

CHURCH NEWSLETTER

Good News

SEPTEMBER 2026



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



“Better Than I”

As I continue exploring how and where we see God at work in music, there are three things we should always be mindful of. 1.) God is at work in music 2.) Not all of these songs are traditional hymns, some of them were not even originally intended for the church 3.) In any song, or art, there is always what the artist intended and what the audience is blessed with. All that is to say, I hope you will listen with me to see where God is at work in music whether the artist knowingly intendeds it or not.

This month I am looking at two songs that reflect and build off of one another. The song I am reflecting on this month is Better than I from *Joseph: King of Dreams*. *Joseph: King of Dreams* is an animated movie made by the same team that made *Prince of Egypt*. The movie tells the narrative of Joseph in Genesis and excels again in animation and music/songs. One of the key songs in the movie is “Better than I”.

After Joseph has been sold by his brothers into slavery, brought to Egypt, promoted to be Potiphar’s right hand, then betrayed and thrown in jail, Joseph sings this song. As Joseph is thrown into jail and his world seems like it is falling apart for the second time in his life, Joseph goes to God in prayer and sings this prayer. In the song/prayer Joseph sings about how he thought he did what was right, what he was supposed to do. He sees that everything is falling apart and he seems to have hit rock bottom. There is an underlying wonder about if he actually did what he was supposed to do. As the song progresses Joseph realizes that God has been with him the whole time. God knows better than him, and that while he did not get what he wanted, he has been following God’s call. The song moves from doubt to faith and trusting in the Lord.

Few of us can fully understand just how broken Joseph was as he was thrown into jail. He had built his life up, and been given a good life, twice now only to have it brought down by betrayal. Joseph finds himself at the bottom of a hole for the second time in his life. But it is here that Joseph, instead of losing faith and becoming angry, strengthens his faith. Joseph commits to the fact that God does know him and His call is better than Joseph. I find myself listening to this song at different points in my life and reminding myself that God does know better than me. I don’t always get what I want or what I dream of. But, if I am willing to follow God’s lead, I can get what I need and what I am supposed to do.

During the Lord’s prayer we pray “Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” We say this so often, but we don’t always reflect on it and we don’t always mean it. “Better than I” is a song that reminds us we should be putting God’s will over ours. Let us take some time this month to listen to the song and truly pray “Lord, may thy will be done, not mine.”

from the desk of Pastor Aimee



At one of our churches, during one of our meetings, we always start off our time together by sharing “God sightings.” These are places and ways that we have seen God at work and moving throughout the weeks since we met last. I absolutely love the time we spend together sharing and hearing about how God has been on the move in our lives and in the lives of those around us. So, this month I thought I would share with you one of my God sightings!

As you may have heard by now, Dolly Parton passed away this past week. She was such an incredible woman ... a woman of faith, of determination, a dreamer, full of kindness, spunk, laughter, and a deep love of community and children. I can honestly say that I have never spoken to anyone that had a negative thing to say about Dolly Parton. Being raised in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, I grew up on her music and she somehow felt like an extended family member. My grandma would always talk about “Dolly’s new song” or that “show Dolly was in,” or that dress that “Dolly was wearing” as if she had just seen her at church on Sunday. She was on the radio in the kitchen, she was pouring out of the speakers in the truck that had its doors wide open so that as we worked in the garden we could listen, and her smile and laugh were lighting up late night tv. She seemed to be everywhere. Her songs were in church, at the grand ole opry, on the radio, and on television. Despite her big hair, makeup and rhinestones, she always seemed relatable and authentic. She was honest, funny, spunky, hardworking, and as I mentioned earlier, a dreamer.

I learned in an article that I read that Dolly and her husband Carl Dean had wanted to be parents, and it was one of her greatest heartaches that she could not have children... But here is where the God-sighting comes in! Instead of letting her sadness, disappointment and heartache take over her life, she turned it into something beautiful. She found a way to love, inspire, and help children grow anyway! She began her Imagination Library.

Although it began for the children in her small Tennessee community, it grew and grew until it now is blessing children, ages 0-5, all over the world with a free new book every single month. On the website for her Imagination Library, she says this, “When I was growing up in the hills of East Tennessee, I knew my dreams would come true. I know there are children in your community with their own dreams. They dream of becoming a doctor or an inventor or a minister. Who knows, maybe there is a little girl whose dream is to be a writer and singer. The seeds of these dreams are often found in books and the seeds you help plant in your community can grow across the world.”

And there was my God sighting....written in black and white on my computer screen. A woman that had inspired so many of us growing up, a woman who had sent books to my own sweet daughter for free for years, she was reminding me of what God was asking each and every one of us to do ... plant the seeds of God’s love and goodness in our community and watch him grow them! Do what we can, where we can, with what we have. For Dolly that looked like giving children the gift of books (literacy, adventure, hope, growth, dreaming, etc.). What does that look like for you and me? Do you have an hour or two a week to read with kids at an elementary school? Can you help prepare food at a shelter? Can you mentor a college student that just needs someone to listen? Can you visit some folks in a nursing home and play cards or give them a hug? Can you send cards to soldiers or missionaries or those that are incarcerated? Can you make a plate of cookies for the fire department, or take cold water to a road crew? Truly the possibilities of the good we can do for those around us is endless....even small acts of thoughtfulness and kindness.... can make a HUGE difference. Isn’t that exciting?? You can use ANYTHING that God has given you to bless the day of someone else!

May Dolly’s overflowing love for God and for life and for others inspire us and encourage us to make the little things in life count in a big way!

Offering and Attendance

Sunday, August 2, 2026 -Offering

(Combined service with other churches)
 Loose Collection 75.00
 General Fund..... 4,520.00
 \$4,595.00
 Rental..... 80.00
 Building Fund 380.00
 \$5,055.00
 In-person Worship Service 90
 ONLINE Worship Service views 263

Sunday, August 9, 2026—Offering

Loose Collection20.00
 General Fund..... 2,180.00
 2,200.00
 Items Not in General Budget:
 Building Fund 160.00
 Sign Campaign..... 200.00
 Rental 200.00
 Reimbursement 430.39
 Car Show..... 1,477.90
 Parsonage..... 323.78
 Parsonage..... 323.78
 \$5,335.85

In-person Worship Service 58
 ONLINE Worship Service views

Sunday, August 16, 2026—Offering

Loose Collection-0-
 General Fund..... 3205.00
 \$3205.00
 Items Not in General Budget:
 Building Fund 965.00
 Sign Campaign 75.00
 Car show 33.50
 \$4,278.50

In-person Worship Service 43
 ONLINE Worship Service views 160

Sunday, August 23, 2026 -Offering

Loose Collection -0-
 General Fund..... 1,250.00
 \$1,250.00
 Gym Rental 50.00
 LP3,950.00
 Pastoral support.....762.50
 Building Fund 125.00
 \$6,137.50

In-person Worship Service 39
 ONLINE Worship Service views 225

Sunday, August 30, 2026—Offering

Loose Collection -0-
 General Fund..... 1,000.00
 1,000.00
 Items Not in General Budget:
 Building Fund 125.00
 Pastoral support..... 418.33
 \$1,543.33

In-person Worship Service 48
 ONLINE Worship Service views

Finances at a Glance July 2026

	Monthly Beginning Balance	Monthly Income	Rentals	Monthly Expenses	Monthly Ending Balance
General Fund	\$ 28,291.01	\$ 11,917.05	\$ 4,830.00	\$ 18,116.72	\$ 26,921.34
7 Paid total \$10,279.06/ behind 0 Apportionment of \$1713.21					
Designated Accounts	\$ 44,197.33	\$ -		\$ 63.33	\$ 44,134.00
Capital Campaign	\$ 10,075.00	\$ 370.00		\$ -	\$ 10,445.00
HVAC	\$ 3,560.00			\$ -	\$ 3,560.00
Building Fund	\$ 50,273.37	\$ 790.00		\$ -	\$ 51,063.37

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	\$ 110,884.01	\$ 119,815.01

Investments	Last Month	Net Change	Current Month
General Reserve Fund	\$ 27,829.00	\$ (181.46)	\$ 27,647.54
Mission	\$ 18,895.74	\$ (123.21)	\$ 18,772.53
Education Grant	\$ 131,027.46	\$ (854.42)	\$ 130,173.04
Total Investments	\$ 177,752.20	\$ (496.75)	\$ 176,593.11



Making an IMPACT on the next generation!

Liberty Prep Begins with Smiles

Liberty Prep began Monday, August 17. The students were welcomed with a wonderful breakfast prepared by Church of the Cross and Smithville UMC volunteers.

The breakfast was a huge hit! The students were so pleased, the staff joined in and ate well too, (as did many of the volunteers)! There were plenty of smiles from the COTC and SUMC volunteers to start the students day off on a good foot and we were able to serve and love on the kids! There were even some good time for conversation with the kids and staff. There were about 35 students who were served, many new to the school and nervous. Hopefully a hot meal and many smiles of encouragement alleviated the apprehension and provided courage to step into the school year.



Talk To Us

330-669-2371
smithvilleum@gmail.com

243 N Milton Street
PO Box 375
Smithville, Ohio 44677

www.sumc-ohio.org

Month's Events

MEETINGS

Mission September 9 at 6 PM
Finance September 10 at 7 PM

HYGIENE CLOSET

September 20 at 4 PM

COMBINED SUNDAY SERVICES

May 3 Apple Creek UMC 269 W Main St. Apple Creek 9 AM Pastor Aimee Gospel of Matthew	August 2 Smithville UMC 243 N Milton S., Smithville 9 AM Pastor Aimee Gospel of Luke
June 28 Moreland UMC 138 Moreland Rd., Wooster 10:30 AM Pastor James Gospel of Mark	October 4 Church of the Cross UMC 5100 Cleveland Rd., Wooster 11 AM Pastor James Gospel of John

FELLOWSHIP TIME WILL FOLLOW EACH WORSHIP SERVICE



September 6

Pastor James

"A Beautiful Faith"

Luke 7:36-50 and Luke 11:37-54

September 13

Pastor James

"The Mission"

Matthew 22:34-40 and Matthew 28:16-20

September 20

Pastor James

"God Reveals All"

Genesis 41: 14-27 and Daniel 2: 24-45

September 27

Pastor James

"Conviction or Convicted"

Daniel 3: 1-30

Preaching Schedule 2026-2027

September

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor Aimee

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor James

October

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor James

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor Aimee

November

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor Aimee

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor James

December

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor James

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor Aimee

2027

January

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor Aimee

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor James

February

March Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor James

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor Aimee

March

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor Aimee

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor James

April

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor James

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor Aimee

May

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor Aimee

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor James

June

Apple Creek UMC/Moreland UMC- Pastor James

Church of the Cross UMC/Smithville UMC- Pastor Aimee

Happy Birthday

SEPTEMBER

Happy Anniversary

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 6 Jack Williams | 4 Matt & Lorynn Turner |
| 7 Grace Hare | 5 Dan & Patty Reinarts |
| 8 Carol Gurich | 13 Patrick & Jane Miller |
| 15 Charline Engle | 14 Merle & Julia Lautenschlager |
| 18 Amber Sayre | 26 Todd & Andrea Gerber |
| 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 | |

Join us for Bible Study!

Grace. We talk as if we understand its meaning. We use the word for hospitals, baby girls, kings and premeal prayers. But do we understand the wildness, turn-you-upside-downness of God's grace?

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Led by Pastor Aimee

Mondays, Oct. 5- Nov. 16

at COTC 10:30-11:30 a.m.

or

Wednesdays, Oct. 7-Nov. 18

at Apple Creek

1:30-2:30 p.m.

Mark your calendars now for TBD Bible study this winter:

Tuesdays, Feb. 9-Mar. 23

at Smithville 10:30 a.m.

or

Wednesdays, Feb. 10-Mar. 24

at Moreland 10:30 a.m.

Thank you so much for supplying newborn baskets as well as other much needed baby items! They will be such a blessing to the parents who come in! God bless you for your generosity!

Thank you for supporting the PCC through your donation!
We appreciate YOU!

Jen
Phil

Jana

Love,
PCC Staff

Bekah

Lauren

Ellie

Maureen
Missy

