



Mount Gretna UMC

Happenings

November 2020

Dear Mount Gretna UMC Family,

This year has been one of the strangest and most challenging of my entire career. As we now enter into the season of Advent, I hope and pray that the events (or lack of events) this year will not cloud your hope and expectation for the celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus. As I have thought about Advent and Christmas this year and how we can celebrate, my heart and thoughts continue to repeat the same words: "Keep hope alive!"

Keeping hope alive is what the church has always been about. In the face of some of the darkest and most difficult times of human history, the Church, with its message of: "Be not afraid – I bring you good news of great joy..." has been there shining a light in the darkness for all to see.

This year let us continue to shine the light of God's love into our homes, communities, nation, and world as we keep hope alive in our hearts and in our actions with the Good News of Jesus Christ guiding our every step. O come, O come, Emmanuel...

Blessings,

Pastor Mike Remel



This year, Charge Conference will once again be held with other churches of our area and will be held on: Thursday, December 3rd at 6 PM via Zoom. Our District Superintendent, Rev. Bumkoo Chung will preside at the meeting. Zoom Links will go out the week of the meeting.



YOU ARE INVITED TO OUR WEEKLY ZOOM PRAYER MEETINGS THURSDAYS AT 7 PM

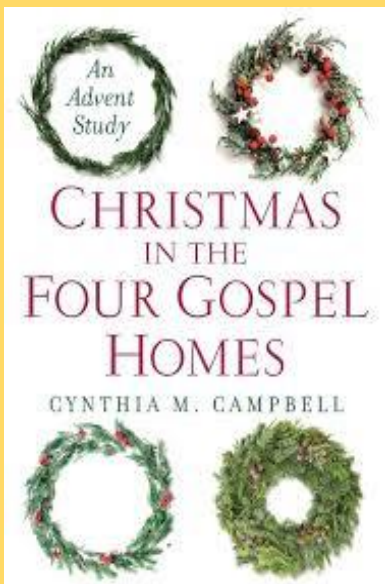
“What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!” You may recognize those words from an old hymn called “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” You are invited to join Pastor Marilyn and members of our congregation as they come together on Zoom to pray for the joys and concerns of friends and family, our nation and the world. The group was formed during the Covid lockdown and continues to be a time of fellowship and taking our cares to God.

ZOOM can be done on a laptop, tablet or smart phone. If you have email: the church will send you an email every week with the link.

BUT PLEASE NOTE--ZOOM calls can also be made from any cell phone by dialing in to the phone number that is in the weekly email.

Don't forget: We still have an email Prayer Chain that is coordinated by member Sarah Ellis. You may call the office with prayer requests at 717-964-3241 or email them directly to Sarah at stellis999@gmail.com .

If you have any questions, feel free to call Pastor Marilyn at 717-269-8613



4 Week Advent Study: Starting Sunday, November 29, 2020 @ 6:30 PM via Zoom.

“How might a house look for Christmas based on what each Gospel says about it? In Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes, beautiful illustrations from architect Kevin Burns reimagine each of the four Gospels as a “house,” which the church visits at Christmas. In each section, Cynthia M. Campbell reflects on the distinctive perspective of the birth of Jesus or the incarnation offered by each Gospel. Suitable for individual or group study, Christmas in the Four Gospel Homes creatively reimagines the season and inspires new and exciting reflection for Advent.”



Yes, 2021 is just around the corner. You may pick up the new Offering Envelopes in the lobby of the church. They are in alphabetical order. If you need to have the church open, please come either on Sunday or call to make an appointment during office hours.

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 9:30AM -12:00PM.
Phone: 717-964-3241



Gifts for Jesus – 2020

This year there are two opportunities for sharing with others.

1. Lebanon County Christian Ministries – Due to Covid, there are many families tapping into their services
2. Gift Bags for Female Inmates at the Lebanon County Correctional Facility – Note: Due to Covid, gift bags cannot be taken into the facility. However, a \$10 donation will

provide for the items purchased by LCCF team members; thus the inmates will still get a gift bag (thermal undershirt, shampoo, deodorant and a pair of white socks).

All of the choices for this year are monetary. Please make checks payable to Mount Gretna United Methodist Church. Note: LCCM and/or Gift bags on the check.

Let us respond to Christ's command to feed the hungry, care for the sick, comfort the heartbroken and welcome the stranger in our midst.



As you can imagine, in light of the Covid-19 Pandemic our Christmas Eve worship services will need to be different this year. At this time we would like to tentatively plan multiple in person services. These services will be limited to 25 persons per service and observing all current safety precautions. We will be asking those who wish to attend to RSVP no later than Sunday, December 20th for the service of their choice (3 PM, 7 PM, or 11 PM). RSVP's will be done on the church Website www.mtgretnachurch.org, starting December 1st. You can also RSVP by leaving a message on the church answering machine.

A Christmas worship video will also be available. This video will be viewable by Christmas Eve and will serve as that week's Sunday video as well. In whatever way you choose to worship this year do so with love and

gratefulness in your heart for the wonderful gift of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. (please note that in-person services may be canceled depending on Covid infection rates)



Mt. Gretna UMC Disabilities Ministry

During the first quarter of 2020, I submitted a proposal requesting the establishment of a new “Disabilities Ministry” within the Mt. Gretna UMC. After an initial review by Pastor Mike Remel the proposal was introduced to the Administrative Committee. Subsequently, the Administrative Committee endorsed the proposal and gave the go-ahead to proceed.

With an initial offering and a matching amount from the endowment fund the new Disability Ministry is now officially in business.

The disability ministry will focus on disabled youth, young adults, and older adults requiring assistance within the Lebanon County area. Assistance in the form of prosthetic devices, visual enhancement devices, or rehabilitative services may be awarded to those in need. Of course, there are many other individual needs and each one will be identified, evaluated, and considered for a possible award.

More specifically, recipients and the award amounts will be determined on a case by case basis. The Disability Ministry’s services are also available to members of the Mt. Gretna UMC congregation, their immediate families, and extended family members currently living in Lebanon County.

There will be a strict adherence to confidentiality. Both Pastor Remel and Randy Swope may be contacted with an inquiry at any time with a phone call or email. The contact information is listed below. Email inquiries will receive an acknowledgement of receipt but no personal information shall be discussed, transmitted, or responded to by email in the interest of personal confidentiality. Person to person inquiries and meetings can be arranged with either Pastor Mike Remel, myself, or both of us to discuss the type of assistance required. In addition, phone calls are acceptable, expedient, and will be guarded with the upmost confidentiality.

The Disabilities Ministry is pleased to announce their first award; which occurred in November 2020. The Lancaster/Lebanon Vision Corps partnered with the Disability Ministry, in order to enable a youngster, one of their clients, to receive the first award.

An 8th grade student with a degenerative visual impairment will receive a digital reading device and face shield that will improve her ability to read at school and do her homework. What was the initial result? After trying on the face shield for the very first time the individual literally beamed over her immediate improvement reading printed material.

The Mt. Gretna UMC congregation can remain confident that we will continue to assist this youngster throughout her academic career. Finally, we should all share in her success today and hopefully, throughout her entire life.

Submitted:

My Kindest Regards,

Randy L. Swope

rlswope@comcast.net

(717) 964-3136

Cell: (717) 954-6222



Once again this Christmas we will be decorating the church with sponsored Poinsettias.

You will be able to pick up your plant(s) following either Christmas Eve Service.

POINSETTIAS

If you wish to sponsor a plant, fill out the Slip below, mail it to the church, or call the Church office at 717-964-3241.

All flowers come in a 6.5" pot with 5+ blooms.

ORDERS DUE BY DECEMBER 13th

<u>Poinsettia Color</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Number</u>
RED	\$8.25	_____
WHITE	\$8.25	_____

Presented by (Your Name) **PLEASE PRINT**

Phone: _____

In Memory Of:

In Honor Of:

Please make checks payable to:
Mount Gretna UMC
PO Box 427
Mount Gretna, PA 17064

