

Sunday, April 21, 2024

10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship

Wednesday, April 24, 2024

10:00 a.m. Bible Study (Chapel)

11:15 a.m. Lay Pastoral Caregivers Meeting

Saturday, April 27, 2023

7:00 a.m. Weekly Prayer Huddle (see details in announcements)

Sunday, April 28, 2023

10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship

FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 2024

Birthdays

22 Gregg Witham

27 Marcella Green

30 Jerry Raymond

Anniversaries

23 Paster 'Debo & 'Lola
Onabanjo

28 Jan & Connie Cox



Edgewood Manor (Lucasville): Alan Fick, C3

LanFair: Mary Chilcote, 131

Luxe: Elaine Hill, Sheridan Wing, 108
Jim Robertson (Billie's brother), Sheridan Wing, 305
Jim Funkhouser, Eckert Wing, 207A

Main Street Terrace: Marilyn Lawson, 36

Pickaway Manor (Circleville): Rose Eblin, 45

Primrose: Bill & Doris Shauger, 121

The Ridge: Fred Beougher, 140
Barb Cook, 103

Continued prayers are requested for:

Amanda Baker, Dave Bash, Sharon Byerly, Barbara Cook, John Cook, Ken Cook, Walt Fawcett, Sharon Funkhouser, Clara Herrick, Cindy, Lloyd & Diann Helber, Mykel Henderly, Dixie Hoskinson, Joan Irwin, Elizabeth Jones, Jill Jubach, Eleanor & Bob Kane, Marilyn Lawson, Carl & Sharon Mathias, Jingur Nichols, Vicki Oatney, Beth Patton, Mark & Donna Shouldis, Rod Shouldis, Kathy Starner, Don Taylor, Carl David Tripp, Kara Whitmer-Beatty, Ralph Bay, Greg & Sandie White.

If you have a prayer concern or praise to share, please fill out a green prayer card found in the pew and give it to an usher before the worship service begins. Thank you for allowing us to pray for and with you!



The Evangelism Team has 3 boxes in the Narthex: one for the OCC (Operation Christmas Child) shoebox ministry, another for Back-to-School supplies, and another for Baby Supplies. These will be available all year round. Hopefully this will be easier for everyone. If at any time you would like to donate to either ministry, just add it to your offering envelopes and please write on the front of the envelope what the special donation is for and how much.

May God bless you always,
The Evangelism Team

Pastor's Bible Study: This holds on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel. As we enjoy the Season of Eastertide, we will continue to explore some of the short Letters of the New Testament. We will conclude **Paul's 1st Letter to the Thessalonians** this week with **Chapters 4-5** and if time permits we will start **2nd Thessalonians Chapter 1**. Please read the chapters for this week in advance. The Bible Study is open to all members of the community. In addition to the joy of worship and fellowship on Sundays, our time together during Bible Study is always a blessing. We also spend some time to pray at the end of the Bible Study for personal and general prayer requests. Please invite a neighbor or friend and thanks for making time to attend.

Lay Pastoral Care Giving Team: As part of our responsibility to nurture, care for and support one another, we would like to invite members to consider joining our Lay Pastoral Care Giving Team under the supervision of the Pastor. Those interested will be trained by the Pastor. If you would like more information, please contact Pastor 'Debo or consider attending the meeting of the group that will be held on Wednesday April 24, 2024 at 11:15am in the Parlor immediately after Pastor's Bible Study. Thanks!

Lancaster Charge To Host Clergy Guest From Africa: We are excited to share with members that the Lancaster Charge (Zanesville Circuit) of the Allegheny West Provisional Conference of the GMC comprising Sixth Avenue GMC and Mt. Zion GMC will be hosting one of the guests that will be visiting our Conference next month as part of the partnership with the Kenya/Ethiopia Provisional Annual Conference. Rev. Wilton Odongo, the President Pro-Tempore of the Kenya/Ethiopia Provisional Conference of the GMC will be itinerating through the Zanesville Circuit while two other guests will be visiting other parts of our Conference. The event for our Lancaster Charge will be held at Sixth Avenue GMC on Monday, May 20, 2024 starting at 6:30pm. Please check out the information Desk for the flyer but note the summary of activities for our Circuit below:

- Sunday May 19th from 5-7pm: Rolling Plains GMC, 3350 Moxahala Park Rd, Zanesville, OH 43701. Picnic on the lawn, Praise & Worship and Puppet Ministry.
- Monday May 20th from 6:00pm: Sixth Avenue GMC, 1004 W. Sixth Avenue, Lancaster, OH 43130 – Mission Night with Rev. Wilton Odongo as Guest Speaker. There will be refreshments.
- Tuesday May 21st from 6:00pm: Hocking Hills Church, 13580 Maysville Williams Rd, Logan, OH 43138 (Across from Logan-Hocking MS) – Praise & Worship and Dessert Bar.

During their visit to our Conference, Rev. Wilton Odongo, Rev. Bonface Ghero Wanyama and Jacklyne Atotso Kezia (recently ordained a Deaconess in the GMC in Kenya) will be opportuned to visit a number of Churches across different Circuits. Please keep the expected guests and their families, churches and Conference in your prayers for a successful visit to the US to build new missional partnerships. Please contact Pastor 'Debo for additional information. Thanks!

Weekly Online Prayer Gathering: Please join our weekly online prayer gathering on Saturday mornings from **7:00-7:30am**. During the prayer huddle, we pray together for our church, local community, our nation, worldwide and personal concerns. Simply dial the Free Conference Call # **425-436-6200** from your phone and when prompted, enter the access code **603577** followed by the # key and you will be able to participate in this special time of prayer. The gathering is open to members of Mt. Zion GMC and Sixth Avenue GMC and members of the public. Text prayer requests to Pastor 'Debo at **614-296-1081** ahead of the prayer time.

Strategic Planning Team – Request for Prayers: As part of measures to help our community of faith discern the preferred future that God has for us, a **Strategic Planning Team** has been set up and is headed by our Lay Leader, Dr. Gregg Witham. Please keep this team and our church leadership in your prayers and be on the lookout for ways to support this important work. If you have any questions or concerns in the interim, please contact Dr. Gregg Witham or Pastor 'Debo. Be on the lookout for regular updates from Dr. Witham.

Allegheny West Provisional Council April Prayer Requests: Please help to lift up all the following prayer requests for the month of April:

- That all plans, procedures and venues for our Allegheny West Annual Conference from May 22nd - 25th emanate from the throne of God.
- That all those God desires to be at the UMC General Conference (April 23rd –May 3rd) from the Central Conferences be able to get the proper visas, finances, and paperwork to be able to participate and “cast their votes.” Please pray in particular for the special gathering in Nairobi, Kenya by the WCA and the GMC with clergy and other leaders in Africa from April 8-11.
- That each Global Methodist Church Pastor will have a fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit as they minister and share the good news of Jesus Christ.
- That the Lord would infill our GMC congregations with children and young people to find genuine faith and fresh, vibrant hope in a strong Gospel-centered family of God! Also pray for the following:
 - AWAC Youth Conference – April 26-28, 2024
 - God would raise up youth leaders to “live Him” in front of our young people

Pastor's Corner:

Real Love Gives Everything

“The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.” (John 10:17-18, NIV)

Today is the Fourth Sunday of Easter and in our focus text, the Gospel reading from the Revised Common Lectionary, we are reminded of a profound truth that Jesus shared with His listeners. In one of His **“I am”** statements found in the gospel account by John, Jesus said: **“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” (John 10:11)**

Jesus explains further that while the hired hand will run away at the first sign of danger, the good shepherd puts it all on the line to protect the sheep. The sheep is a common biblical metaphor for all of us and God sent His Son to come and reveal His heart for us. David was a shepherd before he became king over Israel, and he penned what is without a doubt one of the most popular Psalms in the Bible which captures his personal relationship with the unseen God who he identified as his Shepherd and Provider. In Psalm 23, David the shepherd captures for us the heart of the Lord who is the Great Shepherd of the sheep.

The reason the sheep being led by the Shepherd is not afraid even when walking through the darkest valley is because of the confident assurance that the good Shepherd will lay down His own life so that no harm will come to the sheep. Are you walking through a dark valley right now? Be not afraid! What makes the sacrifice of Jesus our Good Shepherd so beautiful and compelling is because it was a voluntary act motivated by no self-interest but love for the sheep. Jesus makes it clear that His sacrificial act on our behalf was not done out of compulsion but out of love. While human love is always self-centered, Jesus tells us that for love to be sincere and impactful, it must be others centered.

We usually try to manipulate others into doing things for us to prove the genuineness of their love, but Paul tells us that God demonstrates His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners (see **Romans 5:8**). This great love that we have received through grace demands a response from us. The response that God's great love demands from those of us who have received it is captured by the disciple that Jesus loved. John writes to remind us of the sacrifice of Jesus: **“We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.” (1 John 3:16)**

It is quite clear that if we want to practice the “greater love” that Jesus demonstrated in giving His life for us, we must move from mere profession of love to putting our love on display for all the world to see. In the new commandment that Jesus gave to His disciples prior to His own ultimate sacrifice, He reminds us of His expectations: **“So now I am giving you a new commandment. Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” (John 13:34-35)**

Jesus did not say that our church attendance or friendship with one another is what will prove our discipleship but our sacrificial self-giving love for others, including total strangers and even our enemies validates our claim to discipleship. Jesus leaves us with no choice but to love one another as He loved us – unconditionally. John approaches this love we are called to have for one another from a practical perspective with these words: **“If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion – how can God's love be in that person?” (1 John 3:17)**

We may be thinking that John is talking to those who are rich and have a surplus but that is not what John is saying. We are not only called to share with others when we have a surplus but to be willing to share out of love with others even from our meagre resources. While Jesus is not calling all of us to give like the poor widow who gave all she had to live on (see **Luke 21:1-4**), the fact is that we cannot claim to love and not give.

Love is proved in the giving and pouring out of ourselves for others not out of compulsion but voluntarily because God loves a cheerful giver as our brother Paul reminds us. John then concludes the matter for us: **“Dear children, let's not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God.” (1 John 3:18-19)**

Jesus through His sacrificial death has modeled for us what true love means. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we are to prove the depth of our love for Jesus as we love others sacrificially in His name. I believe that if we do this, loving not just with mere words but with action, our world will be a better place, one person at a time. While we cannot address all the needs around us, we can at least start with that of one person. Make that your goal today as you look for an opportunity to be a blessing to someone in need.

Pastor 'Debo