

IT'S OKAY TO GRIEVE

“You hear, O LORD, the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry...”—Psalm 10:17 (NIV)

I felt I had to begin this month's article by letting you know **it's okay** to express your grief over life and the losses that occur in a person's lifetime. There are changes that hurt with any loss that we experience in so many ways. We're recovering from a year of a variety of losses due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Several of us have experienced personal or family losses this past year as well. So, I think as we begin to return to an adaptive, but more “normal” pattern of life, that this is a good time to step back and take a look at the grieving process and acknowledge the change that has taken place inside us as the world around us has changed, and *continues* to explode with change. In that constant state of flux, we often experience the fear of the unknown, as we fear the new change. At some point we must come to accept, though maybe in sorrow, that life is different and we are also different. Most of us might recognize this pattern in the adjustments we make as we grow older.

Some changes from the pandemic may have even left us with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It was a sudden worldwide viral attack – a threat we constantly prepared for, even feared. It took life from us in various ways as we felt out of control. We have to reflect on the change we absorbed and the changes to our course of living. Remember, too, that grief is often expressed through the emotions of sadness and anger. A lot of times we only think of grief as being expressed in sadness, but it can also carry with it anger that we are going through this experience of grief in our lives. Many of us may have found ourselves angered easily during the pandemic. My point is to let yourself FEEL the pain and allow your mind and your body to release the stress from carrying the anger, fear, and sadness of it all. I think this was difficult to do DURING the pandemic, but now, in the aftermath as we emerge to life after, I think it is good to process the grief that has taken place.

God has seen humanity through many generations of change, trauma, and disorder – chaos! Yet, as in the sermon messages the past month, we are reminded that God calms the storms and brings order out of devastating tragedy. Despite our sinful human pride and our rebellious selves, God is a constant Source of power and refuge for us. In Him we can seek protection when life crumbles around us. And as we seek God's sovereign presence within, He often provides the family of faith to surround us with the love we need to carry us through the rough times. Don't be afraid to lean on your fellow believers when you need encouragement. Grief and sadness need not lead to spiritual apathy or darkness and depression. Sharing memories and blessings in the midst of catastrophe can help us make the adjustments we face no matter what has been lost. Lean on one another and then be there to comfort and share with others in their need. We get through life best when we journey with God alongside others (as God intended). Keep being Jesus with skin on and stand firm in the gap as you pray for one another, too. It's okay to grieve. Don't deny your feelings or see any challenge as insignificant. Work through the anger and sadness to reach the point of acceptance. Then rejoice in the hope of the glory that awaits us in heaven when we won't face sorrow anymore! You will laugh and smile and know joy again. ☺

Live blessed & be encouraged! ~Pastor Carolyn

WAY TO SHINE

*I am about to do something new...
I will make a pathway through
the wilderness. I will create rivers
in the dry wasteland.
ISAIAH 43:19 NLT*

The path of the just is like the shining sun. PROVERBS 4:18 NKJV

God is love and love is bright. Kindness and love leave trails of light in our lives that become brighter as we draw closer to their source. Our presence, or rather His presence in us, starts to feel like pure sunshine to everyone we come in contact with. And who doesn't want to be sunshine in a dark world? On sunny days it seems like joy explodes. Birds sing a little more exuberantly, smiles increase, moods lift, and optimism comes a little easier. Light has a positive effect on our overall well-being. I think it's another reason why blue-sky, beach days are so healing. It's impossible to be unhappy there!

Our heartfelt desire should be that the path of our lives stay flooded by the light of God. Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control are the things that keep it illuminated. We won't get everything right every day, but we will get new mercy every morning. If one day dims our path, the next can make it shine again because we walk in grace and forgiveness. God will never hold His hand over the light of our lives when we fail. His love will lift us right back up and into the spotlight that points to Him. We're created in His image and that's a humbling thought. But it's also a refreshing reminder that His glory can light the world through us.

The way to shine is by letting God have His way with our days, our actions, our choices, and our hearts. A little prayer of surrender before we move through our day goes a long way in keeping the path of our lives well-lit by loving well. The best days are always about how we love the people in our lives in the best ways. Nothing else lights up lives like the love of God, and nothing on earth is more fulfilling than being the one it shines through.

Father, shine brightly through my life today, drawing eyes and hearts to You by the warmth of Your love. Amen.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR A PRAYER WALK THROUGH THE VILLAGE OF MIDDLEBURG JULY 18TH FOLLOWING WORSHIP!! We will invite the community to our 'MIDDLEBURG PICNIC' on July 24th as we pray for them.

YOUTH.

YOUTH58 This group took an outing to Get Air trampoline park on May 4th. We took two car loads down to Columbus and had 9 kids attend, including a few friends. The kids jumped with joy until they wore themselves out. While there were a few competitive dodge ball games, it was great to observe kindness shown from all the kids and a willingness to include others.

At our other gathering in May, we studied water. Our verse was John 4:13-14 and we discussed the importance of water in our physical bodies, and the need for the Living Water, Jesus, in our spiritual lives. We concluded with a rambunctious water balloon fight!

At the beginning of June, this group of middle schoolers spread mulch at the church. Many hands made quick work and a fun atmosphere. Thank you kids, for your hard work!

Kids Club! At our May 12th gathering we reviewed the Ten Commandments. The discussion included the importance of the rules God gives us and doing our part to learn and live by them. We played a bean bag tossing game that helped to memorize the commandments in order.

At the end of May we had our annual Pizza Picnic at the Middleburg Memorial Park. We had 8 children and 3 adults. The kids shared in a devotion on Proverbs 6:6 about working hard for the Lord. For the rest of the evening, they enjoyed food, football, four-square, and friends.

We are in need of WOW leaders. WOW (Wild On Worship) is for children ages 4 - 4th grade. It takes place on Sunday mornings in the Fellowship Hall concurrent to the sermon time during worship. It normally last 45 minutes. We used to have five people rotate to lead WOW, but at this time we are down to three leaders in the rotation. The following are the dates we need a leader, in order to allow us to continue to offer this every week. July 11, August 1, and August 22. If you can do one or more of these dates please let Mary Henry know. The kids appreciate your help!

Backpack update Check out the bulletin board in the narthex! It has thank you notes from the kids that received the backpacks this year. We packed on average 15-20 backpacks each week during the school year. This ministry has served students at both the middle school and elementary school. We received some donations of items from some high school students. We are always looking for new members of this committee. If you would like to serve, please let Patty Curtis, or Pastor Carolyn know. Duties include shopping for items, packing the backpacks, taking inventory, and transporting the backpacks to the school. To support this ministry financially, just denote 'backpack ministry' on your weekly tithe. Gerry will add your donation to that fund. Please continue to pray for this ministry. And thank you for your support! *Submitted by Committee chair, Patty Curtis*

DOING OUR BEST TO KEEP YOU INFORMED

Report from 2021 West Ohio Annual Conference

This year's annual conference was held virtually on June 6th and 7th with nearly 1800 clergy and lay members attending. A worship service was conducted where Bishop Palmer preached from Hebrews 12 on "Perseverance". He said that this year has made a lot of church members and leaders weary and it's okay to reflect upon that condition.

Business conducted was related to the conference budget for 2022 reflecting a reduction in apportionments of 3% from 2021. The Board of Pensions indicated that they need no apportionment support for 2022 in order to cover their obligations. The motion to approve the budget was voted on and passed.

The Commission on Equitable Compensation presented a motion to increase the minimum clergy salary by 2% for 2022. This motion was voted on and approved.

The Board of Pensions also described their plan to implement a Health Reimbursement Account for retiree healthcare replacing the employer- sponsored group plan. This motion was voted upon and passed.

There were other non- administrative recommendations discussed and votes taken. Please consider that these items were discussed in the context that the General Global Conference has not been able to meet since 2019 so has not addressed "The Protocol of Reconciliation and Grace Through Separation ". This draft arose from the 2019 vote on clarification of theology and opinions on the traditional understanding of marriage coupled with the Book of Discipline stance on that topic.

Recommendation #4 termed "Christmas Covenant" establishes separate autonomous regions throughout the Global General Conference which act exclusively on their unique recommendations. The motion to refer back to the General Conference delegation for further study considering "The Protocol" was voted upon and passed by a vote of 59% Yay to 41% Nay.

The recommendation #5 termed "Loved as the Image of God" passed 56% Yay to 43% Nay. The writers' summary of the passed recommendation was "West Ohio Annual Conference desires to be aligned with a United Methodist Church witness that is inclusive of all people and is theologically diverse."

Recommendation #6- Call to West Ohio Annual Conference to recognize and validate persons' call to ordination without prejudice toward sexual orientation or gender identity. Considering next year's voting on the separation Protocol a motion was made to stop discussion and table the recommendation indefinitely. This was considered as a means to do the least harm during the conference proceedings. The motion to table passed 50.9%Yay to 49%Nay.

Other business included the commissioning and ordination of elders, deacons, and deaconesses. Also, the honoring of retirees and recognizing the families of the saints who passed in 2020 took place.

As mentioned, there continues to be much disagreement on the current and future direction of the church. Please keep the local and global church in your prayers for resolution of these issues.

Respectfully, Mark Baird

PLEASE SEE SIGN-UPS LOCATED IN THE NARTHEX.

⇒ **Worship Leaders**

⇒ **Community Meals**

New Path Pregnancy Center Update.

Website: www.newpathprc.com

If you encounter someone with needs for an infant see below.

The center is closed but they will make arrangements for supplies of diapers, formula, wipes if they are a current/active client.

If someone is not a current client but has an emergency need for baby supplies please have them email with their contact information.

Email kshanks@newpathprc.com

If you are unable to email call (937) 642-5683 and leave a message with contact information

Church Hours and Contact Information

Please like us on Facebook and stay tuned to One call for instructions to join us online for services and meetings.

Pastor: Carolyn Christman Tuesday & Thursday 2:00 PM-4:00 PM.

Also available by appointment

Secretary: Judy Slemmons Wednesday & Thursday 9:00 AM-12:00 PM

Website www.middleburgumc.com

Facebook Page: Middleburg United Methodist Church

Facebook Group: Middleburg Ohio UMC

Church Office Email: mumcoffice@embarqmail.com

Pastor's Email: cjchrist4u@gmail.com

Church Office Phone: (937) 666-2844

Parsonage Phone: (937) 666-0003

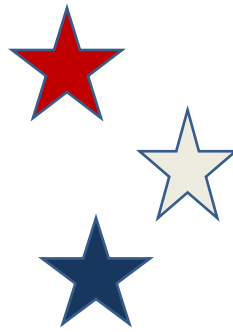


Outreach has donated . . .

UMCOR Local - \$309
Jews for Jesus - \$300
Union Station- \$400

July Birthdays

Andrea Swisher	7/3
Kyle Ackley	7/8
Mark Baird	7/18
Becky Sater	7/21
Kathy Deardurff	7/22
Trevor Sclesky	7/22
Patty Curtis	7/23
Carlin Curtis	7/25
Eric Hardin	7/29
Jasper Henry	7/30
Sally Stierhoff	7/30
Laura Sclesky	7/31



July Anniversaries

Bob & Sue Godwin	7/1/1966
Mike & Kathy Funderburgh	7/2/2015
Mike & Vicki Henry	7/10/1993
Jim & Pat Craig	7/11/1970
Dave & Ruthie Hardman	7/19/1969
Doug & Dana Henry	7/27/1979
Joe & Joy Buffkin	7/28/1978

**Please invite your friends, family and
neighbors to our**

“Middleburg Picnic” on July 24th

(see flyer on next page)



We have an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) unit for use at the church. It is located in the coffee bar area and will be mounted outside the door to the coffee area should the need arise for one.

How Can I Still Give To The Church.....You can continue your giving of your tithes and offerings by mailing a check to the church or by utilizing bill pay options online from your checking account. If you need assistance with this, please contact the church office.

FOR THOSE UNABLE TO JOIN US IN WORSHIP DURING THIS TIME...

PLEASE join us online each Sunday on our Middleburg United Methodist Facebook page. PLEASE stay connected and continue to be involved in fellowship and prayer for the ministry of the church even though you are unable to attend. You are still called to serve in whatever way possible. We are doing our best to keep you informed through this newsletter and One Calls. PLEASE continue to share your praises and prayer requests with the church office or Pastor Carolyn. She remains available and on call for all your pastoral needs. She is accessible by phone, text, or email, and is willing to visit if so desired.

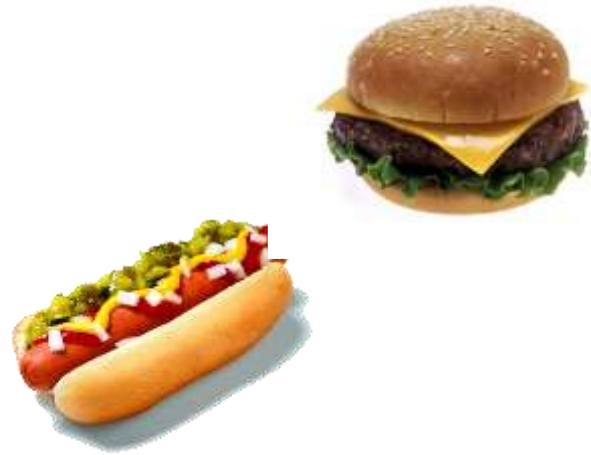
MIDDLEBURG PICNIC JULY 24TH

At Middleburg United Methodist Church

11824 St. Rt. 287, Middleburg, OH

2PM TO 6PM BOUNCE HOUSE AND GAMES

6PM TO 7PM COMMUNITY MEAL



Kiddie High Striker

-Ring the bell win a prize for
Preschool to 9 years old

We will also have a 9-hole putt-putt
golf course for older youth and
adults.

The community meal will be
hamburgers, hotdogs, and
bratwursts hot off the grill!

Please review the calendar below for meeting times and times of worship. Contact the committee leader if you have any questions if your committee is meeting on a certain date. We will send out one call with instructions and cancellations as they are decided.

July 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6 8 am Ladies Breakfast 6:30 pm Finance 7 pm Ad Council	7 6 pm Trustees	8 7 pm Bible Study	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 7 pm Bible Study	16	17
..... Logan County Fair Gate						
18 Community Prayer Walk After Worship	19	20 7 pm Fellowship Team 7 pm Bible Study	21	22	23	24 Middleburg Picnic 2 - 7 pm Meal @ 6 pm
25	26	27	28 6:30 pm Worship Planning	29	30	31