

VOL. 1 ISSUE 3 · MAY 2024

CONNECTION

Official Newsletter of Camphor Memorial UMC

everyday
is a fresh
START

This issue:

Pastors Corner
PAGES 1-2

Leadership Corner
PAGE 3

Methodist Corner
PAGE 4

Fun Corner
PAGE 5-6

Prayer Corner
PAGE 7

Volunteer Corner
PAGE 8

Camphor 4-1-1
PAGE 9



Pastor's Corner: A Time of Hope (Jeremiah 31:1-6)

FROM THE DESK OF REV. DENNIS M. OGLESBY, JR.

The Easter Season is a time of hope. After the gray days of winter, spring comes, and life returns. Flowers bloom, leaves appear on trees, and green grass grows. In the Christian life, Easter reminds us of our hope in Christ. No matter the circumstances or situation we find ourselves in, we are reminded of new life in Christ.

Jeremiah is writing to people who are in despair. He told them that their cities would be destroyed and they would be taken captive by the Babylonians. We come to chapter 31 and the prophet's message of hope to a broken people. This heartbroken prophet had a heartbreaking message from his first chapter to his last. He labored for more than 40 years, proclaiming a message of doom to the stiff-necked people of Judah, saying, "Get your act together...or else!" But his harsh prophecies were also bathed with tears of compassion. Jeremiah wept over the sins of God's people.

Prophets and preachers who tell the truth are seldom admired. Poor Jeremiah was threatened in his hometown of Anathoth, tried for his life by the priests and prophets of Jerusalem, put in stocks, forced to flee from King Jehoiakim, publicly humiliated by the false prophet Hananiah, and thrown into a cistern. But Jeremiah stayed faithful. He speaks at least three messages from God that will provide words of hope to broken lives today.

See Your Condition

First, Jeremiah assures the people of God's awareness of their broken condition. They will be taken in chains to a strange place, raise their children in a foreign land, and be dispersed across the northern kingdom. However, despite all that, God will still be with them.

Sometimes, life doesn't seem to make sense. The faithful of Israel will suffer alongside the wicked. Why doesn't God punish the wicked and spare the innocents of the world? Rabbi Harold Kushner asks the same question of many: "Why do bad things happen to good people? Surely Easter reminds us that God understands suffering. On the Friday we call "good." God watched his only Son die on a cross. In his book Learning to Dream Again, Charles Bugg says of that day: "This God is a God who knows what it is to lose a child. "God sees the condition of God's people.

The Lord appeared to us in the past, saying: "I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.

JEREMIAH 31:3 (NIV)



Pastor's Corner: A Time of Hope (Jeremiah 31:1-6)

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I Will Always Be with You (v.3)

The prophet next reminds his hearers of God's steadfast love. God's love has been faithful even when Israel turned its back on God. Jeremiah says that God has never left or forsaken the people. Rather, God has "loved you with an everlasting love."

God's love is faithful and true today. The often-quoted poem "Footprints in the Sand" reminds us that God carries us in the lowest and saddest times of life. It's more than poetry. Looking back on painful experiences, we can see that God stood beside us if only we would notice. As we recall shameful experiences of the past, when we wandered off into a wilderness of our own making, we know God was just a prayer away.

God overwhelms us with love; Jeremiah only finds hope for the future because of God's wondrous love. In a confusing world, God's love is the one point of stability, providing hope that life will improve. It is also this astonishing love of God that compels us to follow. James L. Green says, "If the realization that God loves us with limitless love that goes the limit for us will not 'draw' us-melt our hearts and wills into contrition and submission, nothing else will."

There is Hope for the Future (vv. 4-6)

The final part of the passage tells of a great homecoming and a new relationship between God and God's people. The people will return from exile, and there will once again be rejoicing in Jerusalem. Fields will be replanted, homes and lives rebuilt, and music will be played in the streets. Jeremiah reminds his hearers that this future is based not on the people's power but on God's will. Therefore, they will worship God in acknowledgment of what God is doing. Worshipping God is the key. We must acknowledge the presence and power of God at work in our lives. Only when we do that can we focus on God's activity in our lives, not our present condition. There is hope for our future with the Lord; together, we can do and accomplish all we are called to do. This is my sincere belief, what about you?

Grace, Peace, and Power.

Rev. Dennis M. Oglesby, Jr.

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-REV. DENNIS M. OGLESBY, JR.





Leadership Corner: Health Ministry

BY MAY MCOY ANDERSON, HEALTH MINISTRY CHAIR

At Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church, we believe in the holistic well-being of every individual – body, mind, and spirit. Our Health Ministry is dedicated to promoting health and healing in all aspects of life, offering a range of faith community services tailored to nurture the whole person.

Our mission is multifaceted:

1. **Comprehensive Health Services:** We offer a diverse array of services, including check-ups and health screenings, to facilitate access to vital health resources within our community. Through these initiatives, we aim to empower individuals to take charge of their physical well-being.
2. **Safe Spaces for Dialogue:** We provide a supportive environment where individuals can openly discuss their mental and physical health challenges without fear of stigma or judgment. Here, compassionate listening and professional guidance intersect to foster healing and growth.
3. **Community Engagement:** You can be part of our mission in several ways:
 - **Donations:** Your generous contributions enable us to expand our outreach efforts, ensuring that our services reach those in need.
 - **Prayers:** We humbly ask for your prayers for our health team as they continue their work of service and compassion.
 - **Spread the Word:** Share our services with your neighbors, friends, and family, inviting them to join us in our journey toward holistic health.

As we walk this path together, let us remember that each act of care and kindness contributes to the well-being of our community. With blessings from the Health Ministry Team at Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church, we invite you to join us in our commitment to nurturing wholeness in every individual we serve.



Methodist Corner

Camphor Memorial UMC is a predominantly Black/African American Church who is part of the United Methodist Church, a global connection whose mission is "To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the World". Being rooted in Jesus, Grounded in Wesleyan theology, inclusive of all people and being engaged in the work of Justice and Reconciliation, we strive to grow in our love with God, with one another and the community we are called to serve. Check out to see what is going on in our connexional system



General Conference 2024

The postponed 2020 General Conference of The United Methodist Church, a denominational gathering of elected delegates from around the world, had happen April 23 through May 3, 2024 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

At a General Conference, delegates discuss and vote on petitions and resolutions proposed by individuals, agencies, annual conferences, and other groups within the denomination. This session has brought some historic changes within the United Methodist Church. Some of the changes include:

- Granting Deacons sacramental rights in their ministry setting
- Eliminate disaffiliation paragraph and give opportunity for those who disaffiliated from the UMC to re-enter the UMC
- Elimination of LGBTQIA+ Bans
- Revised Social Principals
- Regionalization

MN-Dakotas Area Bishop Lanette Palmbeck had said if she were to sum up the time in Charlotte in two words, they would be: holy conferencing. "This means of God's grace has been evident each day. Discussions of the body have been grace-filled. Votes demonstrate unity of the worldwide Church with overwhelming majorities."

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

JOHN WESLEY

Fun Corner-April's Answers

Here are the answers to April's Fun Corner

Test your Bible IQ with these questions about Bible Firsts

1. What feast was celebrated with the first fruits of the crop?
2. Who was the first Christian convert in the province of Asia?
3. Who is the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep?
4. What were the Corinthians to lay aside on the first day of the week?
5. What is the first fruit of the Spirit?
6. Who shall be the First?
7. What are Jesus disciples' to seek first?
8. Where were Jesus' disciples first called Christians
9. Who had the first fight?
10. Who made the first clothes?



April's Answer Key

1. Feast of Harvest (Exodus 23:16)
2. Epenetus (Romans 16:5)
3. Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:20)
4. Money for the Collection (1 Corinthians 16:2)
5. Love (Galatians 5:22)
6. Last (Matthew 19:20)
7. The kingdom of God and his righteousness (Matthew 6:33)
8. Antioch (Acts 11:26)
9. Cain and Abel (Genesis 4:8)
10. God (Genesis 3:21)



Fun Corner

Write Answers Here

Test your knowledge of the Old Testament with these questions:

1. How many books are there in the Old Testament?
2. What is the longest book in the Old Testament?
3. What is the shortest book in the Old Testament?
4. What is the first book in the Old Testament?
5. What is the last book in the Old Testament?
6. Who is the oldest man in the Old Testament?
7. What man is mentioned more often than anyone else in the Old Testament?
8. Which six books of the Old Testament tell the stories of Israel's Kings?
9. What book in the Old Testament is composed primarily of hymns, songs, and poetry?
10. What five books are called "The Book of Moses"?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

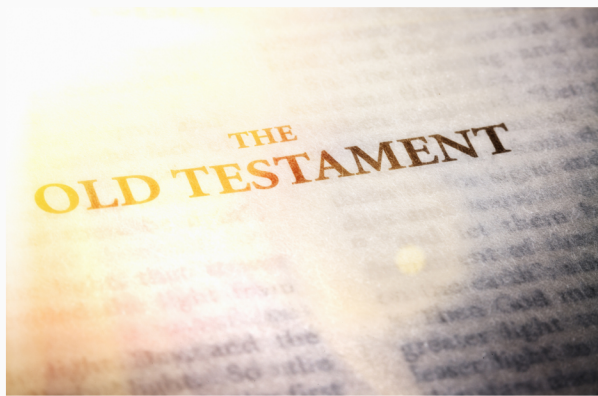
6.

7.

8.

9.

10.



Answers will be given in the June Edition!

Prayer Corner

When we unite in prayer and openly share our needs with God, a profound sense of strength emerges. Let's invest some time in prayer, lifting up the concerns and requests listed in our prayer corner:

Prayer Requests

Horace Harper
James Cummings
Yahaya Kon (brother of Mary Toe)
Calvin Morgan
Karen Morgan
Mario McCoy
Corey Capers (Hospice Care)
Sharon Martin
Gary Martin
· Dr. Leon Rodrigues
· Clifton Fuller
· Dr. Barbara Doyle
· Jackie Sinkfield Fleming

Seniors and Homebound

Verlene Booker
Glenice Booker Butler
Margaret Carter
Shirley Cummings
Ginnie Dennis
Doris Douglas
Charlotte Drake
Johnette Houston
Pat Jemie
Carrie Lewis
Barbara Wulf

Prayer for the Month

**“We Try to Play God Sometimes” - Kwasi I Kena
(from Africana Worship Book-Year B)**

Merciful God, we admit that we try to play God sometimes. We see folks doing things “a little different,” in your name; then we whisper—loudly. Without bothering to ask you, we set up sanctions against those who try to serve you sincerely. Who knows who we may be discouraging “in your name.”

Remind us that we do not have the final say in spiritual matters. Remind us that only disciples of Christ can bear spiritual fruit. Change our first reflex from scrutiny to hospitality. Let your words ring in our ears, for whoever is not against us is for us. Remind us that even cowards criticize, but the courageous encourage. Amen.

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

-HEBREWS 4:16 (NIV)



Volunteer Corner

Learn more about how you can get involved here at Camphor Memorial UMC!

Become a Communion Steward!

Camphor Memorial United Methodist Church are looking for volunteers to serve as Communion Stewards. The Stewards are responsible for the administration of Holy Communion with the Pastor.

If you have served as a Steward before or are interested in becoming one, please contact Mr. Harold Golden via text at (763)-442-5806.



Join the Altar Guild Team



We are seeking two volunteers to help maintain the seasonal colors for the altar and welcoming area of the narthex. The ideal candidates will not be afraid to climb step ladders, have an eye for patterns and colors, and possess sewing skills.

The colors are changed approximately seven times per year. In addition, the volunteers will be responsible for cleaning and maintaining linens and parchments and polishing other altar decorations.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please feel free to call, text, or email Coral at 651-707-2624 or coco.garner57@gmail.com.

Camphor 4-1-1

Worship/Music Ministry

- Rehearsals (All held in Sanctuary):
 - Sanctuary Choir:
 - Every First and Third Wednesday (4pm-6pm)
 - Every First and Third Saturday (1pm-3pm)
 - Woman's Chorale
 - Every Second Wednesday (4pm-6pm)
 - Every Second Saturday (4pm-6pm)
- Rose of Sharon Praise Dance Rehearsal: Every Second and Fourth Saturday (9am in Sanctuary)



UMM and UWF



United Women in Faith

General Meeting: Every Second Saturday at 10am
(Fellowship/Narthex Area)



United Methodist Men

General Meeting: Every Second Saturday
at 10:30am (Conference Room)

Ministry Teams Events

Usher Team Meeting: Every First Sunday
(12pm in Conference Room)

Trustee's Meeting: Every First Saturday
(10am via Zoom)

Congregational Care Team: Every Third Sunday
(11:30am in Conference Room)

Christian Education

Camphor Connects Wednesdays:
Every Wednesday at 6pm (Camphor Memorial UMC)

Adult Sunday School:
Every Sunday from 8:45am-9:45am (Conference Room)



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"Growing in our relationship with God, one another, and the community God has called us to serve."



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