



Heart Beat Newsletter

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



February, 2023

Pastor Carol's Comments

It seems like we've just put away the Christmas decorations, and here we are with Lent beginning this month!

It's traditional to adopt a special devotional practice during Lent as we prepare to observe the Lord's passion and celebrate his resurrection. That may take the form of "giving up something for Lent"—fasting or abstaining from something. The idea is that as you "hunger" for that thing, you'll remember Jesus and what he gave up for us. It's also a reminder of those who fast out of poverty rather than by choice.

Another option is to take on something instead, like a new way of serving or a new form of prayer. This year, I'll be working my way through a little book called *40 Days with Wesley* by Rueben P. Job. Each day includes prayer, a scripture reading, and two selections from Wesley's writings. I'll be doing this with a friend. That will help me be accountable in doing it each day.

My daughter has chosen a different book: *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection* by Kate Bowler. (I may end up reading that one with her as well!) The author is a young woman who, as a professor at Duke Divinity School and young mother, faced Stage IV cancer. In this book, Bowler and her co-author offer new ways of finding truth, beauty, and meaning amid the chaos of life.

Each year on Ash Wednesday, we are invited to observe a holy Lent. God's words in Joel tell us to "rend our hearts and not our garments." May the weeks of Lent be a time when we open our hearts more fully to God, whether it's through prayer, fasting, serving, or study. May we all indeed observe a holy Lent as we prepare ourselves for the joy of Easter.

Thank You from Pastor Carol!

Thank you so much for your generous Christmas gift (or, as Ron said, Epiphany gift)! Your kindness is overwhelming. Marc and I love to shop at Sautter's, so we'll think of you when we do. As for the rest of the gift, I will use it for something as special as all of you are.

Thank you for all the ways you offer your support, caring, and love to me all through the year. You truly are a blessing to me.

News Around Zion

Happy Valentine's Day!

We will again offer our love and support to our public servants in the form of cookies for Valentine's Day. Please have your cookies at the church by Sat., 2/11. Let Pat Jones know if you are willing to help assemble the cookie packages.

Ham Loaf Dinner Gets a Makeover

The delicious Ham Loaf recipe will be the same on 2/16, but it will be served in a new way. Building on what we learned during the pandemic, we will again be giving our customers curbside service. The menu will be somewhat simplified: there will be one vegetable (green beans) rather than a choice of two, and the dessert will be cookies rather than the more difficult-(and expensive)-to-serve pies and cakes. All the menu items will fit in a single to-go container, which we can have ready to deliver to cars as they arrive.

There are some "plusses" to curbside service: customers can avoid getting out of their cars on a cold February night, and we won't have to transfer food from the kitchen to the Scout Hall. As Lee mentioned during the meeting when the congregation agreed to the change, there are always unexpected "bugs" to work out when we do something new, but we'll take care of those if and when they arise.

Recycling Results Are In!

RecycleIT just completed processing the items collected at our Electronics Recycling Day. Our "haul" this year 6,359 lbs. This is significantly less than recent years, but we expected that. RecycleIT owner Chris Earl wrote, "The total was down quite a bit from last year, but it was still a great event!" Bonus: \$123 in donations from grateful recyclers. Thanks to all the AW students who unloaded cars during the drive!



Lent Begins on 2/22

We will begin our observance of Lent at our Ash Wednesday Service on Wed., 2/22, at 7:00 p.m. As usual, the service will include the imposition of ashes and Communion.

Beginning Tues., 2/28, at 2:30, we will return to weekly Bible Study for Lent. The Gospel of John tells of how the disciples, after listening to Jesus, said, "This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" We'll be reflecting on some of the challenging words that Jesus used.

Looking ahead, we will observe Holy (Maundy) Thursday on 4/6 and Good Friday on 4/7. Both services will be at 7 p.m. Then, we'll celebrate the resurrection in worship on 4/9.

No More Smiles from Amazon

Amazon is discontinuing its "Amazon Smiles" program on 2/20. Zion has benefited from this program for several years as Amazon shoppers directed a portion of their purchase amounts to Zion. (Thanks to all of you who did!)

There are other ways to support Zion through your purchases, like linking your Kroger Plus card to Zion through their Community Rewards program. Find out how here: <https://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards>.

iGive.com is another option. Online retailers give a percentage of your purchase to Zion when you begin your online shopping trip at iGive. More than 2000 retailers participate, so you are likely to find your favorite stores, including Walmart, Costco, and Office Depot. Sign up at iGive.com.

Church Information

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2023 District Leadership Training Day

Ron Myers offers this report on the District Leadership Training Day at St. Mark's UMC in Findlay on Sat., 1/28.

"This year's topics focused more on spiritual mentoring and personal spiritual growth than on step-by-step program how-to's. Keynote speaker Timothy Bias, DS for Capitol Areas North and South, suggested that mentoring a few people well who then reach out to an ever-widening group was Jesus' primary discipling approach. Although my take is that Jesus did both small-group mentoring and spoke to the masses, more or less at the same time, Bias' attention to spiritual soundness is well taken.

My first workshop session continued this theme, with more emphasis on keeping one's own self in order. My second was 'Igniting Lay Ministry,' a program proposal for the fall. Although I wasn't sold on it, it was interesting in that the class was as much about confronting fears, conflict, and feelings of inadequacy as the proposal itself."

Thanks to Ron for representing Zion at the event, and for investing his time to gain new insights to use in guiding Zion's future.

Christmas Giving Delivered

St. Paul's homeless shelter was very grateful to receive our gifts of winter wear, underwear, and blankets. These items are always needed. So, keep an eye out for sales on socks, men's and women's underwear, and bras (which can be gently used), especially in larger sizes, for a possible Christmas in July.

**Upcoming Events**

Tues., 2/7, 2:30-3:30, Bible Study
4-6 p.m., Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143

Sat., 2/11 Valentine's Cookies due

Tues., 2/14, Valentine's Day
6-7 p.m., Girl Scout Troop #16232

Thurs., 2/16, 4:30-7 p.m. Ham Loaf Dinner

Tues., 2/21, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Bible Study
4-6 p.m., Food Pantry
6:30 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #10143

Wed., 2/22, 7:00 p.m., Ash Wednesday Service

Tues., 2/28, 2:30 p.m., Lenten Bible Study begins
(weekly through 4/4)
6:00 p.m. Girl Scout Troop #16232