

Fear Not Great Tidings and Great Joy

A special Christmas newsletter for the family and friends of Mt. Carmel UMC



Dear blessed Mount Carmel Family, during this season of Advent,

I just want to say to all of you: MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!

Lord Jesus... We joyously celebrate your birth. We thank you for your sacrificial love for us. Even during this time of pandemic, your Light still shines in darkness, your Grace is amazing, and your Peace is our shelter in the midst of the storm. Just as your birth was miraculous on that day long ago in Bethlehem, thank you for giving us the miracle of new birth today. Continue to make us brand new in you each and every day that we live.

Happy Birthday Jesus, You ROCK!

Pastor Jay

Email: pastor.jay@hopemtcarmel.org/ Phone: 240-664-3408

Thank everyone that attended the Zoom Revelation Study. We will get started with Bible study again in January. Date and subject to be determined.

Worship with us on Christmas Eve!!!



Zoom Worship at 5:30 pm

Plan now to join us at 5:30 pm on Thursday, December 24, for a very special live Zoom Worship Service that will allow us to be together in a new way on this Holy Night and still celebrate many of our most beloved Mt. Carmel Christmas Eve traditions such as the lighting of the Advent wreath, the singing of beautiful hymns and praise music, and the reading of the

Christmas story. The Zoom link will be in the weekly Mt. Carmel Emails. If you do not get those emails contact Donna at donna.clawson@hopemtcarmel.org

Online Recorded Worship

Go to our website (www.hopemtcarmel.org) or our YouTube page to view this extra-special Christmas Eve service put together by our worship team. It will feature everything you love about Christmas Eve service: songs, candles, and a special Christmas story that will feature members of our Mt. Carmel



Advent and Christmas greetings to you and yours nestled at home this season, perhaps grieving and feeling alone, or maybe glad to have an excuse to have a quieter Christmas than usual.

It is hard to believe to look back and remember that we have journeyed this pandemic together through Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Ordinary time. And now here we are at Advent and Christmas, with a little light at the end of this gloomy valley, a valley not all

of us have survived. Thank God for the hope of Christ's birth we have to hold onto, as we are in desperate need of a savior.

As the Youth Pastor of Mt. Carmel, I am particularly humbled and inspired every time I read the story of how Jesus came to earth, through a poor unwed pregnant teenager, who took on her role as Mother of God with a beautiful blend of confidence and humility. Rev. Scott Erickson challenges me to think about this more deeply when he asks, "What does it say about a God who's willing to be this vulnerable with us? Who is willing to be attached by a placenta for nourishment and life to Its own creation? Who is willing to be fearfully and wonderfully made, just like we are?" Friends, let us look with adoration to this God who chose to come into the world in the most vulnerable way, through one of the most socially vulnerable people, as we contemplate and celebrate Christmas together.

Much love and Merry Christmas!

Pastor Laura & the Youth



Children's Ministry Families,

I want to wish you a heartfelt Merry Christmas. I am very excited to celebrate the birth of our Savior with my family in a slower paced holiday season this year. We are all sad that we will not see the loved ones we traditionally see during the Christmas season; however, we embrace the slower pace to truly focus on the "reason for the season." I pray that each and every one of you

remain safe and in good health as we welcome 2021 with open arms.

*May you always feel the comfort of the Lord,
Michele Stine, Children's Ministry Coordinator*

Children's Ministry Update: Zoom Zone Sunday School has been absolutely wonderful. If you have not had a chance to log on please do, even if it is just to listen in. Ms. Alison and Ms. Michele keep it short and the kids enjoy seeing their church friends. We will resume January 10.

Ms. Robin and Mr. Mike have continued to make videos for you to enjoy anytime! Some videos include a craft bag that is available to pick up on the small porch at Mt. Carmel anytime. Please reach out to Michele Stine at (301) 418-0462 if you have any questions. We look forward to welcoming you all back home at church when it is safe to do so.



Merry Christmas, church family!

I pray that God's perfect hope, peace, love, and joy fill your life in every way this Christmas and throughout the coming year.

Sharla Worley, Lay Leader, Mt. Carmel UMC



The December Care Ministry Team meeting was our sixth meeting via Zoom. We had a nice visit with each other showing our beloved and treasured Christmas ornament(s) and sharing stories about why they are meaningful. Also, special Christmas cards and red masks (see photo) lovingly hand made by Diane Derr were delivered by Terry Granger and Barbara Lawson, or mailed by Carol Ann Rowe, to our care recipients/home and facility bound folks. Here is the beautiful verse inside the card: *May be miracle of Christmas find you safe in the Peace of God, warm in the Light of Christ.*

The Prayer Chain has been very active lifting prayers as we are asked to do so. The Mt. Carmel Prayer Chain helps usher in the hand of God when it corresponds to His will. Prayer also creates unity.

Our next Care Team Zoom Meeting is Thursday, January 14th at 6:00 pm. Feel free to contact Terry Granger at RTJEB@hotmail.com, call or text her at 301-514-2379 if you would like to be sent the ZOOM link so you can join us at our next meeting, know of someone who could be blessed with a "Thinking of You" card or benefit from prayer.

The Care Ministry Team wishes that your Christmas season is blessed with joy, peace, and good health!



Keeping In Touch!

If you or someone you know does not have computer access and would like the weekly prayer email and announcement email mailed to them, please call Donna at 301-418-0863.



Thank you from the Finance Team

As 2020 comes to a close, the Finance team would like to thank you again for your generous contributions. We have managed to make it through the year in relatively good shape. We were able to continue many activities – youth and children’s ministries, Hope-4-Kids lunch backpacks, food shelter contributions, bible studies, HASP, and others – while introducing new on-line and live-streaming Zoom services. In addition, we were also able to do much needed repairs to our shuttle and the retaining wall. Not too bad for such a crazy year.

A quick update on the Thanksgiving offering and Pledge cards. As of last week, we had approximately \$14k of Thanksgiving donations towards the \$25K retaining wall repair. Remember that Thanksgiving is a season and not just a day so donations can still be made. We have also received 27 pledge cards totaling \$114k. Please turn in your pledge cards so we can properly plan for the upcoming year.

Have a safe and Blessed Christmas,
The Mt. Carmel Finance Team



Giving Instructions:

Your Bank: You can schedule monthly gifts straight from your bank; this is a secure, no-fee option.

Vanco: This provides another secure online option. Follow the link on the church website (www.hopemtcarmel.org) to donate through the secure Vanco site.

GivePlus+ App: Download the free GivePlus+ mobile app and search Mt Carmel UMC. Log in or donate as a guest.

Mail your offering directly to Mt. Carmel: *Self-addressed envelope attached*
Mt.Carmel UMC, 9411 Baltimore Road, Frederick, MD 21704



I would like to take a moment to wish you all a very Merry Christmas. During this season, we will be celebrating Hope, Peace, Love and Joy; I pray that all four of these would fill your life in every way this Christmas and beyond. I am grateful to God, this Christmas, as in all previous years, as we celebrate “Immanuel” (God with us), without Christ’s presence among us we would be lost. Merry Christmas and a very happy, healthy New Year!!!

Donna Clawson, Church Administrator

The church office will continue to have limited hours. You can contact Donna anytime at donna.clawson@hopemtcarmel.org or 301-418-0863.