



# Lithopolis United Methodist Church

*Inviting people to be in relationship with Jesus and each other so that lives and communities are changed*



*Images from our Drive-Thru Trunk-or-Treat.*

## A Final Farewell

By Charles Martindell

I'm writing my last newsletter note to all of you and I'd like to say two things: *Goodbye... and Thank you!*

Did you know that the English Word "Goodbye" has a wonderful spiritual story? Our word "Goodbye" traces to the mid 16<sup>th</sup> century when the previous term of the word, "Gdbwyte" was a contraction of the phrase "God be with ye". That's the kind of goodbye I want to leave with all of you of our church. It is both a prayer and also an assurance. I am praying that every one of us knows in the depths of ourselves that God is with us. And I'd like to reassure us that God truly is with us always. Remember how Jesus spoke in the final verse of the Gospel of Matthew: *"And remember, I am with you always to the end of the age."* (Matthew 28:20) That is the assurance to which I cling and I pray the same for all of you as well.

### What you'll find inside:

- Christmas Eve Plans
- A Different Kind of Christmas
- Bell Tower History
- Trunk-or-Treat
- Interactive Worship
- Growing Together



*David's Disciples Life Group.*

My thankfulness is for all the ways you have taught me and challenged me and lived your faith in Jesus Christ during the years we've been together. As Karen and I transition to retirement, we take with us so many joyful and meaningful memories from life shared. I thank all of you for being part of that.

Finally, I'll share that I could not have been more blessed than I've been to serve with the Staff team of our church. And you will continue to be blessed by the spiritual leadership and Christian service that will continue to be offered. Our Leadership Board, Life Groups, Bible Studies, Worship Teams and many, many other serving teams have been an inspiration to me. Thank you to the whole church for your faithful discipleship!

*"A Final Farewell" continued from Page 1.*

As Pastor Alex leads the church during the first half of 2021 and begins to help with the discerning about a longer term future during this interim period, I will be praying for the church and I continue to encourage all of you to be praying for the church also... and praying especially for Pastor Alex during this exciting ministry opportunity.

Finally, a personal word- Karen and I will be moving to Marion County in Ohio and living within just a few minutes from one of our sons and his family. It's exciting and a little overwhelming to live into this new chapter of life. Our new address is 3301 Cobblestone Creek Road, Marion, Ohio 43302.

In Christ's love,

Charles and Karen Martindell



*Pastor Charles and Karen Martindell*

## A Generous Response

With so many new challenges being faced during 2020, over the past months, the church has continued a generous response to the extended community. This has only been possible because of the generous gifts of time and financial contributions by so many. We are celebrating these signs of God's love and even the opportunity to share in all these ways:

- A second special gift of \$1900 to the local Food Pantry
- Continued sponsorship of many Blessing Boxes throughout the central Ohio region (this has included both financial contributions as well as many hours of service by a large team from the church who have sorted and delivered the food items)
- Many contributions to the Bloom Crisis Fund for local emergency assistance
- Good progress on our goal to renew the historic Bell Tower of the church
- Steady progress on funding the ministry of the church even during such a challenging year

It is especially worth celebrating when God's people reach out in concern and love to our neighbors while also navigating their way through the needs of their own everyday lives. So, we thank God for working in us and through us. And we thank everyone for helping to show others that God's love is real. Thank you to all who give of their prayers, their generosity, their service.



*Karen Martindell delivering items to an area Blessing Box.*

## A Special Christmas Eve

At 6 pm and again at 7 pm, we'll have a **Live Nativity and Candlelight Service** (glow sticks are provided) at the Village gazebo (Market and Columbus Streets in Lithopolis). Join us for a brief service as our youth and children help us envision the scene at the manger of Bethlehem. We'll sing a few carols and listen to the story of the birth of Christ. And with glow sticks serving as candles, we'll conclude with Silent Night. Dress warm and masks are required.

At 11 p.m., there will be a Candlelight Communion Service in the Sanctuary limited to 50 people in attendance with masks and safe distancing.



And now we're all asked to help spread the word about our plans for Christmas Eve. So, reach out to a neighbor, call a friend, share the news on your Facebook page...

Even if the weather is very cold, these Live Nativity services will be kept brief- approximately 15 minutes or less. Parking can be in the church lot on Columbus St. (next to El Pedregal) or in one of the regular church lots. Market Street will be closed for safety between Columbus and North Streets.

Watch for a sign-up (or contact the church) for those who would like to attend the 11 p.m. service.



## COVID Practice Update

We'd just like to thank everyone for helping the church resume worship in the Sanctuary on Sundays. As the Fall has continued on, the spread and increase of the virus in Ohio has led to several additional precautions put in place to help the church family be safe when choosing to gather. Careful use of the rows in the church, precautions that mean less surface contact (doors for instance), greater precaution through distancing with the use of our Sanctuary space, etc. But all of these precautions only work because of the cooperation and patience of everyone who gathers. We continue to emphasize that each person

should make their own decision about whether to risk gathering in the Sanctuary for worship at this time. And we also continue to find ways to provide online worship opportunities as well as weekly letters to those who are not using the web. If you have questions or ideas to share, please contact the church.

## Bell Tower Restoration – A Brief History

By Steve Stanford

The restoration of our 1887 Bell Tower was completed in the middle of November and this seems like an opportune time to look back at some of the history of the church and celebrate our journey as a congregation.



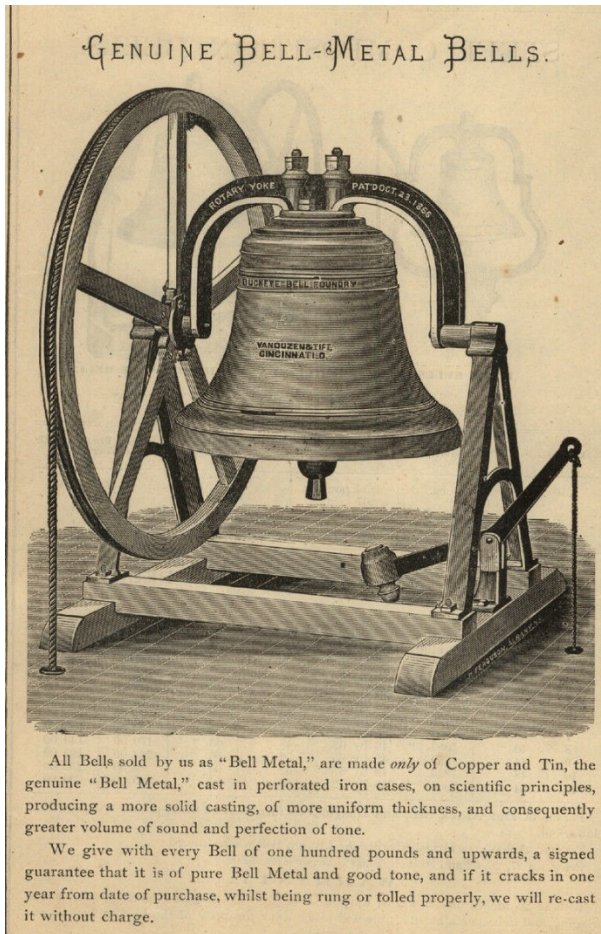
An interesting discovery was made when the bell came down out of the tower in preparation for the restoration work that was just completed. Markings on the bell indicate that it was cast in 1846, long before the tower and chapel building were constructed. How could that be? Did we acquire the bell from another church? Was it in an earlier structure used by Lithopolis Methodists?

We know that the first group of folks that called themselves Methodists in our area actually met regularly in each other's homes, much in the same way our small groups meet today. They would read and study the Bible and pray for each other when they gathered. In time, a Methodist circuit riding preacher would visit several times a year and would perform the sacraments when in town. He would stay in one of the homes of his local flock and in one instance it is reported that one of these ministers spent several months with one local farm family recovering from a serious illness before resuming his circuit.

Sometime around 1840, the congregation was in a position to construct a sanctuary and a small wood frame building was built on the property where our education wing stands now. We understand that it faced Columbus street. Perhaps it was the in the tower of that building that our bell first rang out on Sunday mornings.

Church bell ringing had a typical pattern that often went something like this; the bell would be rung an hour before service to let everyone within hearing's distance know that it was time to finish their morning chores and begin to prepare for church. The bells would ring again at 30 minutes prior to service to let people know it was time to hitch up the buggy and begin the trip into town. In some communities the bell rang again at about 20 minutes prior to service to let the barber know it was time to finish that last customer's shave and for shopkeepers to serve their last customer before closing up the shop. A last ringing of the bell about 5 minutes before the first hymn would let the stragglers know they needed to pick up the pace.

*"Bell Tower Restoration – A Brief History continued from Page 4.*



We don't know for sure how the Lithopolis Methodists rang their bell on Sunday mornings, but we do know that the bell in their tower was originally acquired from the Buckeye Bell Foundry in Cincinnati. Founded in 1837, Buckeye Bell cast thousands of church bells in a little over 100 years of operation before converting to war time production in 1941 and then closing in 1950.

In 1846 when our bell was cast, ownership of Buckeye Bell was held by C. W. Coffin (his name is cast into the side of our bell.) Buckeye Bells were made of "the finest Bell Metal consisting of a proprietary mixture of Copper and India Tin" and were sold all over the world at the height of the company's operation at the turn of the last century.

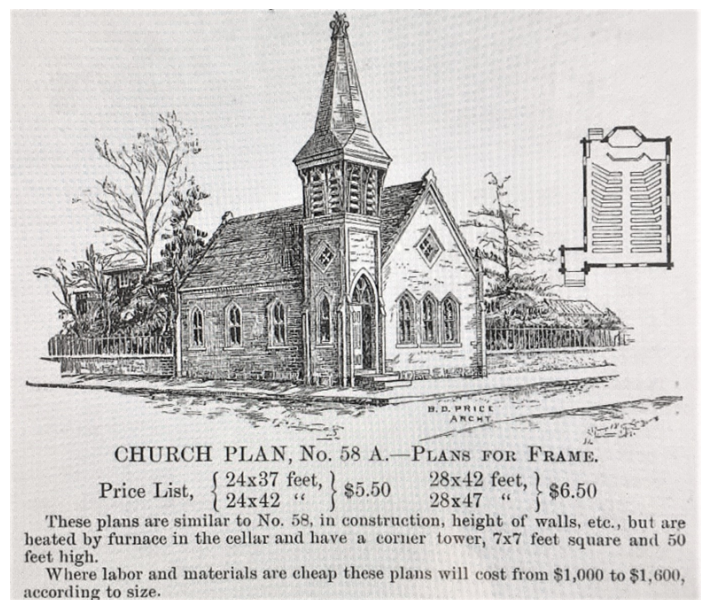
It is difficult to know exactly what the church would have paid for the bell because many bell casters of the era often charged by the pound depending on the current value of the metals used. The fact that the bell dates from 1846 suggests that it was a major undertaking for the Lithopolis congregation to purchase the bell because the wood frame chapel was standing for a few years before the bell was hung in its tower.

In twenty short years, the people of Lithopolis started to think about a larger, more substantial building for their Methodist chapel and a committee formed to look into the matter very likely reached out to the Board of Church Extension for the M. E. Church for a copy of their "Catalogue of Architectural Plans for Churches and Parsonages".

After reviewing the offering in the catalog, the committee appears to have forwarded \$6.50 for church plan "No. 58 A" and were promised that "Where labor and materials are cheap", these plans will cost from \$1,000 to \$1,600 to complete, according to final size. Yes, it appears that our chapel is just one of many "catalog churches" scattered throughout the United States.

Apparently, at some time during or after the construction of our 1887 chapel, the 1846 bell was moved into the new tower.

Ina Baker wrote in a recollection some years back that when she came to Lithopolis in 1905 our church shared the Reverend Priest with Asbury, Brice, and Canal Winchester. Each Sunday Pastor Priest went by horse and buggy to two of his four churches. According to Ina, "He preached 2 sermons every Sunday, before noon and after noon. Lithopolis was every other Sunday in the P.M."



*Continued on Page 6.*

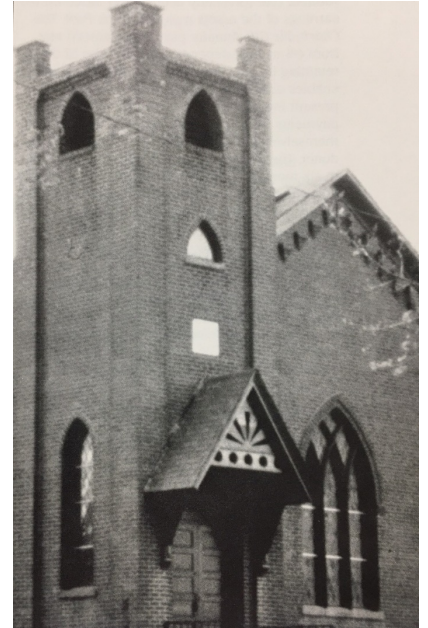
*"Bell Tower Restoration – A Brief History continued from Page 5."*



A photograph from the 1905 "Lithopolis Souvenir Program" published by the *Lithopolis Home-Going Association* shows how the Methodist chapel looked the year Ina Baker came to town. As you can see the bell tower more closely resembles the one in the Board of Church Extension catalog than what we have today.

We did discover during the current restoration work that the top portion our brick tower was built after the original construction of the chapel in 1887. The 1905 photograph suggests that the 1846 bell may actually have hung at two different heights in our tower, higher up in the earlier years, and somewhat lower when the top of the tower was rebuilt. If you look closely at the photo on the right, you can see the difference in the appearance of the brick at the top of the tower. The people working on the restoration said the workmanship at the top was clearly not the same as the lower structure as was done at a later time. At this point, we are not sure of the details or the timing of the tower reconstruction that resulted in current architecture.

When the current exterior restoration was undertaken, it was determined that the interior structure holding the bell was no longer solid and so the bell was removed from the tower and is currently being stored elsewhere on church property.



Today, the tower at the corner of Market and North streets stands restored and proud of the Methodist traditions it has represented for 133 years.

The bell that once rang in that tower will remain silent until the day a new home can be constructed, one that will both showcase the bell and permit it to be rung again.

## Growing Together

By Tiffany Jones

Families with children from birth to fifth grade, please join us down in Lower Level 3 for Growing Together on Wednesday Nights from 6:30-7:30 pm. Each week we dive into a devotion about God and Science called, *How Great is our God*. We reinforce the message with hands on activities like a craft, songs, prayer, games, a service project or science experiment.

We have also amped up cleaning and distancing measures to prevent COVID-19. The room and highly touched areas are sanitized before AND after each weekly gathering, masks are worn at all times, we do not share supplies, family groups are set up 6 feet away from each other. The kids still have a great time together, games are just a little more challenging to play, but we sure do have fun! We hope your family will join us. Contact Tiffany Jones with any questions at [tiffany@lithopolisumc.org](mailto:tiffany@lithopolisumc.org).



Dear LUMC:

Thank you so much for the gift card. We were able to buy Thanksgiving dinner and a few extra things. It helped us so much. God bless you! Merry Christmas!

From, A Thanksgiving Gift Card recipient



I want to thank you so much for making our Thanksgiving great. Had a good dinner and so appreciate your help. Thank you so much!

From, A Thanksgiving Gift Card recipient

We want to thank the church for the generous donation!! Please let everyone know that we are grateful and thankful for it and I know our clients will be as well. We will put it towards providing Thanksgiving Baskets and Food Pantry operations.

- Althea Mullins  
Director of the Canal Winchester Food Pantry



## A Different Kind of Christmas

By Alex Feldman

One of our traditions at LUMC in the weeks leading up to Christmas is to join together to generously support a mission or organization through whom God's work and word is being fulfilled. This has been, and continues to be, a tangible way for us to care for others and to remember together that the Christmas season is all about Jesus! This year, with all the unique challenges

it has presented, we have decided to stick with something familiar and close to home as our Different Kind of Christmas focus.

Throughout the past several months, you have likely heard of Blessing Boxes—small food pantries spread throughout central Ohio where people “take what they need” and “leave what they can.” When the pandemic was just beginning, a collaborative partnership began to blossom between our church and the Blessing Box Project. It truly felt like a move of the Spirit, as the door opened for us to bless others by helping to distribute food and hygiene items throughout our region. To date, an incredible team of willing servants from our congregation and local community have distributed nearly \$10,000 in groceries to just under 50 different Blessing Boxes! Through your Spirit-inspired generosity, families as far away as Westerville, Franklinton, and Logan have had much needed food available during this difficult time.

The funds we have received—both grants and contributions from folks within our congregation—have all been spent. We have food for one more round of restocking, which will be happening the first week in December. With the economic ramifications of the pandemic likely to stretch well into 2021, this is an effort that we want to continue. Your generosity as a part of this year's Different Kind of Christmas will allow us to do just that. Financial contributions and non-perishable food items will be collected throughout the month of December. A collection box for food items will be available in the lobby on Sunday mornings and in the entryway throughout the week. If you chose to contribute online, please indicate “Blessing Box Fund” in the drop-down menu.

There is little doubt that this Christmas will be *different* in a variety of ways. We are hopeful that the ongoing tradition of a Different Kind of Christmas will both be something “different” that feels normal and, as in years past, a wonderful opportunity to bless others in the name of our coming Savior, Jesus Christ!



## Trunk-or-Treat

By Tiffany Jones

COVID AND the weather threw us a few curve balls for the Trunk-or-Treat event this year, but when the event was finally able to happen, it was a gorgeous afternoon! Church members and their families lined the side walk from the church entrance down to the MMC passing out candy, snacks, and trinkets to trick-or-treaters who walked or drove up. Safe distance was kept by passing out candy with the kids in their vehicles and by using tongs to drop the candy in the bags. It was so much fun to see all the different and creative costumes worn not only by the trick or treaters but by the volunteers passing out the candy too. Some volunteers even decorated a table with a theme to match their costumes! A huge shout out to all the people who came out to pass out the candy and to everyone who donated the candy too! This event could not happen without your help. See you at the next Trunk-or-Treat.



## Interactive Worship

By Tiffany Jones & Alex Feldman

We have been having such a great time launching the new Interactive worship service in the MMC Sunday mornings at 10:00 am! This new service offers hands-on participation to keep children engaged, since we are currently unable to provide our normal children and youth ministries. We use hand motions for the call to worship and benediction, different style songs with easy lyrics for all ages, a storytelling time in

place of a traditional sermon, coloring pages that match the story, special area for parents of small children with toys and books if needed, an interactive prayer wall, and more. What has been an absolute delight is seeing children through teens leading and participating in the worship services by providing the drawings for the storytelling, greeting, being a member in the worship band, lighting the candle, and participating during the interactive parts of the service. Even though this is a new service, the scripture matches the Traditional and Contemporary services so that we are all hearing the same biblical message. Our safety precautions align with the guidelines provided by the church. Come check it out!





# FINANCE FOCUS

Financial data thru November 30, 2020

## Fund Balances

General	\$124,004
Building	\$30,166
Planned Replacement	\$92,708
Endowment	\$ 46,329
Other Designated Funds	\$ 21,780

*Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

2 Corinthians 9:7 NIV

## General Fund Activity

Contributions to the General Fund pay for general operating expenses of the church including music expense, payroll expense, office supply expense, parsonage maintenance and utilities, church maintenance and utilities, and apportionments.

General Fund	Nov-20	YTD 2020
Contributions	44,652	422,887
Expenses	40,919	422,131
Difference	3,733	756

- YTD 2020 General Fund contributions have decreased 12.9% compared to 2019.

## Building Fund Activity

**Building Fund Income for November 2020 = \$3,249**

**Bell Tower Restoration Contributions to date = \$9,795**

## Other Designated Funds

Designated Funds are funds that are contributed to LUMC for a specific purpose. Some examples are: Different Kind of Christmas, Local Missions, Conference Special Offerings, Memorials, and Youth.

Questions or Comments? Contact Amy Bratton, LUMC Treasurer  
amy@lithopolisumc.org or 614-271-6242