



Mount Gretna UMC

Happenings

Feb. 2021

Dear Mount Gretna UMC Family,

As we approach Lent this year I don't want to talk about giving things up. After all, we have all spent the past 12 months giving things, activities, gatherings, and a general sense of safety up. So instead, I figure I'll talk about Batman! Yes, "biff!" "pow!" "zowie!" Batman that Caped-crusader of comic book, tv series, and movie legend.

For me, the Adam West "Batman" series was the one I grew up on as I tuned in to the same "bat-channel" at the same "bat-time" and watched it in syndication every weekday afternoon. Sure, it was a not too subtle campy take on Batman, but it was Batman all the same.

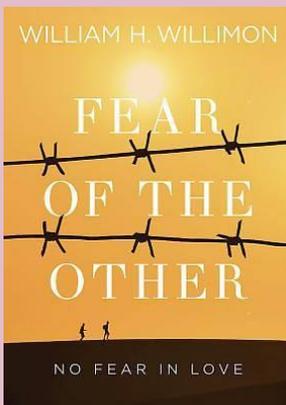
In recent years, the story of Batman has been retold again and again. However, in contrast to my beloved 1960's Batman series, the recent films have focused more on elevating the "Dark Knight" side of Batman's grim and gritty interpretation. Christopher Nolan created films suited to the mood and paranoia of our contemporary issues. How does one stand for the right and the just when so much chaos inhabits our world? Nolan's films pitted Bruce Wayne against the mentally disturbed psychiatrist Jonathan Crane, aka the Scarecrow, the seemingly immortal international terrorist Ra's Al Ghul, the brooding strongman called only "Bane", and of course, the late Heath Ledger's outstanding interpretation of the Joker.

Thinking about the changes that have come to the story of Batman I also find myself reflecting on the sharp edges of the world around us these days. We seem to be in a time of challenge where we can't help but yearn for heroes and hope while others find only reasons to despair or perceive no way to overcome the chaos around them. Characters like Bruce Wayne, who lost his parents tragically to an armed robbery turned violent, demonstrate how a sense of purpose can lead to vocation. We may not live in a world of "biff!" and "pow!" and "zowie!" antics, yet we do have a choice of how we live with the pain and the brokenness of the world around us.

The Lenten season is a time to take stock of the world. We need the penitential focus of the season to work on the shadows lurking within us. We need Good Friday to sober us to the fullness of death. We need the hope of Easter morning, with its promise of resurrection and new life. We need this season called lent to steady us and strengthen our faith as we continue to navigate the world's unevenness and uncertainties.

Blessings,

Pastor Mike Remel



LENTEN STUDY

Tolerate one another. Wait. Isn't that supposed to be love one another? It's one thing to genuinely love people who are more or less the same as we are, but what about those who are not only strangers, but people who live completely different lives? Reliable spiritual guide Will Willimon invites you to look more closely at the Gospel's command to love—because to genuinely love those considered to be "Other" may be the hardest thing for people of faith to do.



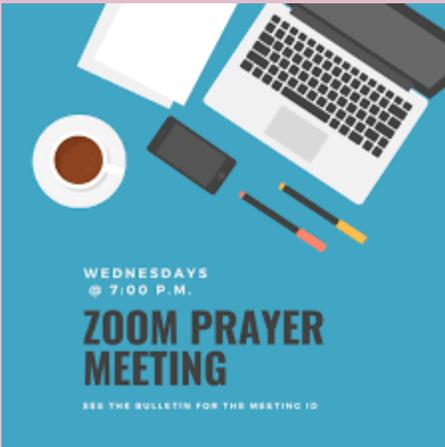
In past years during the season of Lent our congregation takes a special offering to raise funds that provide scholarships for children in our church and community to attend summer camp at Gretna Glen. This year we are asking for donations that will be used for scholarships if the camp is able to have a summer program as planned OR if not, then those funds would be given to the camp itself to help them cover expenses while the camp is shut down. This offering will take place throughout the month of March. If you would like to give you can designate your gift on your check or offering envelope as "Lenten Offering" this option will also be available on the Give Now app if you would like to donate electronically.



With COVID case numbers declining we are planning to resume in-person Sunday morning worship services at our church beginning March 7, 2021. Attendees will be limited to 25 per service at 8:30 or 10:00 a.m. and recommended COVID protocols will be in effect such as facemasks, RSVP's for services, and social distancing. A detailed letter will be going out to the congregation soon to provide specific information.



This year the pastors of the Southern Lebanon County Council of Churches will each be preparing a mid-week video devotionals to be shared every Wednesday during Lent. The theme for the devotional series is Lesser Known Lenten Characters and will focus on 6 individuals. Mary of Bethany, Simon of Cyrene, the Confessing Centurion, Pilate's Wife, Caiaphas, and Joseph of Arimathea. The first devotional will be posted on Ash Wednesday. It's not part of the series, but message from me to hopefully help us all focus as we begin our Lenten journey.



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

“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 .

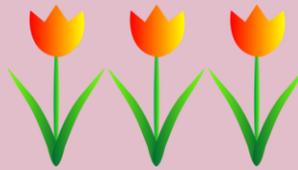
If you have any questions, feel free to call Pastor Marilyn at 717.269.8613



Every year our church has the opportunity to help other non-profit organizations through Drendall Grants. The Grant Committee will be accepting applications until March 15th. If you know of a non-profit organization that could benefit from a grant, please have them contact the church office.

Phone: 717-964-3241

Email: mgumc@verizon.net



EASTER FLOWERS

Once again this Easter, we will be decorating the sanctuary with sponsored spring flowers. If you wish to sponsor a flower, fill out this slip and place it in the offering plate or call the church office at 717-964-3241.

Orders are due by March 28th 2021.

Presented by: **PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION**

Phone # _____

In Memory Of: _____

In Honor Of: _____

<u>Flower</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Number</u>
White Lilies (3-4 blooms)	\$7 .50	_____
Mini Daffodils (6.5" pot)	\$6.50	_____
Daffodils (6.5" pot)	\$6.25	_____
Hyacinth (6.5" pot- 3 bulbs)	\$6.75	_____
Tulips (6 bulbs)	\$6.50	_____