

# The Circuit Rider

## MONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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### MONTVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

#### STAFF

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**Youth Leader** Karen Ausland



#### Pastor's Note – Lent 2022

Sitting on a table in our living room is a book called “Disciplines 2022.” It’s a collection of daily devotions from the Upper Room Publishing House that my wife and I have been going through together each evening. On the cover of this devotional is the trunk of a birch tree, a tree that has always intrigued me when I’ve encountered it in nature, mainly due to the way its outer layer of bark sheds, and how different its smooth texture underneath feels in comparison to other trees.

As I look upon the birch tree on the book cover, which, like many found in nature, is peeling away, I am reminded of Lent as a time for us to do some shedding, peeling away outer layers to reveal something surprising and beautiful underneath. The things we peel away could be things that have become idols, temptations, or distractions; things that have become hindrances to our relationship with God in some way, whether big or small. As a way to engage in this practice of shedding, many will choose to give up a particular food during Lent like sugar, meat or dairy, or a drink like coffee or soda. Some may even choose to engage in the discipline of fasting at times or on a regular basis.

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Some may choose to give up television or video games, social media or listening to the news. Some may choose to give up a convenience they are used to that they struggle to live without. Some may even strive to shed worry or complaining from their life.

As I look at the cover of the book, I am also reminded of the heavy things we would like to shed, but that don't seem to be going away. The pandemic is one reality we have wanted to shed like a wool coat on a hot summer day; to peel away the pain, grief, and frustration that have come with this difficult and ongoing reality. We would like our prayers for Ukraine to shed off the violence and the fear that so many are experiencing. We would like the injustices within the systems and structures we are immersed in to fall away. We would like some digits to be shed off from the gas prices and food that have been rising to an increasing measure. And yet, there are certain things that remain, even though we'd like them to be removed.

Much is in store for this season of Lent. Aside from our special services on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday, we have a special joint church Lenten study on Thursdays at 7pm at Boonton UMC in which we'll be journeying through Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Meditations on the Cross." We'll have a Sunday sermon series for the first five weeks of Lent called "Familiar Words for an Unfamiliar Time" as we journey through the Lord's Prayer together section by section in this new post-pandemic landscape we are emerging from. And much more is on the horizon.

As trees grow, their bark must give somehow. In oaks, the outer bark splits and cracks, while the smooth bark of a birch peels off. But, however we shed, we too, like the trees seen all around us, are called to expand, growing more each passing day. May this also be the case for you this Lent.

In Christ,  
Pastor Donald

**Special Giving Opportunity: Investing in the Next Generation of Disciples**

In May, 2021, our Finance Team wrote a letter asking for donations to continue supporting our Youth Christian Education Leader position. The funds received from generous donors in our congregation last year allowed us to support this role for the remainder of 2021 and a little into 2022. However, at this time, our funds set aside for this position have been used up, funds which were only intended to sustain us through 2021. Therefore, we are now asking for donations once again to help support this important role in 2022, as we continue to make the spiritual growth and investment in our youth (and children) a priority. But we are asking for the support of our congregation to help fund our Youth Leader position for the next four to ten months. As always, we thank you for your support of our church, for your generous donations allow us to continue our ministries and make possible the work God is doing in and through us.

Sincerely,

MUMC Finance Team & Staff-Parish  
Relations Committee

**Hungry to Whole/Dinner Church Initiative**

*Inspired by "The Daniel Plan" book and John Wesley's Holy Clubs, Hungry to Whole is grounded in Psalm 107:9 – "God satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things" (NIV). Our prayer is that those who come hungry each week would leave whole in more than one way.*

Hungry to Whole is in-person again starting Wednesday, March 9th! Check out all the exciting things ahead by looking at our schedule for March and April!

**Dinner Gatherings (dinner starting at 6:30pm)**

*\*All our dinner gatherings will be hosted here at Montville UMC*

Mar. 9<sup>th</sup>: Stewards of the Earth (speaker: Mark Arnowitz)

Mar. 23<sup>rd</sup>: Vegetable Art (artist: Megan Stypulkoska)

Apr. 6<sup>th</sup>: The Science of Sleep & the Practice of Sabbath

Apr. 20<sup>th</sup>: Rebirth in the Places We Least Expect

**Non-Dinner Gatherings (starting at 7pm)**

Mar. 16<sup>th</sup>: Planting Wholeness in Our Hearts & the Ground

Mar. 30<sup>th</sup>: Day of Fasting (every 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday)

Apr. 13<sup>th</sup>: Journey to Jerusalem

Apr. 27<sup>th</sup>: Forest Bathing (at a hiking trail near you)

**Safe Sanctuary Training:**

Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 1pm on Zoom

Have an interest in volunteering/working with our children or youth in any capacity in the year ahead? Join us as we walk through some videos surrounding some important Safe Sanctuary guidelines that will be required for anyone working with our children or youth. The training will be hosted virtually on Zoom and last a little over an hour. The more individuals we can have Safe Sanctuary certified, the better!

**On the Horizon in 2022: Silent Auction (Date TBD)**

Later this year, we will be hosting our second Silent Auction. We are looking for donations of themed baskets or new/"like new" items. Now is your chance to "re-gift" gifts that you have received that you don't like, don't want, or don't need. Now is also the time to take advantage of any sales to buy new items or start craft projects to donate. Please bring any items to church on any Sunday, beginning this week, in anticipation of and preparation for this exciting event!

**Faith & Fellowship:**

This study group meets every Tuesday at 10am in Fellowship Hall.

During Lent, we will be reading and comparing Jesus' journey to the cross, in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Bring your Bible and join us whenever you can. The coffee pot is always on!

### Church Roof Update

In April of 2016, recognizing the need to replace the roof on the church in about five years, a \$40,000 church roof fund campaign began. We are now happy to be able to tell you that the church roof has been replaced. The job was started on November 15, 2021 and completed on November 20, 2021; five and a half years after the campaign began.

The total cost of the roof replacement project was \$55,453. This cost included the required removal and replacement of the lightning protection system, use of a CLASS 4 shingle required by our insurance company, replacing an area of soffit and 9 sheets of plywood, and also several sheets of insulation that go over the sanctuary area of the building. Also, a 50 year Owens/Corning Platinum Warranty was purchased. This warranty also covers the workmanship of Carlson estimate Brothers Roofing, including if Carlson Bros is not available to do any future repairs or corrections, then Owens/Corning Co. will take care of providing for the repairs. All of the above were not included in the original \$40,000 that was made approximately 5 years ago.

At the time the project was paid for, the total contributions received from faithful members and friends was \$41,179, with a deficit of \$14,274 paid for by the Trustees. How blessed we are that we actually reached the goal that was set in 2016. Contributions that we continue to receive for the roof fund are being applied to the deficit.

Montville United Methodist continues to be an active and vibrant presence in Montville Township, doing God's work in serving our community and others. We thank you all for your continued support.

### Sunday School News

While we may still be in a pandemic and wearing our masks each Sunday, our Sunday school classes continue to meet each week thanks to the dedication and commitment from some of our church members. I want to thank Linda, Tammy, Susie and Stephanie for their continued dedication in helping to teach the classes. Thanks also to Debbie for her leadership with our Christmas pageant.

Some of our themes for these past months have been the power of prayer and loving others as God has loved us. The kids have done some excellent coloring and posters that we have displayed in fellowship hall, as well as crafts they have taken home.

Although the older youth continue to come sporadically, **they do continue to come.** I continue to enjoy our time together discussing what's going on in their lives and with school. These are challenging times for all of us, let alone teenagers. We continue to learn about God and his people and how they had struggles and how they overcame them through their faith.

It continues to be my pleasure to be the Youth Christian Education Leader and truly know that this is God's purpose for me.

Blessings,

Karen Ausland

## Special Opportunities during Lent

### 1) Joint Church Lent Study

Join us every Thursday evening in Lent at 7:00pm in the narthex of Boonton UMC (626 Lathrop Ave., Boonton)! We'll be reading through Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book "Meditations on the Cross." The study will begin Thursday, March 3rd, with an introduction and discussion on the life of Bonhoeffer.

Discussion on the book itself will commence on March 10<sup>th</sup>, the second week of the study. Books are available for purchase for \$15 from Pastor Donald. There will be a Zoom option too for those who prefer participating virtually at the same Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8537182720?pwd=bmdLSEhCOGV0dzNSU0J2azcvM1QvZz09>

For those calling in:

- 1) Call 1-646-876-9923
- 2) Enter Meeting ID: 853 718 2720 followed by #
- 3) Press # again
- 4) Enter Password: 29626 followed by #

### 2) Invitation to Read the Gospels

Last year, we invited people to join in a daily devotional and scripture reading using a book called "Return to the Lord." This year, we invite you to consider reading the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) as a Lenten discipline, reading two chapters a day each day starting Ash Wednesday (March 2<sup>nd</sup>), which will allow you to finish by Easter.

### 3) Special Services



Wednesday, March 2: Ash Wednesday Service: 7:30pm at Boonton UMC  
Thursday, April 14: Maundy Thursday Service: 7:30 PM at Boonton UMC  
Friday, April 15: Good Friday Service: 7:30 PM at Montville UMC  
Sunday, April 17: Easter Sunrise Service: 6:15 AM at MUMC Cemetery  
Sunday, April 17: Easter Sunday Service: 9:30 AM at Montville UMC  
*\*With the exception of Easter Sunrise, there will be a virtual Zoom option for all our special services, in addition to the in-person service.*

## Special Opportunities after Lent

Saturday, April 23: Passover Seder at Boonton UMC (Time TBA)  
April 29, April 30 or May 1: Ramadan Iftar Dinner (Time & Location TBA)

## March 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Faith & Fellowship – 10am	2 Ash Wednesday at 7:30pm at BUMC	3 Joint Church Lent Study at 7pm at BUMC	4	5
6 1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent 9:30am Worship – Communion & Sunday School	7	8 Faith & Fellowship – 10am	9 Hungry to Whole: Dinner Gathering 6:30-8pm	10 Joint Church Lent Study at 7pm at BUMC	11	12 Safe Sanctuary Training on Zoom at 1pm  Spring Forward!!
13 9:30am Worship & Sunday School	14	15 Faith & Fellowship – 10am	16 Hungry to Whole: Planting Wholeness 7-8pm	17 Joint Church Lent Study at 7pm at BUMC  St. Patrick's Day	18	19 Joint Church Men's Group Meeting at George's Lincoln Park Diner at 8:30am
20 New Members Reception Sunday  9:30am Worship & Sunday School	21	22 Faith & Fellowship – 10am	23 Hungry to Whole: Dinner Gathering 6:30-8pm	24 Joint Church Lent Study at 7pm at BUMC	25	26
27 9:30am Worship & Sunday School	28	29 Faith & Fellowship – 10am	30 Hungry to Whole: Day of Fasting	31 Joint Church Lent Study at 7pm at BUMC		