



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 2021 Wall Build.

Setbacks, Disappointment, & the Faithfulness of God

“Why, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people?... You have not rescued your people at all.” - Exodus 5:22-23

You likely know the story. God summons Moses from within a burning bush and calls him to go back to Egypt and to confront Pharaoh that God might set his people free. When Moses and his brother Aaron stood before Pharaoh, there were surely nerves and anxiety, but also hope and anticipation. God was about to act, to do a “new thing” (Isaiah 43:19). Freedom was on the way! They would soon be heading back to the promised land!

However, when Moses and Aaron first went to Pharaoh, what the people of God experienced was not freedom, but even greater hardship. Their hope was not matched by reality (at least in the short-term). Pharaoh doubled down, increasing the workload of the already overburdened Israelite slaves. They had hoped for freedom and a fresh start. What they got was higher quotas and increased demands—a setback that was accompanied by discouragement, disappointment, and despair.



Enjoying the bounce house at our Fall Kick-off.

What you'll find inside:

- Children's Ministry Update
- Youth Ministry Update
- Trash & Treasure
- Wall Build
- Groups Fall Kick-off
- Financial Snapshot

When our staff at LUMC set the publication date for this Fall 2021 Newsletter, we did so anticipating that we would be celebrating new discipleship groups on Sunday mornings—gatherings of adults, youth, and children who were sharing life with each other, praying for one another, and digging more deeply into God’s Word together. For months, we had been making preparations. We increased Ray Tiell’s hours so that he could help provide leadership for this “new thing” that we sensed God leading us to pursue. We even brought in bounce-houses for a kickoff!

And then COVID numbers started to rise. We heard of people from our church family who were getting sick.

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We attended memorial services and funerals that reminded us of just how dangerous this virus can be. We realized that our hope was not matching up to the reality before us. We were hoping for a fresh start, for God to do an exciting new thing in our midst. And what we got was a setback.

In the face of their own setback, the Israelites were ready to throw in the towel, to give up on freedom, to accept slavery as their lot. But God was still up to something. God still had a plan. God was still bringing freedom, but it would take time, patience, perseverance, and trust to get there. In the end, though the journey was long and included some setbacks along the way, God "triumphed gloriously" (Exodus 15:1), making a way where there seemed to be no way. And God's people learned to trust him in ways they never had before.

In this season of setbacks, may we too learn to trust God in ways we maybe never have before. And may we continue to be people of enduring hope, not just short-term hope—but people who still feel discouragement and disappointment in the moment and yet never lose sight of God's faithfulness in the long-term.

Grace & Peace,



Pastor Alex

Kids' Night Out

By Tiffany Jones

Kids' Night Out has been a blast! We have been really busy learning and playing new games, making crazy fun crafts, and just enjoying each other's fellowship by making new friends. Does this sound like something you'd like to attend? Join us for our October Kids' Night Out where we will decorate pumpkin creations and have a ton of fall fun!





Volunteers at work.



Deborah's new home.

Henderson Settlement Trip 2021

By Michael Whetstone

Our church was again blessed to be a part of the wonderful effort to build a new home for a family in Appalachian Kentucky. Deborah and her son Dawson lost their home to fire in 2019. Their new home was to be built in 2020 but was delayed due to Covid. In 2021, the home build was completed thanks to 63 volunteers from across the country, three from LUMC, and many monetary donations from our congregation, as well as others. You can see from the pictures that Deborah and her son are thrilled with their new home. Deborah is very excited to move in and has been busy decorating Dawson's room. Her flat front yard is the play area for Dawson and Deborah's daughter's kids. Thanks again for your continuing support for this worthy cause.



Deborah and family on her front porch.

Youth Update

By Ray Tiell

The Youth Group has had a busy summer this year, and we've gotten to participate in a number of service projects and fun activities! Our biggest trip was Alive Festival in July, which took us into the woods for four days of tent camping, speakers, and concerts. We also celebrated the start of a new school year with new friends entering into middle school and high school youth. Parents and families came together for this kickoff party to play games, eat pizza, and get a taste of what youth gatherings look like most weeks.



Our first service project of this summer was helping out at our Habitat for Humanity Wall Build. The students and leaders completed three whole walls, and only a few fingers got accidentally hit with hammers! We also repainted the garage doors across from El Pedregal in preparation for the Bee-attitude Buzz-ar. Finally, the group spent the Honeyfest weekend keeping Wilson Park clean and also worked hard to tear down from the festivities.



Groups Update

By Ray Tiell

Many of our small groups have continued to meet throughout our shifting COVID protocols, and a few more are beginning to meet regularly this fall. On August 29, we had our kickoff party and groups fair to highlight all of these upcoming gatherings. This celebration filled the MMC with bounce houses, donuts, and churchgoers signing up to participate in our various groups. While our Adult Discipleship Groups have been postponed, we still have a number of groups doing awesome things!



We are particularly excited about the beginning of our Wednesday evening groups. The David's Disciples life group will be meeting for anybody who wants to join a long-term small group and a group will be meeting to study *Surprised by Hope* by NT Wright, an awesome book that addresses common misconceptions about what it means to have hope in Jesus. Finally, Growing Together will continue to meet for families with young children.



Growing Together

By Tiffany Jones

Growing Together began after a little delay, but we are overjoyed to be back meeting and growing spiritually together again. We held our first session outside in the park and played after our family devotion. We are now back to meeting in Lower Level 3 Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm. We would love for your family to join us too!



Wall Build

By Kimberly Weaver

In August, we hosted our annual Wall Build with Habitat for Humanity. Our amazing team of 119 volunteers worked hard to build the walls for the house the Patterson family will soon call home. We were blessed to have the Patterson family, Knights of Columbus, and Women of Valor join us for our day of building. It was incredible to see what we accomplished in just three short hours! The walls built that weekend were moved to the Patterson's homesite in September. They have the goal of moving in by the end of the year!



A Huge Thank You

Dear Church Family,

My family and I want to thank LUMC for the incredible job you did assisting in so many ways with Marlo's Celebration of Life. It was such a beautiful day because of all of you.

Alex, thank you for the absolutely amazing job you did. Several people remarked to me on what an outstanding pastor we have here at LUMC and I totally agree with them. Also, a huge thank you to all the other people that worked together, and there were several, that helped to make it a wonderful day. From the parking personnel, to the greeters, to the ushers, to the guest book attendee, to Ray Tiell for monitoring the seating areas, to the music team, to the tech people, to special cleaning between services, to the cookie bakers, and the cookie receptionists, you were all extraordinary. Another special thank you goes to Eli Rickly for the lighting of the candles and to David Plummer for making special altar flowers for the day. Lastly, I cannot forget the special friends that worked to prepare and serve the family meal at my house, thank you.

My heart is grateful for all of these people and my family and I thank you ALL so much.

Many Blessings,
Bonnie Mills & Family



VBS

By Tiffany Jones

We were beyond excited to have a full week VBS at church this past June! Children gathered to learn about God through stories like Shadrach, Meshack, & Abednego, David & Goliath, Jesus' birth, Jesus walking on water, and Paul & Silas breaking free from prison. They traveled from snack, games, story time, science, missions, and craft stations where the Bible stories and verses were emphasized.



The children collected school supply items for Bloom Carroll Schools and Canal Winchester Human Services. Their goal was to donate and assemble 91 kits (one per child registered for VBS) to be able to watch BOTH Pastor Alex and Ray receive a pie in the face. They waited with anticipation at the closing of worship on Friday to see if they had made their goal. They were so excited to hear that they had, and you can check out the videos of them getting a pie in the face on our Facebook page. We cannot wait for you to join us next summer for Adventure Island VBS 2022!

A huge thank you to all of the volunteers and helping hands behind the scenes too. Without you, VBS wouldn't be possible.



Trash & Treasure
By Polly Anderson

Trash & Treasure 2021 was a fantastic opportunity to fellowship with one another while doing something good. The over \$13,000 in net proceeds from this year's sale will go to various United Methodist Women's mission projects including:

- \$1,500 to the Bloom Carroll Food Pantry
- \$1,500 to UMCOR disaster relief
- \$2,500 to Habitat for Humanity Wall Build

Additionally, some of the donated goods are used directly for children in foster care, shoes for people in Haiti, yarn/fabric for service groups within the church, just to name a few. Thank you to all of those who donated treasures, talent, and time to make this year's sale a successful one.



Home School Gym

By Tiffany Jones



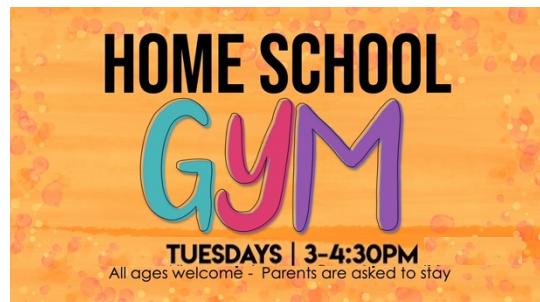
New this year is Home School Gym. We have had fun meeting up each week at different parks to play and make friends. Check out our October park play date times if you would like to join!

October 5 - Slate Run Farm plus Shady Grove park area afterward

October 12 - Three Creeks Metro Park

October 19 - Slate Run Buzzards Roost play area

October 26 - Walnut Woods Metro Park play area



FINANCE FOCUS

Financial data thru August 31, 2021

Fund Balances

<i>General</i>	\$131,542
<i>Building</i>	\$10,016
<i>Planned Replacement</i>	\$78,194
<i>Endowment</i>	\$ 59,830
<i>Other Designated Funds</i>	\$ 62,519

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	Aug-21	YTD 2021
Contributions	47,084	311,766
Expenses	36,044	279,062
Difference	11,040	32,704

- YTD 2021 General Fund contributions have increased 5.7% compared to 2020.

Building Fund Activity

Building Fund Income for August 2021 = \$790

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, and Memorials.

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

Questions or Comments? Contact Amy Bratton, LUMC Treasurer
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