native of Zimbabwe, earned her Bachelor's Degree in agriculture from Africa University in Kenya. (Africa U. is a UMC institution.) She went on to earn a Master's Degree as well. Now she uses her skills in her work as a missionary to Kamisamba Farm.

The farm is owned by the North Katanga UMC and works to improve yields and sustainability, preserve ecosystems, and improve family nutrition. The Farm includes crop production areas, animal production, fish ponds, a training center, and a guesthouse. Through projects like Kamisamba Farm, the UMC strengthens its fight against poverty, malnutrition, and hunger in Kamina by empowering and building the capacity of small-scale farmers.

Lorraine shared one of their success stories. One farmer had twelve children, but couldn't earn enough from his farm to send them to school. With the assistance of Kamisamba Farm, he was able to increase the profitability of his farm, and his children are now in school.

The offering from the service supported Kamisamba Farm. If you'd like to make an online donation to the Farm, go to www.westohioumc.org/conference/kamisamba-farm. 100% of donations support the work of Kamisamba Farm.



Fall Turkey/Ham Dinner

Wow! With the successful take-out-only format we instituted in 2020, we sold out of both turkey and ham in the first hour. Then we offered “dinners of sides” for \$5 until they ran out! Then, we offered desserts for a donation. Total sales: 119 adult and 3 children’s dinners, 14 “sides-only” dinners, and dessert donations. Additional publicity by our members on neighborhood social media helped spread the word. Team work plus great food is clearly a recipe for success!

Advent Bible Study

It’s not too late to join our Advent Bible Study: “The Wonder of Christmas” with Ed Robb and Rob Renfroe. To ease the challenge of driving after dark, we will meet on Thursdays at 2:00. A book is available but not required.

United Methodist Men Suspend Poinsettia Sales

In the past, Zion has supported UMM ministries by ordering poinsettias from them. If poinsettias are part of your holiday décor, be aware that UMM isn’t selling the plants this year.

“Directions” Update

In our work of discerning what God wants Zion to be in this community, we have identified resources we have access to, “inventoried” all our current ministries, and are collecting information about the actual needs of the AW community. Our Directions meetings are on hiatus during this busy time; we will resume on 1/16. In the meantime, Pastor Carol will be assembling a booklet summarizing what we’ve learned so far. Make sure you pick up a copy, review it, pray over it, and be ready to share the directions you believe God is leading us.

Missions Update

Prayer Squares Needed: If you knit, crochet, or even sew, please put making some of these (approx.) 5x5” squares on your to-do list. Directions can be found on our web site.

Operation Christmas Child: Our OCC project broke recent records with 45 boxes packed and shipped!

It’s now time to decorate our Mitten Tree with warm hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves of all sizes and gather blankets to put under the tree. A new option this year is adult-sized socks and underwear—the most asked-for items by the homeless. Family House will again be the recipient of these gifts, and we’d like to get the items to them early in January when they are most needed.



Winter Camping for Kids

Do you know a child who would enjoy a unique camping experience? In January, West Ohio Conference will sponsor a Winter Wonderland of faith, fellowship, and adventure in God’s backyard. Children and teens ages 7-17 will enjoy hot chocolate and worship around camp fires, and a trip to Mad River Mountain for snow tubing. The camp will be held at Camp Wesley in Bellefontaine, from 7 p.m. on Sat., 1/15, to 4 p.m. on Mon., 1/17. Cost: is \$125 per youth. For more information, call 380-223-2267 or go online: <https://www.westohioumc.org/equip/retreats-camping/camp/wesley/event/wesley-winter-camp-2022>.

Church Information

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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](https://www.facebook.com/whitehousezionumc)

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

Upcoming Events

- Tues., 12/7, 4 - 6 p.m. - Food Pantry
6-7 p.m. - Girl Scouts
6:30-7:30 p.m. - Girl Scouts
- Tues., 12/21, 4 - 6 p.m. - Food Pantry
7:00 Preschool Christmas Program
(Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall)
- Fri., 12/24, 7:00 p.m. - Christmas Eve Service
of Candlelight and Carols
- Sun., 1/16, 11:30 - Directions meetings resume
- Sat. 1/22, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. - Electronics Recycling Day
- Thurs., 2/17, 4:40 – 7 p.m. - Ham Loaf Dinner