

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Good News

JUNE/JULY 2026



Smithville
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**TO LOVE
CHRIST
TO SERVE
CHRIST
TO SHARE
CHRIST
NO MATTER
WHAT IT
TAKES**



SMITHVILLE UMC

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from the desk of Pastor James



Dear Smithville UMC,

I am reminded that summer is often a time when things slow down. Or if they get busy, it is normally busy around travel, vacation, and less structured time. Summer from school, to work, to retirement tends to have that sense of feeling more relaxed. As we enter summer, I have been reflecting on Matthew 6.

In Matthew 6, Jesus begins with giving to the needy and helping those in need, Jesus then teaches us the Lord's prayer and about fasting. Jesus concludes by reminding us to not be anxious, but remember the lilies of the valley. It is always important to read scripture in context and these teachings are no different. Jesus tells us to take care of the needy. Jesus calls us to help out those who are in our community and truly in need. Jesus then calls us to nurture our relationship with God. Jesus ends with reminding us that the Lord provides and we need not be anxious. Jesus does this all-in-one teaching session. If we read them together, we see that, as we are called to care for our community and our neighbors, as we work to nurture our relationship with God, the smaller things, the things that seem important in the moment but are not in comparison, start to flutter away. Jesus teaches us that if we care for one another and nurture our relationship with God, we can move to lowering our anxiety. If we love the Lord and love our neighbor, we can move to living a stress-free life.

This summer we will be planning and preparing in the church life cycle. As we look at this summer, it is often a time of rest or at least, not as busy, for many. Can we spend this summer following Jesus' teaching from Matthew 6? Can we work this summer to nurture our relationship with God? To truly believe and have faith that God will provide? Can we work to love the Lord? This summer can we work to nurture and care for our neighbors and our relationships as a community? Can we work to love our neighbor? As we work on our relationship with God and our relationship with our neighbors, can we start to live a less anxious life where we follow and trust in God?

Let us go forward working to trust God in all things, while doing the work we are called to. Amen.

Pastor James

from the desk of Pastor Aimee



I was watching a video the other day of a woman by the name of Doreen Ketchens, playing the clarinet with a full orchestra in a cathedral. The caption of the video said “You’ve NEVER heard the clarinet played like this!!!” They were right. I clicked on the link for the video and from the moment Ms. Ketchens started playing, it was clear that she was one in a million. Her talent and her passion for the music was evident from the first note she played...she was lost in the beauty of the music and totally engrossed in playing. When the orchestra was not playing they were just as in awe of her as the crowd that filled the seats. Even the conductor prefaced the song by saying that it was such an honor to be in the same room with her! When she was done playing the crowd jumped to their feet and erupted in applause and cheers. Once she was done playing, it made total sense why the conductor and the orchestra were in awe of her and why the crowd cheered her. The joy that she felt while playing was all over her and it was contagious! She was extraordinary.

I don’t know if you have ever played an instrument or not...for me, percussion and vocals are all I have ever really played ... but I always liked messing around with my friend’s clarinets and saxophones in band. I could make that clarinet sound like a goose gasping for air in no time. I had ZERO talent with a woodwind instrument! None. When my mouth hit that reed it was all squeaks and squawks from me. No one in their right mind would ever hear that and say “wow...she is so good!” Honestly...people would probably pay me NOT to play almost as much they would pay for Ms. Ketchens to play!

Weird isn’t it? How is it that the same type of instrument is brought to life so differently by two people? Yes, I know she probably has had a ton of training, countless hours of practice, and has honed her skills over the many years she has played. I was just goofing around during a break in band.

Honestly though, I believe the main difference between us is that she clearly has a passion for her music and playing the clarinet. I know people that have musical talent but no love for it ... although they can be good, there is something missing. They can read music, they can count and have the timing, they get all of the technical parts of the song...but when someone doesn’t “feel” the song, it makes a difference. I think any musician would tell you that when you are in love with a piece of music you practice, play /sing, and perform it on a deeper level. It means something to you. You connect with it and so you play from and with your heart. It is so much more than technic. It is love for the music.

I believe that is what Paul was trying to convey to us in 1 Corinthians 13:1 when he says, “If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.” Sharing our faith, telling others about Jesus, living out our call is so much more than just a bunch of technical “do’s and don’ts.” If we are not living out our faith in Jesus with love, then we are simply going through the motions. If we are not loving others as Jesus called us to do, then we “have gained nothing.” Being a follower of Christ, in my mind, is so much like being a musician. Some people have the rules (technic) memorized and follow them to the letter...and they expect others to do the same. They can say the right words and do the right things, but if they do not do these things with love as the motive, then it is just an empty clanging noise to the ears of those who hear it. God’s love changes us. God’s love changes those around us. Without His love working in and through us, we are wasting our time. Loving others the way Jesus did means we WILL be made uncomfortable. We WILL be asked to connect heart to heart with people in places we would rather not think of. We WILL be asked to sacrifice and work hard and be stretched beyond what we feel we can ... but if we are willing to do these things with LOVE, then lives are changed. The acts of service and faithfulness we do, when done with love, bring faith to life. It is more than technic. It is love for God.

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Offering and Attendance

Sunday, May 3, 2026

Service at Apple Creek UMC

Sunday, May 10, 2026 -Offering

Loose Collection 20.00
 General Fund..... 3,021.00
 \$3,041.00
 Sign Campaign..... 95.00
 Building Fund 330.00
 \$3,466.00
 In-person Worship Service 37
 ONLINE Worship Service views 243

Sunday, May 17, 2026—Offering

Loose Collection -0-
 General Fund..... 2,030.00
 2,030.00
 Items Not in General Budget:
 Building Fund 500.00
 Sign Campaign..... 200.00
 Gym Rental..... 100.00
 \$2,830.00
 In-person Worship Service 39
 ONLINE Worship Service views 207

Sunday, May 24, 2026—Offering

Loose Collection-0-
 General Fund..... 675.00
 \$675.00
 Items Not in General Budget:
 Building Fund 525.00
 Pastoral 1180.83
 Lib Prep..... 50.00
 Parsonage..... 500.00
 Sign Campaign..... 2,125.00
 \$5,155.83
 In-person Worship Service 33
 ONLINE Worship Service views 266

Sunday, May 31, 2026 -Offering

Loose Collection 20.00
 General Fund..... 1,355.00
 \$1,355.00
 In-person Worship Service 39
 ONLINE Worship Service views

April 2026

| | Monthly Beginning Balance | Monthly Income | Rentals | Monthly Expenses | Monthly Ending Balance |
|--|---------------------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|------------------------|
| General Fund | \$ 39,323.08 | \$ 13,782.22 | \$ 1,438.33 | \$ 21,699.75 | \$ 32,843.88 |
| 3 Paid total \$5139.55/ behind 1 Apportionment of \$1713.21 | | | | | |
| Designated Accounts | \$ 42,789.01 | \$ 1,471.65 | | \$ - | \$ 44,260.66 |
| Capital Campaign | \$ 6,730.00 | \$ 175.00 | | | \$ 6,905.00 |
| HVAC | \$ 20,000.00 | | | \$ 16,440.00 | \$ 3,560.00 |
| Building Fund | \$ 47,123.37 | \$ 980.00 | | | \$ 48,103.37 |

Yearly Financial Summary

| | YTD Monthly Income Needed for Budget | Actual YTD Usable Income - including rental | Actual YTD Expenses |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| 2026 Budget \$182,336.81 | \$ 15,194.73 | \$ 69,150.11 | \$ 72,158.57 |

| Investments | Last Month | Net Change | Current Month |
|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| General Reserve Fund | \$ 25,391.76 | \$ 1,653.79 | \$ 27,045.55 |
| Mission | \$ 17,240.86 | \$ 1,122.92 | \$ 18,363.78 |
| Education Grant | \$ 119,552.36 | \$ 7,786.56 | \$ 127,338.92 |
| Total Investments | \$ 162,184.98 | \$ 10,563.27 | \$ 172,748.25 |



Patriotic Celebration Event

**1818 Community Camp Meeting Sunday –
June 28th – 2:30 p.m.**

Please plan to join with Churches of the Smithville Area for an 1818 Community Camp Meeting to be held on the green across from the Historic Church of God (old Smithville Elementary School grounds) on Sunday, June 28th at 2: 30 p.m. Pastor James will be participating in the service along with other pastors of the community. A time of fellowship will follow.

In conjunction with this, we plan to encourage participants to visit our own Smithville UMC's Historic Hallway to explore the 212 years of history of our church. Pastor Aimee will host the event.

Participants are encouraged to wear historic costumes or red, white and blue, if they wish. This event is planned as part of the local celebrations of America 250 and Smithville's 190th Birthday!

(Churches are being asked to supply cookies and bottled water for this event. More information to come later!)

Pastor Aimee cont. from p. 3

I pray today, wherever you are sitting reading this, that you will close your eyes, breath in deep, and ask the Lord of melody and life to fill your heart with love for those you will encounter today. Ask Him to make you a blessing to someone you see today...and ask Him to teach you to love them the way He loves them. To see them the way He sees them. To feel the compassion towards them and the connection with them that He does. I pray that when you say yes to loving others the way God has called you to, that you will have a passion and hunger for it ... and that love will always fill your songs and your soul.

Thank You!

Dear Smithville UMC Members,

Thank you so much for providing lunch in recognition of our 2026 graduating seniors and students. Your time, thoughtfulness, and generosity in planning this event is truly appreciated!

Liberty Prep Staff and Students

Talk To Us

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Month's Events

MEETINGS

June 10 Missions 6 PM
June 11 Finance 7 PM
July 8 Missions 6 PM
July 9 Finance 7 PM

MISSIONS SPOTLIGHT



Liberty Preparatory Highschool Baccalaureate and Graduation



We had the joy of blessing, honoring and providing needs for the high school students that attend Liberty Preparatory School (Liberty Prep) with a Baccalaureate and providing cake, ice cream, bibles and sweatshirt hoodies for their graduation.

A lack of food is one struggle that students at Liberty Prep often have, resulting in difficulty focusing, studying, and learning due to hunger. While the school can provide lunch, through state of Ohio funding, the students are still hungry over weekends and other times. We cannot solve this problem fully, but we decided a good lunch (chicken, pulled pork, salad, mac and cheese) would be a wonderful way to celebrate graduation and the accomplishments the seniors have achieved. By working as the Body of Christ, we were able to provide a blessed meal for all the students at Liberty Prep. Pastors and some laity were able to attend and see the community that is being built at Liberty Prep and how God is working in the lives of these students (and staff).

We saw 18 seniors graduate this year and were blessed and able to bless by attending, bearing gifts, and supporting them as they graduated. I give thanks for the help of our volunteers and those passionate to make this happen. It was the help of several churches that helped financially support this endeavor (Church of the Cross UMC, Oak Chapel UMC, Smithville UMC, Wooster UMC). We give thanks that we could bless these students, these young adults, this year.

Blessings,
Pastor James



**Sunday, July 5
After Church**

AMERICA 250 BRUNCH

*you're
invited*

**Let's thank the Lord for
our freedom and celebrate the 250th
birthday of the United States.**

★ **MAIN DISHES & DESSERTS**

★ **WEAR RED, WHITE & BLUE OR
EARLY AMERICAN ERA CLOTHING**

★ **REGISTER BY SUBMITTING BULLETIN INSERT
OR CALLING THE OFFICE BY JULY 1**

Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

SERMON CORNER

June

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 Jacklyn Becker | 3 Timothy & Rebecca Ebertt |
| 14 Keith Schrock | 10 Ronald & Marla Singer |
| 17 Dorothy Beichler | 11 Sandy & Jerri Lynn Baxstrom |
| 22 Joyce Studer | Bryan & Heidi Hartzler |
| 23 Eileen Arrington | 15 Keith & Susan Schrock |
| 24 Jan Pierce | James & Carol Thompson |
| Rose Evans | 18 Edward & Priscilla Gresser |
| 28 Carole Martin | 22 Michael & Stacey Miller |
| 29 Elda Imhoff | Rick & Lisa Tilton |

July

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2 Kristi Grimes | 10 Larry & Peggy Imhoff |
| 5 Pamela Beichler | 17 Mark & Rose Evans |
| 7 Matt Miller | 18 Dale & Carol Gurich |
| Lydia Evans | 19 James & Donna Holderman |
| 8 Linda Rader | 26 Bernie & LeeAnn Caldwell |
| 11 Peggy Imhoff | 30 Brandon & Angela Eicholz |
| 15 James Thompson | |
| 17 Wanda Fetter | |
| Andrew Shold | |
| 18 Priscilla Gresser | |
| 25 Nickolas Sayre | |
| 26 Dale Gurich | |
| 27 Lauren Shull | |

June 7

Guest: Pastor Anne Fisher
How Do We Continue the Good Work
When We Are Tired?
Philippians 3:1-16

June 14

Guest: Pastor Anne Fisher
Living Out Our Faith
Philippians 4:1-14

June 21 Father's Day

Pastor Aimee
Do You Trust Jesus? (Jairus)
Psalm 37:3-6 and Mark 5:21-24, 35-43

June 28

Combined service at Moreland UMC

Pastor James
Who Will You Follow? How Will You Live?
Mark 1:9-20 and Mark 12:28-34

July 5

Pastor James
Freedom! (The Gadarene Demoniac)
Galatians 5:1-13 and Mark 5:1-20

July 12

Pastor James
Maybe God Needs Me to Take Care of This...
(Sarah)
Genesis 15:1-6, 16:1-7, 18:1-15

July 19

Pastor James
Shift Your Gaze to Christ (Abigail)
1 Samuel 25:1-38

July 26

Pastor James
A Different Set of Rules (Phillip)
Acts 8:1-40

