



Heart Beat Newsletter

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



March, 2023

Pastor Carol's Comments

You may have heard from your friends at other churches about a Lenten tradition called “burying the Alleluia.” Beginning at the end of worship on Transfiguration Sunday or on Shrove Tuesday (the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday), a visible symbol of the word “Alleluia” is hidden from view.

This tradition goes back more than a thousand years. In those long-ago days, choir boys marched in procession with crosses, tapers, and holy water, carrying a coffin containing the Alleluia banner with great “moaning and mourning.” They buried the coffin in the church yard and sprinkled it with holy water. Today, the Alleluia might be on a banner that is taken down, folded, and placed on the altar with a covering over it, or it may be printed on a paper, placed in a box and sealed (and maybe even literally buried). Once the Alleluia is “buried,” the word “Alleluia” (or Hallelujah) isn’t spoken or sung again until Easter.

The idea behind this is that “Alleluia” is a song of celebration and joy. Putting it away symbolizes the penitence and sorrow which characterize the season of Lent. Sometimes it’s likened to putting away our Christmas decorations. If we left them up all year, they would lose their meaning. So it is with our “alleluias,” the thinking goes. If we put them away for a time, they will be more meaningful when we “resurrect” them.

While the UMC doesn’t forbid engaging in this very old tradition, our *Book of Worship* doesn’t include it, and for good reason. If you count the days from Ash Wednesday to Easter, there are 46 days, not 40. Why? Sundays aren’t part of Lent! (That’s why our bulletin reads, “___ Sunday *in* Lent,” not “___ Sunday *of* Lent.”) Sundays fall within the season of Lent but they’re not part of it, because we consider every Sunday a “little Easter”—a weekly celebration of the Resurrection and the joy it offers us.

As Christians, we are promised hope in the face of our sinfulness, life in the midst of grief, and joy in the midst of sorrow. Celebrating with praise and joy on Sundays, even in the midst of the solemn, reflective season of Lent reminds us of this fact. So, go ahead and sing your alleluias with gusto, even during Lent, for Christ the Lord *is* risen today!

News Around Zion

SPRC Meets with District Superintendent

The SPRC met with District Superintendent Amy Haines. She expressed her appreciation for all that Zion is and does. If there were any concerns that the Conference might be considering closing or merging Zion due to its small size, Rev. Haines put those to rest. Zion will continue in its mission of loving God, loving people, and serving the world!

Valentine’s Day Cookies Bring Smiles

Pastor Carol had the fun job of delivering the cookies from Zion’s bakers to those who serve our community. Cookie packages, decorated by Zoe and Nora, were delivered to the Fire Dept., Library, Village offices, Police Dept., Post Office, and Blue Creek nursing home. They were received with smiles everywhere, and a hug from the nursing home activities director.

Ham Loaf Dinner

The new curbside service at the Ham Loaf Dinner went very smoothly. With Laurie collecting money, Caleb and friends serving as our runners, and all the usual suspects cooking the food and preparing the to-go packages, the evening was a success logistically. The only downside was that the number of people served was down significantly. The weather may have been a factor; freezing rain was forecast throughout our dinner hours and, while the freeze wasn’t as bad as forecast, it was a cold and ugly night. The figures for how much we made aren’t complete yet. Stay tuned!



Lent Observances

It's not too late to join our Bible Study for Lent, Tuesdays at 2:30. We're focusing on some "hard words" we encounter in the Gospels. We began with the word "tempted" and will move forward with words such as "rebuked," "condemned," and "judgment." If you can't participate in person, let Pastor Carol know. We've been able to include two people by phone, so we can figure out a way to include you!

Looking ahead, we will observe Holy (Maundy) Thursday on 4/6 at 7:00 with Communion and the Stripping of the Chancel. We will hold our Good Friday "Service of Shadows" on 4/7 at 7:00 p.m. We need seven different Scripture readers for that service. Please let Pastor Carol know if you are willing to be one of them.

Thank You from a Food Pantry Customer

Dear Pastor Carol, I wanted to take this time to tell you how much you and the lovely souls that give up their time to work the Food Pantry mean to me.

I came for about a year then backed off because I got SNAP and wanted to make room for someone else. As things have a way of happening, I started back. I don't know what I would do without you and the lovely angels. You make me believe there are still loving people in this world. You are doing a great job doing God's work. I'm glad with all my heart to see you twice a month.

I enjoy the newsletter. You give me hope and it makes me want to do nice things for others all year long.

With all my love, PL

Church Information

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<http://www.zionumcwhitehouse.org>

Find us on Facebook: whitehousezionumc

Scan to donate safely and securely online:

West Ohio Conference News

At last year's Annual Conference, a decision was made to reduce West Ohio's eight districts to six. The new redistricting plan will take effect 7/1. Zion will be part of the "Maumee River District," which roughly extends from the MI state line to Hancock Co., and from the IN state line to Sandusky Co. It's possible that the district office will be relocated, but that remains undecided. The Rev. Amy Haines will remain our District Superintendent.

2023 Annual Conference Lay Members at-Large

This year, the West Ohio Annual Conference is being held June 1st-3rd in Dayton at the Convention Center. Each year, our district is allowed a certain number of Lay Members at-Large to balance out clergy and laity at Annual Conference. Any member may apply to be a member at-large, and the conference seeks diversity in ethnicity, age, context (rural, urban, suburban), church membership size, and more. Although the deadline for applications was 3/1, you can still indicate your interest in case more members are needed. If you are interested in attending Annual Conference with voice and vote, let Pastor Carol know and she will get the link to the application form to you.

Ready to Take a Walk?

Registration is now open for the summer Emmaus Walks. The Men's Walk is 6/11-14 in Bryan; the Women's Walk is 7/13-16 in Maumee. Interested? See Cassie for more info.

Upcoming Events

- Tues., 3/7 2:30-3:30, Bible Study
4-6 p.m. Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143
- Tues., 3/14 2:30, Bible Study
6-7 p.m., Girl Scout Troop #16232
- Wed., 3/15 6:00 p.m., Church Council meeting
- Tues., 3/21 2:30-3:30 p.m., Bible Study
4-6 p.m. Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143
- Tues., 3/28 2:30 p.m., Bible Study
6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #16232
- Tues., 4/4 2:30-3:30 p.m., Bible Study
4-6 p.m. Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143
- Thurs., 4/6 7:00 p.m. Holy Thursday service
- Fri., 4/7 7:00 p.m. Good Friday service
- Sun., 4/9 Easter!