



Heart Beat Newsletter



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

May, 2023

Pastor Carol's Comments

Why are we still singing Easter songs?!

Although we typically think of Easter as a day, it is actually one of the seasons of the Church, along with Advent, the Christmas season, the season after Epiphany, Lent, the Easter season, and the season after Pentecost. The Easter season begins on Easter Eve (after sundown) and lasts through Pentecost. The white paraments on the altar table, pulpit, and lectern are a visual reminder that our Easter celebration continues.

The period between Easter and Pentecost is called "The Great Fifty Days." During this time, we practice "living resurrection" in our own lives—we live as "Easter people," whose lives are shaped, not just by the cross, but by the resurrection of Jesus. As the noted preacher Barbara Brown Taylor wrote, it is in this season of resurrection that "followers became leaders, the listeners became preachers, the converts became missionaries, the healed became healers...and nothing was ever the same again." Easter is a season when we, too, can be transformed by the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

In fact, our celebration of Easter doesn't end with Pentecost. Every Sunday is considered a "little Easter," in which we remember what Christ has done for us. As we recently sang, "Every day to us is Easter, with its resurrection song." During these fifty days and beyond, we look for signs and instances of resurrection in ourselves, in the Church, and in the world. We ask ourselves, what relationships that seem dead might live again? What work that has fallen by the wayside might be revived? What in us that has become dormant can find new life?

John's gospel tells us that Jesus "was the light of all people...and the darkness did not overcome it." May the Light of the World continue to guide your days in this Easter season and beyond.



News Around Zion

"Directions" Meetings Resume

We have resumed our "Directions" meetings after worship. Although Zion's pastoral leadership will change this summer, its mission of "loving God, loving people, and serving the world" will not! So, in these meetings (lasting less than an hour), we'll discuss current ministries and future opportunities for service and spiritual growth.

In recent meetings, we have begun exploring how we might partner with other community organizations such as the Library to connect with people beyond the walls of the church. We are also being intentional about how our projects can connect people with Jesus—to help people to meet him or grow in their discipleship.

We also began reviewing a variety of tasks that Pastor Carol has been covering but don't necessarily need to be done by a clergyperson. Please take a look at the list and see what roles you might be interested in taking on.

Communications

Writing and printing the "Heart Beat"

Church phone: Check voicemail, update announcement

Check and respond to church email

Change exterior sign as needed

Publicity for events other than dinners (flyers/signs/media, etc.)

Informational hand-outs for events

Update web site (using the Wordpress online platform)

Update church Facebook page

Serve as contact for groups like AW Interact service club, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts)

Worship, Study, and Service

Check/Replace sanctuary candles, polish brass

Lead Bible Study

Valentine cookie delivery

Admin

Vanco (contact/reporting for our online giving platform)

Preparation and submission of conference reports

(church conference, Trustee/Property Legal Report, etc.)

Do you have Spiritual Gifts that might find expression in one of these tasks? See the separate article to find out!



Cherry Fest Diaper Changing Station

We're all set to host our diaper changing station once again at Cherry Fest. Cassie and her husband will be heading up the set-up on Thursday night (6/8) and take-down on Saturday evening (6/10), so watch for information from her about when your help will be needed. The station will be open on Friday and Saturday, so we'll need people to host our visitors throughout both days.

What Are Your Spiritual Gifts?

Spiritual gifts are not talents or skills, but abilities given to us by the grace of God. Spiritual gifts empower us to match our deep passions with the world's deep need. These gifts are given in order to build and strengthen the Church as the Body of Christ and to serve the world Christ came to save.

Want to discover your spiritual gifts? The UMC has an online quiz you can take, based on the gifts that Paul gives as examples in his letters. It looks long but doesn't take long to complete, and you get your results immediately. Go to <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/spiritual-gifts-inventory/en>.

Congratulations to Caleb!

Congratulations to Caleb on his confirmation and on being received into the professing membership of the Church of Jesus Christ, the UMC, and the Zion congregation. Caleb was confirmed in worship on Sun., 4/16, with many loving friends and family witnessing this important event. Blessings, Caleb!

Church Information

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West Ohio Annual Conference

The West Ohio Annual Conference will meet in the Dayton Convention Center, 6/1-3. In addition to administrative tasks, a variety of resolutions will be voted on. The "Book of Reports," with detailed information about each resolution, hasn't been published yet, but the agenda lists topics such as Palestinian Christians, support for the creation of a US Conference, the removal of discriminatory policies, affirmation for full inclusion of all people in the UMC, and net zero greenhouse gas emissions. There is always lively debate about the proposed resolutions before they are voted on by the lay and clergy members of the conference. (Ron Myers is Zion's lay member, with Pat Jones as the alternate.)

Annual Conference also includes a variety of worship experiences, streamed online. More information about how you can participate virtually will be provided as it is announced.

West Ohio Conf. Suspends Residential Camping for 2023

West Ohio Conference has decided to suspend residential camp programs for the 2023 season. Like many businesses and organizations, West Ohio's camping programs have had difficulty recruiting enough staff to safely offer its programs. In lieu of sleep-away camp, various offerings at multiple sites are planned, which are expected to reach up to 1500 children, youth, and young adults.

Upcoming Events

- Tues., 5/2 2:30-3:30 p.m., Bible Study
4-6 p.m. Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143
- Sun., 5/7 "Directions" meeting (after worship)
- Tues., 5/9 6-7 p.m., Girl Scout Troop #16232
- Tues., 5/16 2:30-3:30 p.m., Bible Study
4-6 p.m. Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143
- Wed., 5/17, 6:00 p.m., Church Council meeting
- Tues., 5/23 6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #16232
- Thurs., 6/1- Sat., 6/3, Annual Conference (Dayton)
- Sun., 6/4 "Directions" meeting (after worship)
- Tues., 6/6 2:30-3:30 p.m., Bible Study
4-6 p.m., Food Pantry
- Thurs., 6/8 - Sat., 6/10 Cherry Fest