



The Edison Light

Edison Memorial UMC - September - 2020 - Newsletter

Building Disciples; Growing in Faith; Serving in Christ's Name

Dear Friends,

Beginning Sunday, August 30, our church is introducing you to a new mission effort: the Teach, Reach, Bless campaign for Africa University. This initiative of our Bishop Tracey Malone encourages the members of our East Ohio Annual Conference to commit to raising money to build a new women's dormitory at Africa University that will serve to house 88 female students on the campus. The goal is to raise \$1.5 million over three years. Our own Firelands District has committed to raising \$79,500 to build and furnish three of those dormitory rooms. Please see Paul Black's letter, which is part of this newsletter, as he further explains the goal and our own part in it.

I suspect some of you who may be totally unfamiliar with Africa University might greet the news of this major effort asking, "What is Africa University? Why, in the midst of a global pandemic and so many tough issues facing us right here in our own country, should I be concerned about building a dormitory at a university in Zimbabwe, Africa?" Let me respond:

Africa University was founded in 1992 with 42 students. It is located in Old Mutare, Zimbabwe, (see the enclosed map of Africa) and by 2019 had grown to 2179 students, coming from 25 different countries on the continent. Some in our United Methodist denomination say that founding and supporting Africa University is the most important thing the United Methodist Church did in the 20th century. Africa University has been and continues to be a force of transformation on the continent of Africa.

From the school's beginning, our East Ohio Annual Conference has been a strong supporter of the University. Our conference built one of the first dormitories there, and has raised \$2 million in scholarship endowment, the largest scholarship fund of any annual conference across our denomination.

The need now is for a new women's dormitory on campus. 54% of AU's students are women, and due to the housing shortage for women on campus, they often have to live some distance from campus. Female students walking to and from the University become potential targets for human trafficking and prostitution. It simply is not safe for female students to live off campus! We have the opportunity to do something about that through the Teach, Reach, Bless campaign.

Gifts to Africa University are transformational gifts. When you make a gift to Africa University, you say yes to the invitation to partner and invest in a ministry that transforms lives through education. Participating in the Teach, Reach, Bless campaign will bless the lives of women students at Africa University now and for years to come. I commend your consideration of this program.

Please be at drive-in church on Sunday August 30 as we introduce this new mission effort—we plan to have a special surprise treat for each person attending (you will have to be there to find out what the surprise is!) Please also read Paul Black's letter, and the attached Teach, Reach, Bless brochure for further explanation and information.

Yours, in Christ,

Pastor Barbara



To: Members and Friends of Edison Memorial UMC,

Subject: Teach, Reach and Bless Campaign

Earlier this year our Bishop Tracy Malone announced a new fund-raising campaign for the African University, a Pan-African United Methodist institution. Increasing enrollment at UA and a lack of on-campus housing means that some women commute from remote areas to find off campus housing, putting them at high risk for living in and being subjected to unsafe and untenable situations. Her vision is for the East Ohio to build an on-campus women's dorm that provides a safe, secure environment and a community of support, so that female AU students will be able to focus on education without risking their very lives.

The goal of the campaign is to raise \$1.5 million to build and furnish a 46-room dorm that will safely house 90 students. Bishop Malone is asking each district in our conference to participate in this fund-raising campaign.

Our district, The Firelands District, has set a goal to raise enough money to build and furnish three dorms rooms at a cost of \$79,500.00. How are we going to this? The district has pledged \$26,500.00 over the next three years from its reserve funds. That leaves \$53,000.00 for the 72 churches in our district to contribute to the Teach, Reach and Bless campaign.

With the approval of the Finance Committee and the Administrative Council we are asking the members and friend of our church to participate in this worthy cause. We ask that you prayerfully consider how you can help raise funds for this worthy project.

You can support the Teach • Reach • Bless campaign and show your commitment to the education and wellness of women today for a better Africa tomorrow by making your checks payable to the church and write "Teach • Reach • Bless" on the memo line or marking the outside of your offering envelope on the memo line with the amount and Teach • Reach • Bless campaign. In addition to our own gifts, our Administrative Council is asking our Trustees to use funds from the Wilbur Trust to multiply our giving through a matching grant. What a wonderful opportunity this is to help Africa University in this important way, to help create a better Africa tomorrow.

Yours in faith,

Paul Black



The University of Africa - Located in Mutare Zimbabwe

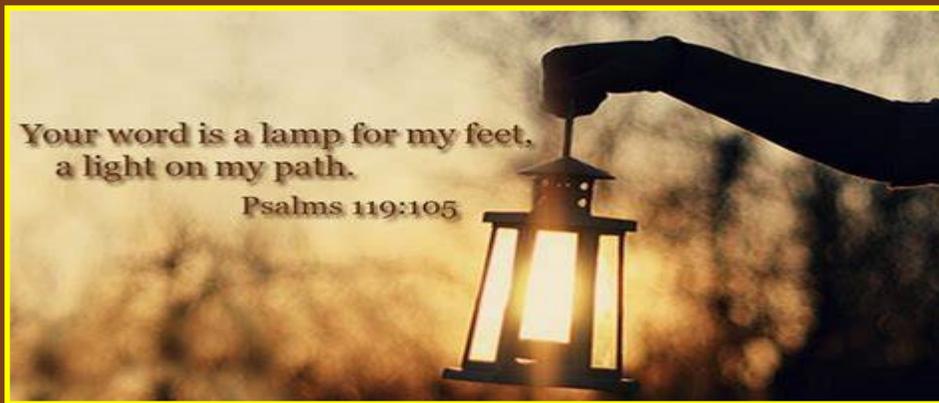


Drive-In Worship Continues for September

Back in late March, when I purchased the FM transmitter for our church, I never dreamed we'd still be relying on it 6 months later! But these unprecedented times have caused us to reinvent worship, and the response to drive-in church continues to be wonderful! I have characterized the atmosphere I feel among us outside as "a tailgate party without the food." Despite our limitations, there is a lightness of spirit and a joy to being in church together—apart in our cars.

We will continue worshiping drive-in style through the entire month of September. Meanwhile, our Worship Committee is making plans for how to safely, conscientiously return to worship inside our sanctuary once the weather turns colder. Stay tuned for the protocols we will be putting in place.





New Bible Study Season Begins

Sermon on the mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven by Amy-Jill Levine will be our September/October Bible Study on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. What must it have been like to hear Jesus deliver the Sermon on the Mount? What did his words mean to the people in the crowd? How did it change their lives? What do his words mean to us today and how do they change our lives? Did his listeners interpret the sermon as we do now?

In this 6- week study based on Matthew 5-7, Dr. Amy-Jill Levine explores the major topics of the most popular sermon ever delivered. Dr. Levine is a professor at Vanderbilt University and a prominent New Testament scholar. She is devoutly Jewish in her personal faith, which brings a unique perspective to her understanding of Jesus as a first century Jew (which he was)

We will have our Bible Study both in person in our beautiful new parlor, social distancing from each other, and also via Zoom for those uncomfortable with being in-person. Our first session will be Tuesday September 8, which will be an introduction to Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, and our opportunity to pick up her book for our study. The following 6 weeks will be based on her book, along with a short introductory DVD segment (10-12 minutes) for each session. I am excited to explore this new study together!

Our Ministry of Thanks

+ **To Joan Wikel** for her work coordinating the restoration and refinishing of our church's antique pulpit, now able to be used for Drive-In Church. It is gorgeous! Used for the first time for our worship on August 23, the restored wood panels shone forth with beauty. We are so grateful to Joan for taking this project on and adding such love and thoughtfulness to our outdoor worship setting.

+ **To Jenni Seel and Rudy Ruiz** for preaching and leading worship in July and August, respectively, allowing Pastor Barbara to have two vacation Sundays off.

+ **To Dick and Connie Smith** for their commitment to, and passionate efforts on behalf of, our Backpack Ministry. Thanks to Dick and Connie's efforts, the Backpack program has received donations from Civista Bank, State Farm Insurance, and the Erie County Community Foundation.

+ **To all those who continue to make our outdoor worship possible: Mike Seel** (who loves to boast that each Sunday he gets to "carry his cross") and **the whole Seel team** for their help with set-up, passing bulletins, receiving our offering: **Mike and Shirlean Smith** for their help with set-up and Holy Communion distribution; our musical team of **Sarah McCoy and Karen Klinger and Kristi Crumrine**; and our sound engineer without whom this way of worship would be impossible **Rex Stanforth**; and **all of you** who keep coming (or tuning in from home) and have made our spring/summer attendance significantly above our average.



YOU'RE INVITED

TO OUR FIRST EVER

DRIVE-THRU FUNDRAISING BANQUET



TICKETS

SATURDAY

\$10.⁰⁰ EARLY BIRD

\$12.⁰⁰ AT THE DOOR

SEPT 19

11AM-5PM

OR UNTIL SOLD OUT

INCLUDES: HALF CHICKEN •
POTATO SALAD • BAKED
BEANS • ROLL • DESSERT • DRINK

ABIGAIL PREGNANCY SERVICES

3900 LAYLIN RD, NORWALK, OH

RS BY SEPT 1st
VP 419-668-9500

MORE
INFO



Due to COVID-19, The Annual Fundraising Banquet for Abigail Pregnancy Services has been reimagined. We hope that you enjoy our attempt to think outside the box—keeping you safe and giving you the opportunity to support this life-affirming ministry, all while enjoying a delicious meal. *Because of you* Abigail has had the privilege of serving our community for 30 years!



Let's celebrate!

The Annual Fundraising Banquet is the cornerstone of our donor support for the year and its success is vital to continue providing life-changing services in our community. Meal tickets and donations may be made with the enclosed forms or by visiting FriendsOfAbigail.com. Follow the link on the events tab. In addition tickets may be purchased online using the QR code:

Donations made to Abigail at a minimum of \$30 above the cost of your meals will include delivery!

You are welcome to bring your donation when you pick up your meal.



Just pull into the entrance on Laylin Rd and our volunteer servers will bring your dinners out to you, served with a smile (under their masks)! These famous B&B chicken dinners will sell out fast, so reserve yours today.

Please share this information with family and friends.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you!



Abigail Pregnancy Services

Educate, Encourage, Empower

CALL 419-668-9500

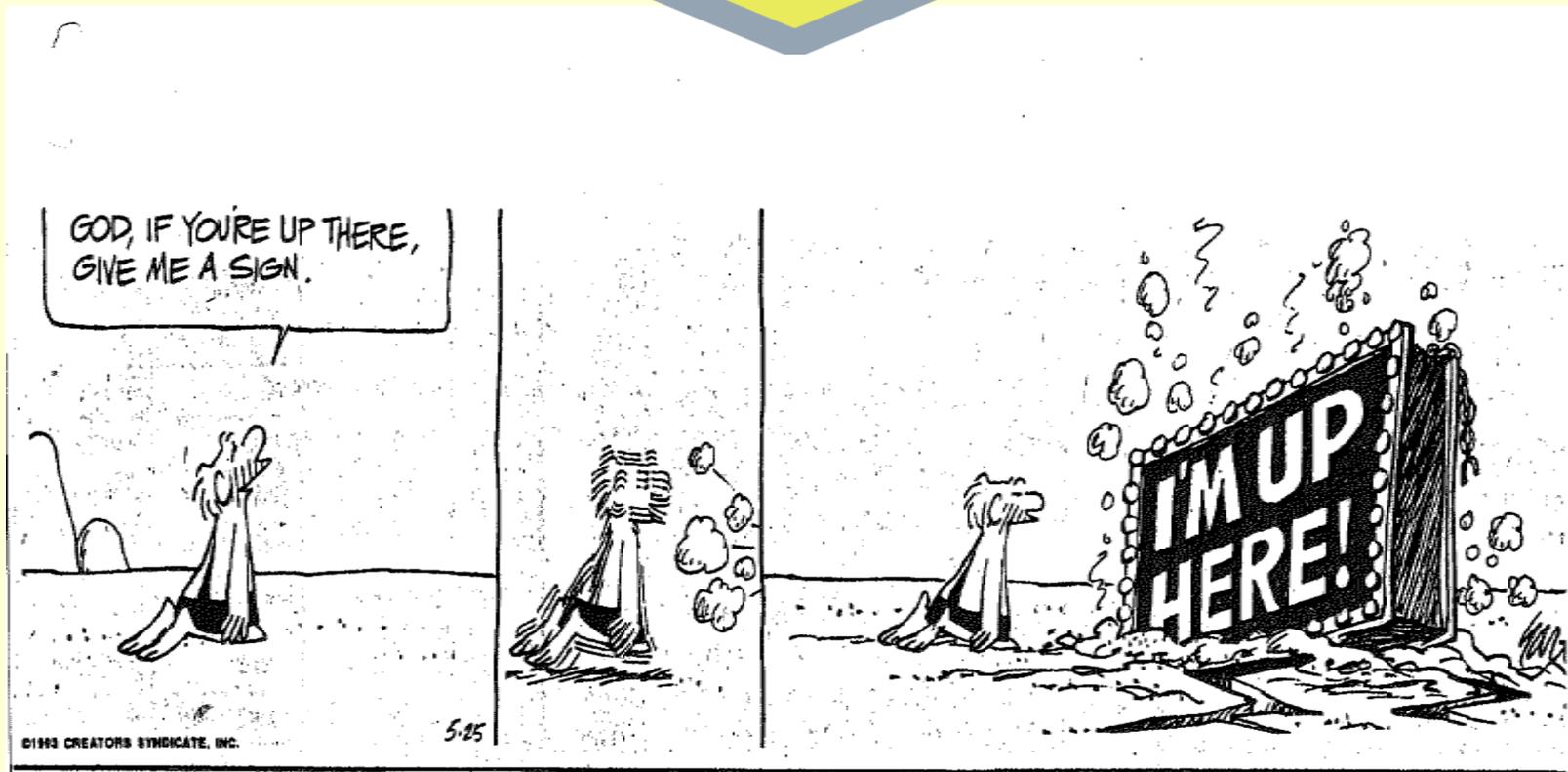
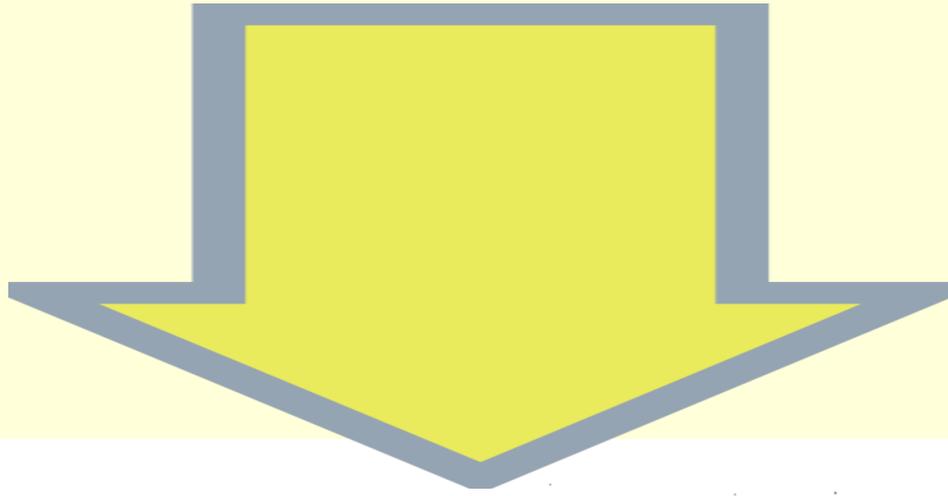
FOR MORE INFO

DON'T FORGET THE NEW LAW ALLOWING ALL TAXPAYERS TO DEDUCT FINANCIAL DONATIONS TO CHARITY UP TO \$300 ON THEIR 2020 FEDERAL TAX RETURN, EVEN IF YOU TAKE THE STANDARD DEDUCTION.

Our Deepest Sympathy

+ Goes to Lou Romell and the whole Romell family on the death of Bob Romell who entered Eternal Life on July 4. Bob died at home after a long illness. We are grateful for the gift of his life in our church family.





**I will never leave you
Nor forsake you!**

Love, *Jesus*