



Heart Beat Newsletter

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

September, 2022

Pastor Carol's Comments

School's back in session, and students are again immersed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. As with so many things in our divisive society these days, what students can or should read has become a hot-button issue. Schools are even being called on to ban books from their libraries and reading lists. These books are most often about characters who are members of social, racial, ethnic, or religious minorities.

Reading has a special place in our Wesleyan tradition. John Wesley's publishing house printed inexpensive pamphlets that even the poor could afford. He loaded his preachers up with reading material for the people they preached to as they rode through the countryside on their "circuits." He started schools to teach poor children to read. Wesley himself read for five hours a day and recommended the same to his preachers. (Although I would love to follow his example, I confess I fall "a bit" short in that department.)

While we may not be able to devote as much time to reading as Wesley did, we can read the way he did: widely. He read books of poetry, memoirs, philosophy, science, and history, as well as theology. He didn't confine himself to authors he agreed with, but also those with opposing views that he then engaged, sometimes passionately but always thoughtfully.

Books that give us a glimpse into lives that are different from ours or expose us to ideas that are foreign to us challenge us. They force us to think more deeply about what we believe – about the world and about our faith. As a friend of mine once said, "Faith is like a muscle. If you don't exercise it against resistance, it gets weak and flabby."

Reading is in our Wesleyan DNA and in our Christian DNA, too. St. Paul asked Timothy to "bring the books" when he came to visit Paul in prison. As our children hit their books, let's renew our commitment to reading books that deepen our understanding of the world we're meant to serve.

Check Your At-Home COVID Tests

If you have a supply of COVID tests at home, be sure to check the expiration dates. The tests can have a relatively short shelf life. Don't be caught off guard without an effective test when you need one.

News Around Zion

Food Pantry Scores!

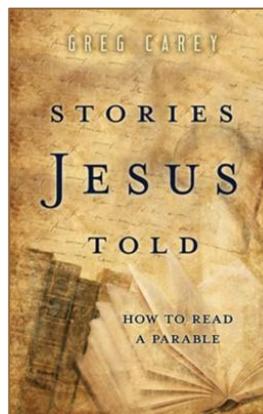
Each season, the members of the 10u AW Junior Generals baseball team perform Random Acts of Kindness, both as individuals and as a team. The team does two projects each season. They toured the Pantry and collected food as a team, but Brody Varner hit a home run for us when he chose the Food Pantry as his personal RAK project.



As you can see in the photo, Brody collected food, plus he donated \$110—his share of the team's remaining funds after the season ended. Thanks to Brody and his team, and to the coaches who teach their players more than athletic skills.

New Bible Study

We will begin a new Bible study called "Stories Jesus Told" on Tues., 9/6, from 2:30-3:30 as part of our "Body and Soul Tuesdays." Jesus told stories (or parables) to help us



understand how God wants us to live. But, stories like the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son can be interpreted in more than one way, and even Bible scholars are divided on their meanings. In this 6-part video series, we'll explore six of Jesus' parables to learn how to read, interpret, and live them in our daily lives. A book is available but not required. If you purchase one, please remember to use iGive or

Amazon Smile so that your purchase will benefit Zion. All are invited to attend, especially those who are new to Bible study! Contact Pastor Carol if you would like more information.



“Directions” Update

We continue our efforts to expand usage of the Food Pantry. Amy has contacted the gas stations. So far one has already committed to posting signs and making flyers available. Annette has been in contact with health care providers. Brenda has posted signs at the laundromat, post office, and the party store. Cassie was told by the Village that they wouldn't post signs or provide flyers, but they continue to post Food Pantry days on the electronic sign. Laurie is talking with some friends at Cedar Creek about a possible partnership that may help us get food to people who can't come to us.

Brenda is continuing her efforts to be in conversation with diversion programs and the juvenile courts to let them know that we have service hours available for young offenders.

We have had some participation in our “Body and Soul Tuesdays” Bible Study. We hope that the Food Pantry can serve as a “means of grace,” where current believers can grow in discipleship and others can be invited into discipleship.

We'll meet after worship on Sun., 9/11, to get caught up on what everyone has been working on and to talk about what should come next. All are encouraged to participate as we seek ways in which Zion can better serve the community, grow in discipleship, and invite others into a relationship with Jesus.

West Ohio Laity Session

All laypeople are invited to attend Laity Session 2022 on Sat., 9/10, from 10:00 – 11:15 a.m. online. Worship and a message from Bishop Palmer will be included. The event is free and open to all West Ohio lay persons. There is no cost, but pre-registration is required:

<https://www.westohioumc.org/conference/event/laity-session-2022>.

Special Session of the West Ohio Conference

The West Ohio Conference will hold a Special Session on Sat., 11/19, from 10:00 a.m. – noon to deal with requests for disaffiliation. Requests by churches complying with all requirements will be voted on. The conference likely will be held online. While only clergy and elected lay members may vote, anyone can observe the proceedings.

There is a lot of disinformation being circulated about this topic. For example, it is *not true* that pastors can remove their congregations from the UMC; only congregations can make that decision. It is *not true* that the UMC is going to stop preaching the Bible or the gospel truths we affirm in the Apostle's Creed. It is *not true* that congregations are being forced to leave. It is *not true* that changes of any kind in the UMC can or will be made before the 2024 General Conference.

Don't assume that what you see on the internet or in the media is true or accurate. If you have questions about anything you hear, don't hesitate to ask Pastor Carol.

Church Information

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Worship at 10:25 a.m.

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Find us on Facebook: whitehousezionumc



Upcoming Events

Tues., 9/6, 2:30-3:30, Bible Study
4-6 p.m., Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143

Tues., 9/6 and Wed., 9/7, Sunbeam Preschool opens

Sat., 9/10, 10 a.m. - noon, West Ohio Laity Session

Sun., 9/11, after worship, Directions meeting

Wed., 9/14, 6:00 p.m., Church Council meeting
All are welcome to attend.

Tues., 9/20, 2:30-3:30, Bible Study
4-6 p.m., Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143

Tues., 9/27, 6-7 p.m., Girl Scout Troop #16232

Sat., 11/19, 10 a.m. - noon
Annual Conference Special Session (virtual)