

#THE CONTACT

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM CARMEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH // FEBRUARY 2025



• February 2025 •

- Missions: Missions Pledge Month
- Music Ministry: 'First Weds' on Feb. 5
- Kids: Open Gym for families on Weds.
- Pancake Supper is Tues. March 4, 2025
- Ash Wednesday is March 5, 2025



A Note from Pastor Jessica about Sierra Leone

As you read this article, I am likely in Sierra Leone visiting partner organizations and people with whom you all have built relationships with over the past thirty years. It is amazing to be able to step into your legacy and be welcomed with open arms in a country the size of our home state of Indiana but worlds apart culturally. As you may know, Sierra Leone was torn apart throughout the 1990s by a Civil War. Most people my age saw things none of us should ever see, they lost everything, including their parents, and yet, they are rebuilding with resilience. There is vibrancy and thirst, heartbreak and innovation all together, creating a desire to be truly present and joy-filled with those around you.

When I was last here, in 2023, I was awed by how families work together. How one income can support multiple generations. But I was most impressed by how the missions our church partners with are run by the people of Sierra Leone. Operation Classroom, which funds the Taiama Enterprise Academy, a trade school for young adults who could not afford a secondary education or had to drop out for family circumstances, was asked for by the Sierra Leonians – they just needed help financially.

Today, they have 120 young adults getting a chance at good jobs, to start their own business and/or the possibility to go onto University if they choose. This is huge! It is changing the trajectory of their life, and the lives of their family. It costs \$850 to support a student for the

year (books, room, board, education) and you all have supported around twenty students each year for the past several years. So when I look around at these young faces today, I see your love and support for every 1 in 6 kids here.

You know I could go on and take over this whole issue of **The Contact** with my amazement and awe at how our congregation has walked alongside the people here but there is only so much space. Just know that even if you have never been, or will never go to Sierra Leone, your love is here. I get to see it first hand, and I am so ever grateful.

Our team would love your prayers while we are here. If you are feeling brave, write them down and send them to us via email.

With love,

Pastor Jessica

jstevens@carmelumc.org



CHURCH UPDATES

WE ARE HIRING

JOB POSITION:

FULL CHARGE BOOKKEEPER

We are seeking a Full Charge Bookkeeper to oversee the day to day financial operations of the church, including receipts, disbursements, banking and financial reporting. This position works closely with the Church Administrator and the church finance committee.

CARMEL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
621 S. Rangeline Rd.
Carmel, IN 46032
317-844-7275

FULL JOB DESCRIPTION HERE:
carmelumc.org/employment



In Celebration of...

○ Dylan Laughlin who was baptized **January 12, 2025**
Parents: **Karisa & Sam** Laughlin, brothers: **Owen & Henry**

With Sympathy to the families of...

- Art Adams who passed away **January 7, 2025**
- Pauline Crumley who passed away **January 15, 2025**
- Janet M. Wilson who passed away **January 22, 2025**

2025 Hospitality Committee Meeting

Sunday, February 23 immediately following services, at 11:30am until 12:30pm, Room 121.

We look forward to seeing you and kicking off the new year together! If you're new to CUMC, please join us!

For questions, contact:
Cheryl Curry — 317-440-8216
ccurry59@sbcglobal.net



Mark your calendars:

ALL YOU CAN EAT

Pancake Supper

SUPPORTING BOY SCOUT TROOP 131

Tuesday, March 4, 2025 5pm - 7pm

TICKETS

Adults - \$10
12 & under - \$5
4 & under - FREE
Family cap - \$30



ON SALE in the Gathering Place on Sundays, Feb. 16, 23 and March 2, 2025 or in the church office during office hours




Boy Scout Pancake Supper on Tuesday March 4.

Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 12 & under, and ages 4 and under are FREE. Family cap is \$30.

Look for tickets to be on sale Sundays February 16, 23 and March 2 in the Gathering Place or in the church office during office hours.


Carmel

EAT TO SUPPORT Carmel UMC United Women in Faith



CUMC UWF FUNDRAISER is on Wednesday February 26, 2025 from 11:00am to 8:00pm

Where: **City BARBEQUE**
ORDER IN, or TO GO.

United Women in Faith 

02.26.25 11:00 AM - 8:00 PM
USE PROMO CODE **GIVE**
CITY BARBEQUE
1356 S Rangeline Rd, Carmel

CUMC E-Prayer Chain


If you would like to receive the list of prayer needs, and be a prayer warrior for CUMC, please [CLICK HERE](#) for a simple form, adding you to the list of **PRAYING PEOPLE**. If you have a prayer request for the team to pray for, send it in email to Ed King, edking722@gmail.com. When sending, let Ed know if you want it shared publicly, otherwise he will assume it is for the prayer list only.

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

Service: 6:30pm

Drive-thru Ashes: Noon-12:45pm



Children's Pastors Conference



CPC is a children's ministry conference for Pastors, Directors, Ministers, and Volunteers working in Children's ministries. This conference is organized by INCM (International Network of Children's Ministry) and was held in Orlando, FL.

Image: Children's Pastors and Directors from Canada, MN, TX, OH, MD, and IN! These ladies continue to be a prayerful support for me and the ministry here at Carmel UMC. And I am keeping them and their ministries in my prayers as well.

This was my first year attending CPC, as our former Children's Pastor had registered early for the benefit of the incoming Children's Minister. I didn't have many expectations, but I was hoping for warm weather. It was warmer in Orlando than Carmel, but it wasn't sit by the pool weather.

I tried to get as much out of the conference as I could. I attended multiple Meet-Ups, where I met other

First Time Attenders and others attending Solo. I signed up for Break Out Sessions on topics such as: 12-month Ministry Calendaring, VBS, Worship Planning, Budgeting and Volunteers in Ministry.

I visited the resource center of vendors multiple times in order to have conversations with publishers, ministry focused organizations, and I was introduced to an overwhelming amount of information!

I am grateful for the opportunity to learn from experienced ministry leaders and take those best practices with me!

I am thankful for the opportunity to learn, network, and worship with others in Children's Ministry. Thank you for supporting continuing education of your staff and your support of Children's Ministry through your Annual Giving.

Turn to page 10 >> for a SPECIAL INVITATION for kids to see an ELECTRIC VIOLIN! ♡♪

FEBRUARY

2025

Wednesdays 3:30-5pm
OPEN GYM!

Thursdays 11:30am-12:30pm
Moms' Bible Study

Friday Feb 21
InTouch 4/5 graders

Sunday Feb 16
NO Sunday School

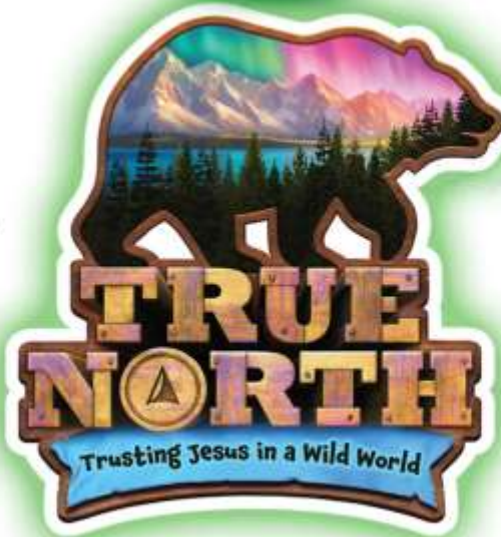
VBS

JUNE 8-11, 2025
Sunday - Wednesday

Age 5 by June 8, 2025
through Current 4th
graders

Leadership Training for
current 5th and 6th
graders

Current 7th grade
through adults can
Volunteer for station
and crew leaders!



Too cold & wet to play
outside? Need to get
out of the house?

OPEN GYM!

Children's Ministry will be
opening the gym for parents
and kids on

WEDNESDAYS in FEBRUARY

from 3:30pm-5:00pm.

Half the gym will be designated
for basketball & the other half
will be set up for our younger
preschool friends. And you can
always run laps around the gym!

Please note: this is not a drop
off event - responsible adult will
need to stay!



For three weeks in January we had the opportunity to learn from certified enneagram coach, David Bell, about how we connect with God and others based on our **enneagram type**. It was a great way to start off the New Year and explore how we can bring our whole selves before God. As we continue into the year, be on the lookout for more classes to spark your curiosity about how religion impacts our daily lives!



In March, we will offer a **New Member class at 9:00am on Sunday mornings**. This new format will cover various aspects of Methodism over the course of four weeks and will be a space where you can learn more about our denomination. This is obviously open to new members but it is also open to anyone interested in learning more about the Methodist church!

If you are interested in joining the church, or simply learning more about Methodism, this (new) class is for you.

Save the Date!
New Member Class
is coming in March!
Classes will take place at
9:00am on Sundays in March
and will cover United Methodist History,
where we are today, and the local church.
CLICK HERE to SIGN UP

Also in March! We are offering a six-week course on the **Spiritual Practices of the Saints on Sundays at 6:30pm**. A different instructor each week will teach on saints such as St. Ignatius, Gregory the Great, St. Francis, Thomas Merton and hands on applications will be taught. Be sure to listen to the podcast that goes along with the course each week. **Soup and childcare will be provided.**

COMING UP in MARCH 2025

Spiritual Practices of the Saints
Sundays at 6:30pm
Different instructor each week
Soup and childcare provided



Are you looking for a way to join in, but don't know where to start? Send me an email, and I will be glad to help you join a group, or form a new one!
- Pastor Jessica Stevens



STUDYING: The book of Acts, with a Right Now Media study that focuses on 6 themes that permeate the book.

Feb. 5, 12, 19

Friends in Faith
Every Wednesday
from 3:30pm to 5pm

at church in the conference room.

CONTACT: NANCY ADAMS
nadams35@att.net



LYDIA CIRCLE *Discipleship*
 Lydia Circle is a Discipleship Group that meets every Tuesday at 6:30pm at Carmel Church.

Lydia Circle
2nd Tuesdays
at 6:30pm

CONTACTS:
 Nancy Miller
 nancymiller99@hotmail.com
 Gayle Webb
 gayle.beyers.webb@gmail.com

CARMEL CHURCH

The **Lydia Circle**, shown in the first picture, met last month to create these beautiful Valentine's wreaths. In conjunction with our **Congregational Care Ministry**, they delivered them to many happy recipients in our congregation. The **Super Seniors at Independence Village** in Carmel are shown in the second picture receiving them, and a few days later, they shared pictures of their doors with the wreaths so beautifully displayed (shown below) and wanted to wish everyone **HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY**. What a wonderful way to show God's love.

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥



Happy Valentine's Day
 from the Super Seniors
 at Independence
 Village



Prayer Shawl Circle
EVERY TUESDAY

In the Gathering Place.
 12:30pm-2:30pm

CONTACT:
 Katie Kesler
 kmacovian@ao.com
 CARMEL CHURCH

Ruth Anna Circle

Meeting: TUESDAY
February 11
10:00am

Gathering Place
 Program: Betty Carew

CARMEL CHURCH

Dinner Belles
Tuesday Feb. 11
at 6pm

We are meeting at
MCL Cafeteria
 this month! ♥

CONTACT Kay Hapner -
 kayhapner@yahoo.com

CARMEL CHURCH

Make Your Pledge

Click this button to make your pledge to MISSIONS now!

MISSIONS PLEDGE MONTH

February is CUMC Missions Pledge Month A History and Personal Perspectives

By Ed King

This year, **FEBRUARY** is **Missions Pledge Month** at CUMC, where 100% of pledged mission money goes directly towards outreach in our local and global communities. Our goal is to raise **\$75,000** in pledges and one-time gifts to continue the outreach we provide in our communities and abroad. All of our mission ministries will benefit from the offering in 2025. Pledge cards will be mailed to congregants in advance of Pledge Sunday (and also available at church).

Our largest outreach in the community is our **Food Pantry and Food Pantry Gardens**, which in previous years has fed over 16,000 people in one year. We are fortunate to have many volunteers who are passionate about quality food and give their time monthly or weekly to this outreach. We are one of the few food pantries that consistently has fresh produce and meats for our guests. We pray with our guests, encourage them and offer hope in difficult times.



Our church also participates with **Soups On**, a feeding ministry for the unhoused, at **Robert's Park UMC** in downtown Indianapolis where every Sunday of the year, approximately 250 guests come to eat and spend time together enjoying a safe and comfortable dining environment. For 5 Sundays per year, CUMC provides meals and shares the love of Christ with our brothers and sisters who would otherwise go without.



Our missions that impact children include **Bags of Hope** that gives dignity and comfort to kids in foster care across Indiana, **Kids Coats** that



provides warm winter coats, and the **Salvation Army Angel Tree Program** which helps families provide Christmas when money is too tight for extras.



Our housing ministries includes **Family Promise** of Indianapolis (formerly known as Interfaith Hospitality Network), which addresses the issue of homelessness holistically, by providing prevention services before families reach crisis, shelter and case management services when they become homeless, and stabilization programs once they have secured housing to ensure they remain independent.



MISSIONS PLEDGE MONTH

Loose coins, and pledges made this month, will go directly into the **Missions Operating Budget** now, and throughout the year as you designate on your pledge card. Thank you! ♥

Make Your Pledge

Click this button to make your pledge to MISSIONS now!

(Continued from page 8...February is Missions Pledge Month)

Our mission team to **Henderson Settlement** has been going to Frakes, Kentucky for over 20 years. The team brings hope and God's love to many who are struggling in this former coal mining area of Appalachia by rebuilding and creating healthy living spaces for people who live there.



Internationally, we continue to pour into Sierra Leone by way of the Carmel Preschool and the Seminary as well as



partnering with Operation Classroom to provide school supplies, scholarships and room & board to students and The Betty Carew Women's Training Center where women are provided vocational training so they can take care of themselves, their families and community.



Now, a quick history lesson. Missions are a vital part of the ministry at CUMC, but there was a time when the budget for missions was relatively lean compared to today. But that all changed at CUMC in January 1997. Under the leadership of chairman Jon Pavey and inspirational support by assistant pastor Rev. Jack King (himself a former missionary to Korea), the CUMC missions committee initiated their first "second mile giving" program for mission's ministries, which was affectionately known as "Faith Promise" for many years. Financial pledges and giving in the first year were outstanding, allowing CUMC to better support existing missions and rapidly expand outreach to new mission ministries. A new tradition was born!

While no longer called "Faith Promise", the special offering to missions has been in effect every year at CUMC since 1997 and will happen again in 2025. Several million dollars have been raised at CUMC over the past 27 years that have impacted thousands of people in many ways, not only locally but also in other states and nations. Shelter and meals have been provided for the homeless. Local food insecurity is addressed in both Hamilton County and Indianapolis. Clothing and winter coats are provided, as well as Christmas gifts and "Bags of Hope" for local children in need. Newly arrived immigrants have been taught English classes in past years. Prisoners have received Bibles. Natural disaster relief (via UMCOR) has been supported in the USA and around the world. Christian ministries, schools and medical clinics have been supported and expanded in far reaching places like Sierra Leone in West Africa and Guatemala in Central America. Mission trips have allowed hundreds of CUMC members to experience and provide direct "hands on" support and outreach in inner cities and rural areas of the USA, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Sierra Leone (just to name a few). The list goes on and on, and none of it would be possible without the faithful support of CUMC congregation.

For fuller description of all the missions supported at CUMC, you can find more information on the mission's webpage: <https://carmelumc.org/missions/>

Thank you for supporting the work that our church does locally, nationally, and internationally!

Visit this website to make your pledge to MISSIONS now! We can reach the GOAL with YOUR help!

MISSIONS PLEDGE MONTH

(Continued from page 9...February is Missions Pledge Month)

(continued on page 10)

On a personal note, I first became involved in missions at CUMC in 1994 with my wife Michelle serving temporarily homeless families in the Interfaith Hospitality Network (now known as **Family Promise**). One small step of volunteering led to bigger commitments until for several years we served as the IHN volunteer coordinators in the late 1990's for CUMC. While the families staying at CUMC were certainly blessed with the generosity and hospitality of our church, Michelle and I also benefited from our service by meeting many special people and better understanding the different circumstances causing homeless situations. Our faith also grew by leading the ministry, as we relied on God to do things we couldn't have achieved on our own. To me, participating in mission ministry is a "Win/Win" for both our missions recipients (having a need met while experiencing Christian compassion) and for our volunteers who receive a blessing while gaining greater empathy/understanding for those being served.



Pictured: Ed & Michelle King

CCPL Donates Hats and Gloves to CUMC

Carmel High School students participated in an all-day read-a-thon on January 5, 2025. Students chose CUMC Kids Coats as the recipient for their donation.

For every hour students engaged in reading, gloves and hats were purchased by the library.

CUMC Kids Coats received 96 donations. The CCPL Teen Book Club presented the donation to Michele Tuttle, Kids Coats Giveaway Director, at their monthly meeting Thursday January 23, 2025.



Join us for soup and soup-er music!

Bring your appetite and join us for an evening that warms your bellies and your hearts! It starts at **6 p.m. this Wednesday, Feb. 5, in the Gathering Place!**

The Traditional Music Ministry resumes its first Wednesday Friends and Family gatherings for 2025 with a “Souper” Pre-Valentine’s Day Dinner! All are welcome for a night of delicious food, fellowship and choral music!

A variety of soups will be lovingly prepared by Jan Ayers, Kay Hapner, Margaret Kettle, Ray Lahrman and Faye Thomas. [Click here to register so we have enough for everyone!](#)



After dinner, we’ll raise our voices to God as we rehearse the hymns for the following Sunday and several weeks of upcoming anthems.

Are you reading this article too late and missed Feb. 5? No worries! The Chancel Choir gathers in the Sanctuary **every Wednesday** during the school year at 6 p.m. for about an hour of rehearsal – just minus the food!

And mark your calendars ahead for a special performance by **electric violinist Cathy Morris on Wednesday, March 12 downstairs in the HUB.** Cathy is a prolific recording artist, composer, arranger and producer who has performed for world leaders and dignitaries including Mikhail Gorbachev and Bill and Hillary Clinton.

We’re issuing a special invitation to the children of our congregation starting at 5:30 p.m. with pizza, popcorn and snow cones! The concert will follow around 6 p.m. As a music educator, Cathy has worked with thousands of students each year through convocations, workshops and performing side-by-side concerts with student orchestras.

So what is an electric violin? Much like an electric guitar, it can use effects such as reverb and distortion for use in jazz, rock and pop music. You’ll love it!



If you have questions, or if your group is interested in partnering with us for a music event, contact DMorton@carmelumc.org

YOUTH MINISTRY

Ryan Remington • youth@carmelumc.org

Click [here](#) to visit the [Youth Ministries Page!](#) Sign up forms, and updated info on all events are available online.



RISE UP



Over 40 adults and students donned winter coats, braved subzero temperatures, and fought through the Pharaoh's Trials to learn how to RISE UP with God. We learned how to creatively partner with God, trusting in God's goodness, to free those in our communities. We knocked pennies off of our foreheads, we drank too much coffee, and slept even less so we could come together in worship and fun. If you see one of our amazing students this month, ask them how God moved through Senior Testimonies and silliness, how AirBand was rigged against them, and what's the most important lesson one can learn from a Purple Penguin.

Upcoming Youth Schedule:

Feb 2: HIGH SCHOOL (6pm-8pm)
Feb 9: SUPER BOWL PARTY (4pm-8pm)
Feb 16: ADRENALINE ACTION PARK (12pm-6pm)
Feb 23: MIDDLE SCHOOL (6pm-8pm)

CONFIRMATION
(10:45am in the Confirmation Room)
Feb. 2, Feb. 9,
Feb. 16, Feb. 23

Bibles & Breakfast
(10am in the HUB Cafe)
Feb. 2, Feb. 9,
Feb. 16, Feb. 23

Youth Group Girls!
Maddie & Monica are putting together a small group on Sunday's at 5pm. Contact either of them for more info!

Yo! Students!

Are you ready to dive into a 2,000-year-old collection of life hacks, epic advice, and unapologetic truth bombs? Paul's letters might have been written to ancient churches, but they're packed with wisdom that's just as relevant today as it was back then. From navigating relationships to dealing with conflict, finding hope in hard times to understanding your identity, these letters hit all the big questions.

Join us as we break down the seven most iconic letters of Paul—Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon—and discover how these ancient words can ignite your faith and guide your everyday choices. This isn't just youth group; this is building a roadmap to living boldly, loving fiercely, and standing firm in who you're called to be.

Join us on Sunday nights as we unpack Paul!

REGISTRATION FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR

CUMC Preschool Registration for the 2025-26 school has begun and our classes are almost full! We still have spots open in our Bunnies (18 months) program, so if you or someone you know is interested in joining us for another amazing year, please have them contact us! You can email Stephanie Holl at sholl@carmelumc.org or call the preschool office to set up a tour **(317) 844-1958**.

Information about our class offerings and registration process is on our website , www.carmelumc.org/preschool.



WE LOVE CUMC!

CUMC preschool is so thankful to have the church's support this school year. We are blessed to have the best staff, and want to express our HEART FELT gratitude to CUMC for all you do to help make our preschool the best in town!

Thank you!

LOVE





A 2025 Reminder!

Giving from Your IRA – A Special Opportunity for those 70½ Years and Older

If you are 70½ or older, you can now make gifts directly from your traditional IRA account to CUMC using a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) in two unique ways.

An Outright Gift – A transfer directly from your IRA to CUMC (up to \$108,000 per year) without paying federal income tax on the withdrawal. It counts toward your RMD, if one is due.

A Life-Income Gift – Choose a one-time \$54,000 option to purchase a life income gift (i.e. Charitable Gift Annuity or Charitable Remainder Trust). The income tax due will be distributed over your lifetime of income payments. The tax-free distribution (up to \$54,000) counts toward your RMD if one is due, generally beginning at age 73.

Why consider this gift?

- Beginning in the year you turn 73, you can use your gift to satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution (RMD).
- You pay no income taxes on the gift. The transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your charitable deductions.
- Since the gift does not count as income, it can reduce your annual income and decrease the amount of Social Security that is subject to tax.
- For many members, this is a tax-wise way to support the operations and missions of CUMC every year and to give thanks to God for blessings bestowed.

“For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given to You.”

1 Chronicles 29:14, NASB

How to Make a Gift from your IRA

Contact your IRA plan administrator and request that a “QCD” be made from your account to Carmel United Methodist Church by either:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Electronic transfer to Horizon Bank
ABA # 071201320
Account # 10030141 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Mail check from your IRA to:
Carmel United Methodist Church
621 S Range Line Rd
Carmel, IN 46032 |
|---|---|

Your IRA funds will be directly transferred to CUMC. Please contact us to confirm receipt of your gift. You can specify your gift to the Endowment Fund as for either (a) the areas of Greatest Needs (undesignated) or (b) to one or more of the 12 existing designated funds. **We encourage you to consult with your legal, tax and/or financial advisors regarding your eligibility to make a QCD and that it meets your particular circumstances.**

For more information about the Endowment Fund or if you would like to make a gift or participate in “Planned Giving” to the Fund through your will, trust, estate, life insurance, IRA, or other bequest, email: plannedgiving@carmelumc.org or pick up a brochure at the Welcome Center for more information.





CARMEL
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

621 S. Range Line Road
Carmel, IN 46032

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E-mail: caremail@carmelumc.org
www.carmelumc.org



At Carmel UMC we are connecting with God and others, growing in faith and love through Biblical learning, and serving our community and world as followers of Jesus Christ.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



THE CONTACT FEBRUARY 2025

UPCOMING EVENTS

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GIVING FROM YOUR IRA

LOOK INSIDE

for more information about all the happenings at CUMC!

KIDS: In Touch Feb. 21, OPEN GYM on Weds.!

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP: Join a class or group

PRESCHOOL: A HUGE THANK YOU! ♥

MUSIC: February 5 & March 12 Events! 🎵

YOUTH: Breakfasts on Sunday & other events

MISSION FOCUS: Missions Pledge Month