



From The Desk Of...

Lou Piel

Pastor Emeritus

Mount Zion UMC - Finksburg
Friday July 14, 2023

I have always appreciated people who seek for the “truth” whether it be in politics, or in serious Bible study or even in personal relationships.

In recent years we have heard the term “fake news” and we have come to realize that what is “fake” is often in the mind of the beholder. Fake for me might mean truth to you!

I appreciated a phone call I received a couple of nights ago. The individual, part of the Mount Zion congregation, wanted to know if something she heard (or was told by a well minded person) was true or false.

Like, “when we became part of the North Carroll Cooperative U.M. Parish did we close our church door to people who are gay?” The answer is that our congregation has always been and will continue to be an “open church for all - regardless...” The church and its doors belong to God not us! Like the Holy Communion table. We often say, “we have set the table” but Jesus is the “Host” – he is the one who invites “all people” to come and eat and drink at the “holy meal.”

Another question was “why did Mount Zion become part of the North Carroll Cooperative Parish?” When I retired the Baltimore-Washington of the United Methodist Church had the

responsibility of finding a new pastor for Mount Zion. While I was willing to retire and then keep on serving (for 16 more years) most pastors simply retire. Apparently it is getting harder and harder to find “part-time-pastors. This is true not only in our conference but in many other denominations.

In order to find a pastor for our church (which is a small congregation) and be part of a “cooperative United Methodist ministry” the best way was to be part of the North Carroll Cooperative Parish. This successful ministry had begun in July 2011 and has a meaningful relationship with a number of congregations providing strong clergy leadership while forming growing community programs.

While we would be part of a “cooperative ministry” which has many positive advantages we would also hold onto our identity as Mount Zion of Finksburg. The appointment by NCCP to bring Pastor Shawn Vollmerhausen to our church was a blessing. It is very important that you read your July/August church newsletter to learn more about Pastor Shawn and three other key pastors in the NCCP. If you did not get this issue of our newsletter by email or post office mail, please contact Barbara Hayes or Mark Hemler to get a hard copy or get on the email list. It is free.

Every Sunday morning, we send out a special video from one of the NCCP pastors and other related information. In that special Sunday email is our **The Mt. Zion Weekly / Bulletin Insert / Announcements. Please make sure you can open it and read it. It is the same weekly information that you will receive if you attend worship services at the church. It is our way of keeping all our people up to date and in touch.**

There are many other issues we could deal with but if you have any questions or concerns make sure you get the “truth” about our congregation and our “cooperative ministry.” Give me a call or email. I will hold your concerns confidentially. I firmly believe that God, through the Holy Spirit, has a meaningful future for our congregation. We have been blessed working side by side with other congregations and their leadership who share the same love of our Lord Jesus as we do.

Sunday service starts at 9:55am
3006 Old Westminster Pike
Finksburg, MD 21048
Accessible Friendly Building

Grace and peace

Lou Piel, Pastor Emeritus
Mt. Zion UMC - Finksburg, MD

julo1@verizon.net

H: (410) 751-9049

C: (301) 351-6689