



# TIDINGS

## LENT AND EASTER AT MT. CARMEL

Thanks to all of our super volunteers who helped make our Advent and Christmas seasons so special. The Worship and Music Committee is now working on ideas for the Lenten season, Holy Week and Easter.

### Dates to remember:

- Ash Wednesday, Feb. 17
- Wednesday evenings, Feb. 24, Mar. 3, 10, 17, 24: Prayers Around the Cross.
- Palm Sunday, Mar. 28: Cry of the Congregation
- Maundy Thursday, April 1
- Good Friday, April 2
- Easter Sunday, April 4

Look for details on a possible Easter egg hunt, and for more information on dates and times as they are available.

We are also looking for more music volunteers (see inside).

Thanks to Karen Moeller for volunteering to coordinate the children's message program, and to Audrey Erickson who will coordinate liturgists for Sunday services.

## MT. CARMEL FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Calling those who might be interested in applying for a post-secondary scholarship provided through the Mt. Carmel Foundation. Please contact Karen Moeller at 612-619-3743 if you are interested in applying. You will be provided with the necessary information in order to complete your application. All applications must be completed and received no later than Feb. 28, 2021. If you know of someone who might be interested in applying, please pass along this announcement to them. Applicants must be a member of Mt. Carmel.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pastor's Ponderings . . . 2

Call for musicians. . . . 3

Treasurer Report . . . . 4

COVID-19 Task Force Update . . . . . 5

Forget-Me-Not . . . . . 6

Faith Formation . . . . . 6

Council highlights . . . . 7

Mt. Carmel Council. . . . 7

### OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES

Please continue to support our congregation with your faithful financial contributions to Mt. Carmel as you are able. There are several ways to give:

- Online by credit card or bank account. Visit [mountcarmelmpls.org/give](http://mountcarmelmpls.org/give) for online giving opportunities.
- Mail or drop off your check to the church office.

Your generous support for Mt. Carmel and our ministry is truly appreciated.



## MT. CARMEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are a faith community participating in the life of God, both as sheer gift to us and as a calling to the neighborhoods of Northeast Minneapolis. We are a multigenerational community that proudly celebrates our history while joining together with younger generations to follow where God is leading. We build our community through faith practices like prayer, dwelling in the Word and hospitality.

1701 St. Anthony Pkwy NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418  
612-781-2796  
Fax: 612-781-1621

**Office hours**  
By appointment

### **Interim Pastor**

Christine Wenzel, ext. 103  
pastor@mountcarmelmpls.org

### **Director of Faith Formation**

Nick Ralston, ext. 121  
faithformation@mountcarmelmpls.org

### **Church Administrator**

ext. 101  
office@mountcarmelmpls.org

### **Interim Director of Music**

Ruth Bills, ext. 120  
ruthabills@gmail.com

### **Maintenance Engineer**

Steve Panning, ext. 104  
building@mountcarmelmpls.org

### **Tidings**

Jenni Lathrop  
jenni@jennilathrop.com

### **Mt. Carmel Child Care**

Brenda Wetzel, ext. 107  
612-781-2798  
childcare@mountcarmelmpls.org

[www.mtcarmel.net](http://www.mtcarmel.net)

**The mission of Mt. Carmel  
Lutheran Church and its members  
is to learn, live and share  
God's Word.**

Ministry Affiliates: Minneapolis Area Synod/ELCA; Northeast Senior Services, Inc.; Little Kitchen Food Shelf; The Sheridan Story; Eastside Meals on Wheels; Plymouth Christian Youth Center; Mission Northeast and Casa de Oracion a las Naciones.

The Mt. Carmel facility is shared with the following community groups: Scout Troop 132, Venture Crew, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts and Alcoholics Anonymous.

We are an ELCA congregation. All are welcome. Learn more about the ELCA at [www.elca.org/About](http://www.elca.org/About).



## PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

### **Dear Members and Friends of Mt. Carmel,**

In a fast-changing world, the one thing that remains constant is change itself! If your neighborhood is changing as quickly as mine is, I can only guess how the community around Mt. Carmel is changing. This time of year, the weather changes constantly. Our presidential administration is quickly making changes which affect us all. Closer to home, the pandemic, that has been with us for almost a year, seems to stretch on and on.

It is important to note that along with change, comes loss. And with loss, comes grief. Scripture is not a stranger to loss and grief. Through Scripture we know that God is always with us. Scripture responds to what we are going through by giving voice to where we are in the moment, especially through the Psalms, which are full of laments. Laments help keep the conversation open with God. They are a way to keep talking when we would prefer to draw away from God in doubt, or anger, or even fear. Laments are perfect during change because they are not examples of the way things are supposed to be, rather, they are a description of the way things are!

Transition time in the church also means change. One reason, we refrain from calling a new pastor right away, is that we need to live through the grief and loss of the past. The next reason is to have time to do a self-study. In the next months, I will be meeting with numerous members and friends of this faith community, by either Zoom or phone, to listen to your story, and hear about your experience with this congregation. It has been obvious to me from the very beginning, that there are a lot of people who care very deeply about this church.

Also, during this time, I, along with the leaders of Mt. Carmel, will be in the process of putting together a Transition Task Force. The work of this team is to focus on five areas of ministry: Heritage, Leadership, Mission, Connections and finally, begin the call process. Through this whole year, we hope to discern where God is calling this congregation into the future. We also hope that from this transition work, you will be better able to discern what kind of leader best fits your congregation's needs.

It is my prayer that we can all recognize that through this transition time, God will be with you, calling you, urging you and most likely challenging you to move forward with trust and grace, knowing that in the end, new life for this congregation is your promise. I have a lot of confidence in what God will do in this journey together!

You are in my prayers, please keep me in yours!

Pr. Christine

# CALL FOR MUSICIANS

## Help enhance our Sunday worship services

Looking for kids, adults or families who sing or play an instrument and would like to share their talents in our Sunday services with special music. It can be recorded or done in person if you are comfortable with that (safely distanced of course). If you're interested please contact Ruth Bills at [Ruthabills@gmail.com](mailto:Ruthabills@gmail.com).

# WANTED: ADULTS LOOKING TO CONNECT WITH YOUTH

We are looking for a number of adults—both men and women—to connect with a younger member of Mt. Carmel (6th-12th grade). Especially in this time of pandemic and distance community, creating relationships between our youth and faithful, authentic adults is so important. While this program is still in its planning phase, we are looking for Mt. Carmel members over 25 who are willing to be partnered with a Mt. Carmel youth through at least June 2021. Right now, that relationship building will be created through phone calls, emails and possibly video chats. And don't forget prayer! In the future, we will also look at in-person activities.

If you have questions or want to participate, Jenni Lathrop at [jennifer.lathrop@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.lathrop@gmail.com).

# THANK YOU FROM STEVE ROBERTSON

Thank you to all the members of the congregation who offered their words of appreciation, thanks and encouragement as I concluded my service at Mt. Carmel as your church administrator. It has been a privilege to serve among you these last few years. I hope that my time and work there has contributed in some small way to the ministry that the congregation is about. I pray God's blessings on you during this year of transition with Pr. Christine and the new office staff that will assume my duties. And I trust that God will lead you forward to new times and new ministries in the northeast neighborhoods of Minneapolis.

Many people have inquired as to what is next for me. Following my decision to step down at Mt. Carmel, I have since accepted a call to be the pastor at First Presbyterian Church of Hasting, Minn. That was the congregation which I was serving as an interim pastor when I left to assume the job at Mt. Carmel, and it is the congregation which I have been preaching at since the end of January 2020. That was supposed to be a temporary preaching-only engagement for about two months while they finalized calling of their new pastor. Then the pandemic hit, their candidates withdrew, and I am still there. I keep thinking of my relationship with that congregation as something akin to the Jonah story.

## DEATHS

Ray Carlson who died Dec 28, 2020. A memorial service will be arranged at a future date.

## WITH SYMPATHY

Lorraine Carlson on the recent death of her husband Ray Carlson

## FAREWELL & GODSPEED

Cesar Chinichay who has begun attending a Spanish-speaking congregation online during the pandemic. While he misses his Mt. Carmel friends, he has found the service in his primary language more meaningful for him.

## MEETING ONLINE

These groups are meeting online:

**Reflect Group**—Sundays at 11 a.m. (Contact Nick Ralston at [faithformation@mountcarmelmpls.org](mailto:faithformation@mountcarmelmpls.org))

**Good Fruits Bible Study**—Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. (Contact Leona Olson at [onondave@yahoo.com](mailto:onondave@yahoo.com))

**Men's Bible Study**—Wednesdays at 6:45 a.m. (Contact Ralph Matthes at [marinosdelimpls@gmail.com](mailto:marinosdelimpls@gmail.com))

## KEEP US INFORMED

Did you know that because of privacy laws, hospitals and nursing homes do not call us to report if a parishioner has been admitted, or if a person's condition has worsened?

That means we rely on family members and friends to keep us informed. Please call the church office, 612-781-2796, if you or someone you know of is hospitalized.

# TREASURER REPORT

## EOY Dec. 31, 2020

Mt Carmel's finances for 2020 ended with a surplus of \$12,111.47. This amount has been carried forward into the 2021 budget. December showed Income/Expense to be on track.

Due to COVID-19, we faced challenges and received blessings. We received a forgivable PPP Loan of which \$37,440.00 was applied to the church salaries, benefits, and utilities over an eight week period. The pandemic also led to a healthy savings of expenses.

### December

Actual Contributions/ Income \$ 31,417.19	Pledged/Budgeted Contributions/ Income \$25,345.73
--	---

Actual Expense \$ 31,865.50	Budgeted Expense \$27,376.07
--------------------------------	---------------------------------

Actual Income/Budgeted Income for the Year to Date 2020: \$12,111.47

Though we have delayed pledging process for 2021 due to pandemic. Please consider keeping your giving and planned pledges up to date. We pray pledges and giving keeps us on a healthy trend in 2021.

—Diane Davis Langer, Mt. Carmel Church treasurer

## WHERE CAN I FIND...?

During this unusual time, our communications team is working hard to keep you updated and connected.

### Website

One of the best ways to find information is on the church website at [www.mtcarmel.net](http://www.mtcarmel.net).

Find wind worship videos and documents, congregational mailings and other information on the NEWS page. Visit the news page directly at [mountcarmelmpls.org/news](http://mountcarmelmpls.org/news).

### Facebook

Worship is live on Sunday mornings through Facebook live. Also find our daily devotions and event information. **You do not need to have a Facebook account to view our videos and posts, simply visit [www.facebook.com/MountCarmelMpls](http://www.facebook.com/MountCarmelMpls) on any computer or mobile device.**

# COVID-19 TASK FORCE UPDATE

The COVID-19 task force's update for this month is...well, there isn't really an update.

State restrictions haven't changed as far as indoor social gatherings since before Thanksgiving, when they were reduced to three households and 10 people. In fact, before Christmas, they were pulled back further to two households and 10 people.

We're following that guidance to tell us when we can reopen to small group meetings and gatherings. Right now, there are no indications those restrictions will be lifted anytime soon, despite the reopening of restaurants and bars.

But we'll keep an eye on things as more people get the vaccines. As the vaccination programs progress, it will become clearer when the state and nation will reach the "herd immunity" point—that is, when enough people have an immunity to the virus to reduce the likelihood of widespread infection. What that percentage will be isn't clear or agreed on—I've read varying estimates from 75% to 90% of the population being immunized.

Whatever that number is, the important thing is that all of us get immunized when it is offered. Getting that vaccine right now is difficult as supplies are still being increased, but the opportunity will arise for all of us to get the shot. And we all should do it. Doing so will help ensure that COVID-19 will become less dangerous or vanish entirely, and it will make it possible for us all to safely return to worship together, indoors, on a regular basis.

Returning to "normal" is what we all want. And the only way to make that possible is to drastically reduce the danger that the virus poses to us all.

*Paul Lathrop*

# SHERIDAN STORY IS NOW EVERY MEAL

The Sheridan Story has officially changed its name to Every Meal but their mission to fight child hunger through community and school partnership has not changed. Mt. Carmel is still committed to supporting this effort through our recent council actions to support the 2019-2020 school year and the 2020-2021 school year. Mt. Carmel has supported The Sheridan Story (Every Meal) for over six years through amazing fundraisers, packing lockers at Waite Park Elementary School and working at the distribution center preparing meal bags. During this time of pandemic imposed social distancing and economic downturn, we need new ideas on how to raise money to support what we care and treasure: our children and our neighbors. If you are interested in working on a fundraiser for Every Meal, to support Mt. Carmel's commitment please contact Matti Gurney, he is looking for ideas and volunteers. Or consider making a donation to Mt. Carmel to support the church's commitment to Every Meal and help get meals in children's' homes. Contact Matti at [Matti.Gurney@gmail.com](mailto:Matti.Gurney@gmail.com) or 651-269-2167.

## PRAYER CHAIN

To to lift up a prayer concern for the prayer chain, please contact Leona Olson at 612-859-7075.

## TIDINGS DEADLINE

**Feb. 16, 10 p.m.**

Submit articles to [jenni@jennilathrop.com](mailto:jenni@jennilathrop.com). Issues are delivered the first week of the month.

## JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

Stay updated on our community life. Join our email list to receive The Candle once a week , special announcements and important church communications.

To subscribe, email [office@mountcarmelmpls.org](mailto:office@mountcarmelmpls.org) or visit the church website at [www.mtcarmel.net](http://www.mtcarmel.net).

## FORGET-ME-NOT

Birthday greetings to each of the members listed below who will reach or surpass the 80th milestone in this month. We pray that God bless you on your special day and in the year to come.

Feb. 9—Patty Griffith

Feb. 10—Ron Handberg

Feb. 12—Chuck Grider

Feb. 17—Dick Jacobson

Feb. 19—John Hedberg

Feb. 22—Dorothy Warhol

Feb. 28—Ethel Antonson

It is the policy of Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church to not publish the phone numbers and addresses of members. If you wish to call or send a card to these individuals, please refer to your church directory or call the office.

## GIFTS RECEIVED

### THE FOUNDATION

#### In memory of Bruce Hoyt:

Eleanore Semanko, Ruth Emerson

#### In memory of Ray Carlson:

Jo Alice Boatright & Steve Ristuben

#### In memory of Matthew

Bishop: Scott & Terri Black

## FAITH FORMATION AT A GLANCE:

It feels now that we are settling in and yet have new hope on the horizon. Winter is here, and yes, the hard, long part of winter that comes after Christmas is over. I pray though, that we have hope, both in Christ and in new beginnings that this year is bringing on the pandemic front, in our country, in the church, and in the world. A time for evaluation and moving forward is here and it is an opportunity for growth and changing how we do many things for the sake of others and the most vulnerable. At the time of this writing I read that we have reached 400,000 COVID-related deaths in the U.S. This is a tragedy and I pray for the safety for you at Mt. Carmel as well as for the friends and families of those who have been lost to this pandemic. In the hospital this year I have seen first-hand both hope and loss. Let us continue to hold strong together against this virus for a brighter future.

### Check-ins for this winter:

- **Reflect.** Reflect remains on! For security purposes, please email me if you would like to join us for Reflect. We continue to gather each week, after service, via Zoom, in the same time slot (11-11:45 a.m.) to retain the greatest sense of normalcy as possible! I invite you to join our conversation and fellowship and directly engage in this faith formation opportunity.
- **Christmas Card Project.** The reviews are in, and the Christmas card project was a huge success! It provided joy and a sense of care and hope to all those we sent cards to. Thank you again to the volunteers and card writers for making this project what it was.
- **Confirmation.** Confirmation met for a socially distanced kick off in the month of October and virtually in November. We took a break in December and in January the two classes were scheduled to meeting at their regular time.
- **Camp Wapo.** As of right now our camp, Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp, is planning on having a few different camps this summer. I am in the process of gathering names of Mt. Carmel Youth who are interested in a week of camp this summer. The staff are working on how to make a fun and Spirit-filled week of camp happen while being sufficiently safe in the midst of the pandemic.
- **Monthly Reminder.** And as always, what are your ideas? If you have an idea that is not listed above for something positive and in the realm of faith formation or fellowship for our community, email me at [faithformation@mountcarmelmpls.org](mailto:faithformation@mountcarmelmpls.org)! My virtual door is always open to working with people on new ideas.

I look forward to gathering with you all again when it is safe.

*Blessings,  
Nick Ralston, Faith Formation Director*

# COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

Council met Tuesday, Jan. 12

- Update on Directory privacy issues: After consulting with the ELCA it was recommended we provide an opt-out option for members if they choose not to have some or all of their personal information shared in a directory to other members.
- Update on council nominations: We have not been able to fill all of the open positions on council. The council discussed making a change to the bylaws to reduce the number of people on council. Our church membership numbers are down and we have had a problem filling a nine-person council for a few years. Karen Matthes, Dave Larson and Diane Langer all agreed to serve on council an extra year, however, the concern is that it will leave even a bigger gap next year when Barb Hollister and Tim Quinlan's terms are also up.

Pastor's report notable items:

- Lynette Dubbels has found temporary volunteers to fill in on some office duties until a replacement has been hired to replace Steve Robertson. An ad is out for the position. There has not been any activity at the time of the report.
- COVID Task Force: The decision at the last meeting was to not make any changes at this time. The building will remain closed, except the day care.
- A special worship service will be shared on Sunday, Jan. 17 to commemorate the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Transition Team: Once we have the council positions filled, and the Building Committee and Finance Committee filled, I would like to form the Transition Team. If you know of anyone who might want to serve on this team, please let me know.

Administrator's report highlights: Steve has been preparing for his departure and is leaving us in a good place to transition to a new office administrator.

Items to note include:

- PPP loan: Steve will prepare and submit the loan forgiveness request.
- Steve signed a contract with Emerson Technologies to get our church computer hardware and software in order.
- Financial audit: Estimates that Steve presented for a formal audit is out of our budget for now. Diane will pursue some volunteers to do this in the spring.
- Sheridan Story/Every Meal: Per council's request in December, a payment of \$2,500 was made to Sheridan Story/Every Meal.

Communication Forum : The council expressed a huge thank you and well wishes to Office Administrator Steve Robertson for everything he has done for Mt. Carmel during his time here. Steve's dedication, his expertise and his willingness to always go above and beyond will be greatly missed. Thank you Steve!

—Karen Matthes

## WATCH SUNDAY'S WORSHIP ONLINE

Did you miss worship this week or would you like to watch it again? You can watch the recorded videos on our website at [mountcarmelimpls.org/category/worship](http://mountcarmelimpls.org/category/worship) following worship each week. We also post the text to the sermon at [mountcarmelimpls.org/pastors-page/sermons](http://mountcarmelimpls.org/pastors-page/sermons) (when available).

## MT. CARMEL COUNCIL

Tim Quinlan, President  
Barb Hollister, Vice President  
Karen Matthes, Secretary  
Diane Langer, Treasurer  
Allison Gurney  
Dave Larson  
Patrick Lathrop



## Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church

1701 St. Anthony Parkway NE  
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Non-Profit.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Twin Cities, MN  
Permit #93097

### Address Service Requested

### Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church

During this season of COVID-19, the church building is closed. But our faith community is always open.

#### Interim Pastor

Christine Wenzel

#### Office hours

By appointment

#### Sunday worship

10 a.m.—Facebook Live at  
[facebook.com/MountCarmelMpls](https://facebook.com/MountCarmelMpls)

#### Mt. Carmel Child Care

Brenda Wetzel, Director  
612-781-2798

**Mission: Learn, live  
and share God's Word**



# WORSHIP WITH US ONLINE

### Join the Mt. Carmel faith community for worship on Facebook Live, Sunday mornings, 10 a.m.

To access the worship online, go to the Mt. Carmel Facebook video page at [facebook.com/pg/MountCarmelMpls/live](https://facebook.com/pg/MountCarmelMpls/live) anytime after worship is scheduled to begin. Select the video with the red "LIVE" tag to start watching. *You do not have to have a Facebook account to watch the worship service.* Videos are available to watch at any time after the live event.

For more on worshipping with us using Facebook Live, visit [mountcarmelmpls.org/watching-worship-on-sunday-mornings](https://mountcarmelmpls.org/watching-worship-on-sunday-mornings).



612-781-2796



[office@mountcarmelmpls.org](mailto:office@mountcarmelmpls.org)



[www.mtcarmel.net](http://www.mtcarmel.net)



[/MountCarmelMpls](https://MountCarmelMpls)