

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2025

good news



Smithville
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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



SMITHVILLE UMC

243 N MILTON ST.
SMITHVILLE, OHIO 44677
330-669-2371
smithvilleum@gmail.com
www.sumc-ohio.org

from the desk of Pastor James



Dear Smithville UMC,

As we enter September, we continue to explore how we can understand our humanity within the framework of five concepts of health: Physical, Volitional, Mental, Emotional, Spiritual. As human beings we experience all five of these, and we are all strong in some and weaker in others. While we break them down to help us understand and work on them individually, we must always remember they are connected in us and one will always affect the others. This month we will explore Volition. Volition is, perhaps, better understood as “will.” Do you have the will to get up early, the will to work out, the will to work on your emotional or spiritual health? Do you have the will to do the things you don’t want to but know are the good things to do?

In some ways, volition is sometimes the hardest aspect of our health to understand because it is connected with the others so closely. You can think of your volition as an inner pool of water that you are constantly spending and renewing. To get up early in the morning may take a cup of water for some, but maybe a gallon for others. To work outside in the garden may refill some of that water for some but take a cup for others. To work, play, and live in this world requires our will.

The healthier we are physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, the better our volition will be. It is also possible that as we work on our volition, our pool of water can grow. Also, as we do a task multiple times and make a routine of it, it will take less water from us. At first, it may take a gallon of water for us to get up early in the morning, or to work out. However, if we have the will and can spend it, after 2-3 weeks, we normally find it becomes easier and may only take a cup of water to do so as we have made it a routine.

As we explore Volition let us think of Romans 7. Paul states “If I do what I want to do, then I don’t do what I ought to do, and if I do what I ought to do, I don’t do what I want to do.” Volition, our will, is what gives us the power to do what we ought to do, even when it’s not what we want to do. Examples of this may be working out or getting up early, helping others, giving up what we want to love our neighbors, or willing to work for others when we are tired.

God created us and gave us free will. Many debate why we were given free will, but the truth remains God blessed us with free will. We now have a responsibility to use that free will, to use our volition, to do the good that God calls us to. That starts with us understanding that we have volition, will, and that it is limited. We must be mindful of our volition and how much we have in our pool. If we are called to do the right thing and have emptied our pool, we may find, even if we are physically fit and emotionally calm, we lack the will, the energy, to do the right thing. This month let us go in prayer and work on growing our pool of will. Let us continue to work on healing our volition. Let us work on growing our will so that we can better love the Lord and love our neighbor as ourselves.

Amen.

from the desk of Pastor Aimee



Bob Goff once said that “The way we deal with uncertainty says a lot about whether Jesus is ahead of us leading, or behind us just carrying our stuff.” Wow! I don’t know about you, but this really hit me hard in this season of our lives. Within the last 2 months, the Lord has brought me into a wonderful new ministry appointment, and our family has experienced my husband’s job loss. There has been so much change in our lives over these last few months. Perhaps I shouldn’t admit this, but as you may have noticed already, I believe in being “real” so here we go ... all of this change all at once has made me feel a bit on the anxious side. Have you ever been there? Have you ever had those days when your anxious thoughts and worries were so loud that they were drowning out the still small voice of God in your soul? Have you had those days when the “what-ifs” won’t stop playing over and over in your mind and it feels like they might choke out the promise that God has made to never leave us or forsake us? Sound familiar? Yeah...it does for me too.

Over the last few weeks, God has been reminding me of how very good and how faithful he is. I spoke with a colleague and friend the other day who said that during a difficult season in her life, she would remind herself daily that “God is good and that God is faithful.” I was so deeply encouraged by this! What an incredible reminder that circumstances and challenges NEVER change the goodness and faithfulness of our God! The God that delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt was the same God that led them into and through the dessert places, provided for their needs, disciplined their rebellion, and eventually gave them the land he had promised. The same God that called Jonah to go to Ninevah was the same God that watched him try to run away and that same God sent the big fish to swallow him up and spit him out where he was meant to go. The God that created the world and all that is in it watched as that world fell into sin... and yet God made a way for the world to be saved when he sent his only begotten son to pay the price for our sins, to restore us, to redeem us, and to bring us back into relationship with himself. God is so good. God is so faithful.

So, whether you are wandering in the dessert of uncertainty, drowning in an ocean of grief, or feeling separated from God for any reason, let this be your reminder... the God that created you still loves you. The God that sent Jesus to die in your place will always be faithful – even if we are faithless, God remains faithful! “The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22-23). No matter the circumstance, no matter the giant standing in front of you, no matter what ... God IS good and God IS faithful.

Talk To Us

330-669-2371
smithvilleum@gmail.com

243 N Milton Street
PO Box 375
Smithville, Ohio 44677

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Month's Events

Meetings

Hygiene Closet

Sunday, September 21, 4 PM

Missions Sept 24 @ 7 PM

SPRC Consultation Sept 30 @ 7 PM

Offering and Attendance

Sunday, Aug 3, 2025—Offering

Loose Collection 5.00
 General Fund..... 5,116.00
\$5,121.00

Items Not in General Budget:

Building Fund 315.00
 Sign Campaign..... 230.00
\$5,666.00

In-person Worship Service 49
 ONLINE Worship Service views 202

Sunday, Aug 10, 2025 -Offering

Loose Collection -0-
 General Fund..... 2,575.00
\$2,575.00

Sign Campaign..... 20.00
 Sch of Ministry..... 140.10
 Parsonage Utilities..... 444.18
 Gym Rental..... 180.00
 Donation..... 100.00
 Building Fund..... 210.00
\$3,669.28

In-person Worship Service 36
 ONLINE Worship Service views 173

Sunday, August 17, 2025-Offering

Loose Collection -0-
 General Fund..... \$1,946.00
\$1,946.00

Items Not in General Budget:

Parsonage rent 500.00
 Sign Campaign..... 20.00
 Cont. Ed..... 140.10
 Gym rental..... 200.00
 Building Fund..... 250.00
\$ 3,056.10

In-person Worship Service 40
 ONLINE Worship Service views 215

Sunday, August 24, 2025-Offering

Loose Collection 55.00
 General Fund..... \$ 1,655.00
\$ 1,710.00

Items Not in General Budget:

Building Fund..... 250.00
 Sign..... 20.00
 Liberty Prep..... 3,700.00
 August payroll..... 762.50
\$6,442.00

In-person Worship Service 55
 ONLINE Worship Service views 234

Sunday, August 31, 2025-Offering

Loose Collection 5.00
 General Fund..... \$ 2,045.00
\$2,050.00

Items Not in General Budget:

Building Fund..... 250.00
 Sign..... 40.00
 Rental..... 100.00
 Donation..... 300.00
\$2,740.00

In-person Worship Service 39
 ONLINE Worship Service views 220

Smithville United Methodist Church Finances at a Glance Aug 2025					
	Monthly Beginning Balance	Monthly Income	Rentals	Monthly Expenses	Monthly Ending Balance
General Fund	\$ 23,215.56	\$ 13,403.37	\$ 5,080.00	\$ 11,762.06	\$ 29,936.87
	7 Paid \$11992.19 behind 1 Apportionment of \$1713.17				
Designated Accounts	\$ 30,084.61	\$ 330.00	\$ -	\$ 59.00	\$ 30,355.61
Building Fund	\$ 35,605.03	\$ 1,275.00	\$ -	\$ 4,750.00	\$ 32,130.03

Yearly Financial Summary			
	YTD Monthly Income Needed for Budget	Actual YTD Usable Income - including rental	Actual YTD Expenses
2025 Budget \$196,057.00	\$ 16,338.08	\$ 141,004.52	\$ 155,339.01

Investments	Last Month	Net Change	Current Month
General Reserve Fund	\$ 24,353.32	\$ 568.04	\$ 24,921.36
Mission	\$ 16,535.75	\$ 385.72	\$ 16,921.47
Education Grant	\$ 114,662.93	\$ 2,674.63	\$ 117,337.56
Total Investments	\$ 155,552.00	\$ 3,628.39	\$ 159,180.39

New SS Class! Join us Sept 14 at 10:15 for an informative meeting. The class, led by Kathy Buchwalter and Lee Ann Caldwell, will be studying Romans using a study book by J.D. Greerar.

Liberty Prep

Liberty Preparatory School is the high school that currently rents space and resides at Smithville UMC during the week and serves all of Wayne County (and can serve (depending on year and students enrolled) other nearby counties like Holmes and Ashland). Liberty Prep is a public school that works to give students an alternative chance to graduate. Many students that attend face socioeconomic barriers, not just in education, but at home as well. Many times, they have individual education programs (IEP's) and their learning style tends to be outside the normal learning path. These are bright individuals and good students, but many schools cannot adapt to their learning needs. Liberty Preparatory School works to grant students with different learning styles an alternative place where they may learn and grow.

There is often confusion when it comes to alternative learning styles, so I want to take a moment to explain. Most of the learning systems and schools in the United States is set up for the general population. The truth is teachers are underpaid and overworked and many are overwhelmed. We, as the US, tend to expect teachers to work with far more students than is reasonable. This does not mean it's not possible, but it does mean that there are problems at times. One of those problems is that a teacher must teach in a general format to the class. The teacher must teach in a way that enough students can learn the basics. Some problems that result from that are students that are faster at book learning get bored and don't "learn" as much. Students that struggle do not get the further explanations they need because the teacher must get to a certain point in the curriculum. Students that that are not set in reading and lectures tend to be left behind.

cont. pg. 7 Liberty Prep

Pastor Bible Studies Beginning in October!

What would it look like to live a life patterned after Jesus- a life of profound wisdom, peace and purpose? *A Jesus- Shaped Life* by Lisa Harper is a six-week guide to help you get there. Through daily meditations, spiritual exercises, and guided discussion questions, you will explore key aspects of Jesus's character and learn how to reproduce God's grace in your own life. This isn't about simply following rules; it's about inviting the Holy Spirit to transform you from the inside out, empowering you to live more like the person God created you to be.

There will be a sign-up sheet at each church. Everyone is invited to any of the churches or times that work best!

Pastor Aimee- teacher Bible Study Times and Days

DAY	CHURCH	TIME
Monday	COTC	11-Noon
Tuesday	SUMC	11-Noon
Wednesday	Moreland	10:30-11:30
Wednesday	Apple Creek	3-4:00

Pastor James- teacher

Sundays at 2 PM and Wednesdays at 6 PM we will meet at the Spoon Marketplace in downtown Wooster. Join us as we explore the three letters of John during a 6 week study. All are welcome- you can purchase a drink/meal as you want.

SERMON CORNER

September 14

Are we tone deaf?

Romans 1:1-7, Phil. 1:1-11 and Ga. 1:1-10

How does the tone and emotion of the writing affect our understanding of scripture?

September 21

For Faith, By Faith

Romans 1:1-18

What does it mean to live for our faith and by our faith?

September 28

Righteousness Through Faith

Romans 3:9-31

What does it mean to be righteous through faith?

Preaching Schedule for

Pastor Aimee and Pastor James

September 21, 2025– January 11, 2026

September 21 – October 19

Pastor Aimee– SUMC/COTC

Pastor James– AC/Moreland

October 26 – November 23

Pastor Aimee– AC/Moreland

Pastor James– SUMC/COTC

November 30 – December 7

Pastor Aimee– SUMC/COTC

Pastor James– AC/Moreland

December 14 – January 11

Pastor Aimee– AC/Moreland

Pastor James– SUMC/COTC

Better Together.



Transition Team

Wednesday, October 29

7 PM

Apple Creek UMC

Charge Conference

Saturday, November 1

4 PM

Fusion CC

Christmas in Europe

Wednesday, November 19

6:30 PM

SUMC

Jerri Lynn Baxstrom will be presenting a slideshow and conversation on various Christmas Traditions and celebrations throughout Europe

Benefit Handbell Concert

Saturday, December 13

1:30 PM

Lincoln Way Vineyards



Prayer Groups

All are welcome to join

Women's Prayer Group

Smithville UMC

Thursdays 8:30 AM

Knitting and Prayer Group

Church of the Cross UMC

Tuesdays 7 PM

Prayer Group

Moreland UMC

Wednesdays 3:30 PM

Liberty prep cont.

When we think about bible studies we have participated in at the church many of us learn from the DVD sessions we watch. Most of us learn from conversations and interacting with each other. Some of us only truly understand it when we have to apply it to life and live it out. Most of school is about reading and learning from a lecture. If we were to make a bible study solely based on reading and lecture (with minimal, or no room for conversation), there would be low attendance and even less learning. It is through these alternative teaching styles that we learn about our faith.

Liberty Preparatory school works to have a lower teacher to student ratio. This allows the teachers to work more one on one with students and modify the lesson plan to the individual student. The student is covering the same material as any other high school, as required by the Ohio Department of Education, but in different ways and at different speeds than they would at another high school. This allows the students to learn the material in a way they can truly use. It also provides an option for credit recovery, a second path to graduation when the first was overcome by individual barriers.

The care and time Liberty Preparatory School's staff and teachers take towards these students has resulted in- (Based on Ohio's report card 2023-2024)

- Exceeds standards for Achievements (Achievement component)
- Exceeds standards for student progression in learning
- Exceeds expectations/norm for graduation rate

They are working on "closing the gap" section. But this is partially due to "the gap" in learning where students initially enroll.

We are blessed to have a school that does this work in our community. This is, on some many levels, a ministry that is blessing youth every year. We are blessed to know that they are making a difference and providing a future, where, there was little hope at times. Let us take this month, to pray for the students that are working at Liberty Preparatory School. Let us take this month to pray for the staff and teachers that are making a difference in the lives of the students. Let us rejoice that the Lord is working in our community, providing hope for the future.

Save The Date for Ministries at Liberty Preparatory High School

Precook Date- TBD

Thanksgiving Meal - Monday, November 24th

Back to School Breakfast- Monday, January 5

Baccalaureate - Thursday, May 21 - (Catered through Village Catering, Gifts & Bibles)

Graduation - Thursday, May 28th - (Cake & Ice Cream)

- Thanksgiving Meal- On Monday, November 24 (around 11am) we will serve a homecooked Thanksgiving meal (some of the students may not have on Thanksgiving) to Liberty Preparatory's students and families as we work to share God's love and break bread together.
- Back to School Breakfast- On Monday, January 5 we will serve a back to school breakfast (around 8 am) to help Liberty Prep students start the semester on the right foot!
- Baccalaureate- We will have a catered lunch with prayer and celebration for all the students that are graduating on Thursday, May 21 (around 11am).
- Graduation- On Thursday, May 28 (around 11am) we will serve Cake and Ice Cream at Liberty Preps graduation to help them celebrate this important achievement in their lives and all the work they have done to achieve graduation!

We will work to have more precise times and information the month of each event.



Dear All,

Pastor Aimee and Pastor James are aware that there have been some scams going around churches recently. There have been scams in the past and there will likely be in the future. We want you to know that we will NEVER ask for money, gift cards, or other financial help/gifts/support. Please ignore any text, emails, or phone calls from us that request such items. We will always work with and through the church to provide any financial assistance or missional giving and neither pastor will ask you to purchase or provide that for us personally. If you ever have any questions or concerns, please check with the pastors or the church office.

Blessings,
Pastor Aimee and Pastor James



Birthdays

6 Jack Williams
7 Grace Strait
8 Carol Gurich
9 James Beichler
15 Charline Engle
18 Amber Sayre
20 Ronald Singer
21 Barbara McCleary Tennent
22 Bill Davisson
24 Kyle Krownapple
25 Jacklyn Beaver
26 Makaya Krownapple
Abigail Ross
29 Jerri Lynn Baxstrom
Joshua Bersch
30 Roberta Welty

Anniversaries

4 Matt & Lorynn Turner
5 Dan & Patty Reinarts
13 Patrick & Jane Miller
14 Merle & Julia Lautenschlager
26 Todd & Andrea Gerber



New Office Hours for Pastors BEGINNING IN OCTOBER

Pastor Aimee

Monday 10 AM - 2 PM COTC
Tuesday 10 AM-2 PM SUMC
Wednesday 10 AM- 2 PM Moreland
3 PM- 5 PM Apple Creek
Thursday and Friday Off

Pastor James

Monday Off
Tuesday TBD (mtgs/visits/ office)
Wednesday 9 AM - Noon COTC
1 PM - 3 PM SUMC
Thursday 10 AM - Noon SUMC
1 PM - 3 PM Apple Creek
Friday 9 AM - Noon Moreland

Pastor James
jlance12@bu.edu

Pastor Aimee
aimeejohare@gmail.com



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