

**hoffman**  
united methodist church

# THE TOWERS

201 S. Main St., West Milton, Ohio 45383

JULY 2020

## A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR

*FREE INDEED*

**John 8:34-36 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."**

This is the time of year when it is normal to hear about Freedom, and being Free...but while in the most abnormal of years in my lifetime, we especially this year have had conversations speaking of being free, and having freedom. Freedom of speech, freedom to peaceably assemble, and freedom of religion, and the question of whether all have the same freedom to pursue happiness continue to vex our country today.

A few weeks ago I was in an exam room in a medical facility hearing profanities being shouted as someone was upset at how their freedoms were being taken away by having masks required in some places. I admit in that moment I would have liked to have been free to not hear the tirade, but apparently that was taken away as well. Moments like this have had me thinking about what we are free to do or not do.

Freedom is woven through Scripture, too, from the very beginning, when humanity was free to eat from any tree in the garden but one...and yet still were free to eat from the forbidden one, though consequences necessarily followed. It is difficult to list off the various freedoms covered in Scripture, but maybe it is helpful to consider as a lens Ecclesiastes 3:1-7, and how there is a "time" for everything under the sun. One could also say we are "free" to do all those things....to build up, to tear down, to weep, to laugh, to gather, and to scatter, and so much more.... We are free to do countless things, and we are free to refrain from it, whatever "it" is. Each and every choice comes with consequence, both to our advantage and disadvantage. In the New Testament the apostle Paul puts it another way:

**1 Corinthians 6:12 "I have the right to do anything," you say-- but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"-- but I will not be mastered by anything. (NIV)**

We are free to do things that help benefit both others and

ourselves, but sometimes we have to choose whether our actions or words are going to benefit others, or ourselves, with possible *exclusion* of the other. I admit it has troubled me that on an airline that if oxygen masks are dropping from the ceiling I should care for my needs first before the needs of my companions. Caring for oneself makes it possible to care for others, and yet the John passage reminds that what we are "free" to do could also be what enslaves us.

At Hoffman we are attempting to allow everyone in the congregation freedom to encounter worship in as many methods as possible, depending upon each one's assessment of health and comfort level. At the church building we can gather in the sanctuary or there can be a live feed in the Activity Center for those wanting to be present, but distanced. We will continue to offer the live stream online, and DVDs are

being recorded each Sunday. If you would like more information regarding any of those options, please don't hesitate to reach out. We will continue practices to attempt to keep everyone as safe as is possible. All are free to come, but all are also free to protect themselves and loved ones as they see fit, as it is obvious the COVID-19 virus isn't going to be completely gone for some time to come. Throughout this time we have and will do our best to make certain all feel Free to worship here.

This is just one in a list of circumstantial Freedoms, but all pale in comparison to the Freedoms we enjoy in the United States, and is barely worth mentioning compared to the Freedom from sin we all can have through Jesus Christ. While we continue to declare THAT Freedom through the Good News to all who will listen, we will deal with these various challenges around circumstantial Freedoms, and try to do so with Grace and Love, as would bring glory to our Heavenly Father... because Light Still Wins over Darkness. Thanks be to God.

While (still) shining church lights at night for hope,  
I am,  
In His Service and Yours,

*Rollie*

**FREE  
INDEED**

# Board Meeting Highlights

**Devotions:** Devotions were led by Carol who shared about “key words” missing from common and significant passages in scripture. When these passages are missing “key words or phrases” greatly change the message.

**Meeting Attendees:** Dick Martens, Katie Poling, Carol Storer, Wendy Heisey, Julia Circle, Jill Circle, John Ankerman, Patti Wion, Janet Benkert, Robbie Scott

**Special Operation:** The board received Wendy Heisey into full membership.

**Mission and Ministry:** Robbie gave “live streaming” updates and solicited feedback from the board. New hardware, which was funded by donations, improved the ability to stream and update the sound and improved the ability to watch services from the nursery. Robbie will work on setup of live streaming so someone would be able to step in if he was unable to be at service. The board discussed the procedure for “reopening”. We reviewed and discussed West Ohio Conference “Return to Public Church Guidelines” as well as Governor DeWine’s website updates. Return date of June 7 allows time to communicate to the church and create signage for return. Trustees to check with our insurance regarding liability of reopening. Hymnals, bibles, bulletins, offering plates and pew pads will not be utilized. Pews will be wiped between services. Attendance will be taken in preparation for possible contact tracing. Safe social distancing procedure with every other pew roped off in-between. No Sunday school or gathering in greeting areas. Communion will be individually packaged. Masks recommended. Live streaming will continued to be offered

**Nominations:** Dan Studebaker was accepted into the position of SPRC Co-Chair

**Pastor’s Report:** Average attendance for April was 143, with more watching that do not “sign in”.

Numbers for 2<sup>nd</sup> service have declined, as mentioned families with small children have some difficulty with logistics of settling to watch. Joann has been working with her new computer and software. Becky provided updates regarding options for VBS. The board would like to have VBS if it can be done safely. Robbie has Jury Duty in June. It was recommended that someone besides Robbie be trained to keep the live streaming running. Robbie is finishing his 8<sup>th</sup> year on the Board of Ordained Ministry, he has accepted the request to serve 4 more years. Pulpit fill planned for Aug 2, Tom Weeks.

**Finance:** Income versus budget has been about \$1400 short each month since “stay-at-home” started. There is still 6.3 weeks of operating buffer. The capital value of the endowment was reduced by \$15,000 for the first full quarter of the year due market decline. We received a \$500 dividend check from the Bureau of Workers compensation. Methodist Men gave a 10% tithe from hog sausage sales. John presented options for “online” giving. We will revisit next meeting.

**Staff Parish Relations:** Job descriptions were reviewed. No updates indicated at this time.

**Trustee Update:** The streaming unit to improve the online services was purchased with donations and Trustees paying the difference. The floor wax unit in the Activity Center was repaired. Jason Antonides was hired to apply fertilizer and weed control. Action Blacktop will seal the parking lot. Hubbard roofing to repair the Northwest Sanctuary downspout and propose ways to fix roof leaks in the nursery, the narthex, and JoAnn's office. Young Spirits will store their risers in the garage. Plans for mulching the flower beds in May and painting the garage in June. Stained glass window restoration will be explored.

**Non-Agenda Items:** The 2020 Art show has been cancelled. The 2021 Art Show will be July 30-Aug 1, 2021.

As we continue our journey through this season of COVID-19, I want to update that we have an additional option for worship, as our Activity Center is now hardwired to the sanctuary video feed. For any and all who come to the sanctuary but feel that even with the separations between the pews it is a little crowded, there is an option that allows for personal space. I have to admit that I have been in empty rooms enough the last few months that I have had to get used to being around groups again. In case this is also true for some of you, this is now an option (in addition to online). There is a minimum amount of preparation necessary, so please communicate with me or the church office if this is an option you would like to have ready for you or your family, and we will make it so. -rs

### 'Stay At Home' Statistics

| Date                         | 5/31/20 | 6/7/20  | 6/14/20 | 6/21/20 |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| General Offering             | 3060.00 | 6289.00 | 5522.00 | 3170.00 |
| Weekly Budget Need           | 4824.00 | 4824.00 | 4824.00 | 4824.00 |
| Mission Offering             | 55.00   | 245.00  | 340.00  | 140.00  |
| Maintenance Fund             | 605.00  | 235.00  | 330.00  | 125.00  |
| Building Fund                | 75.00   | 355.00  | 1345.00 | 740.00  |
| Online & Physical Attendance |         |         |         |         |
| 9 a.m. Service               | 81      | 77      | 68      | 56      |
| 11:15 a.m. Service           | 59      | 50      | 62      | 41      |
| Total Attendance             | 140     | 127     | 130     | 97      |

### Happy Birthday & Happy Anniversary July 2020

1<sup>st</sup> - Joe & Leah Blackburn (14 yrs)  
 2<sup>nd</sup> - John Hayes  
 3<sup>rd</sup> - Joe Blackburn  
 4<sup>th</sup> - Dane Studebaker  
 7<sup>th</sup> - Erin Studebaker  
 9<sup>th</sup> - Nancy Allen  
 10<sup>th</sup> - Cathy Brown  
       Chris Moran  
       Dan Studebaker  
       Tim Wright  
 11<sup>th</sup> - Mike & Jill Circle (39 yrs)  
 14<sup>th</sup> - Kathy Watkins  
 16<sup>th</sup> - Dustin Jay



17<sup>th</sup> - Chris & Val McKay (46 yrs)  
 21<sup>st</sup> - John & Carol Carter (47 yrs)  
 22<sup>nd</sup> - Winston & Theda Klepinger (13 yrs)  
 23<sup>rd</sup> - Elaine Pickering  
 24<sup>th</sup> - Adrienne Beaty  
       Joetta Perry  
 25<sup>th</sup> - Ed Johannes  
       Jean Sanders  
       Beth & Larry Thoele (38 yrs)  
 26<sup>th</sup> - Amanda Burns  
 27<sup>th</sup> - Janet Weeks  
 29<sup>th</sup> - George Everage  
       Griffin King  
 30<sup>th</sup> - Tim Koeller  
       Eric & Johanna Morrow (14 yrs)

# Hoffman United Methodist Church, Holidays in United States

Jul 2020 (Eastern Time - New York)

| Sun  | Mon                                      | Tue  | Wed  | Thu  | Fri  | Sat   |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| <div>28</div> <div>9am - Worship</div> <div>11:15am - Worship</div>  | <div>29</div>                            | <div>30</div>                                | <div>1</div> <div>9am - Ladies Bible</div>                     | <div>2</div>   | <div>3</div> <div>10:30am - Lunch</div> <div>4:30pm - Lunch</div>  | <div>4</div> <div>Independence Day</div> <div>9am - Lion's Club</div> |
| <div>5</div> <div>Communion</div> <div>9am - Worship</div> <div>11:15am - Worship</div>                                    | <div>6</div> <div>7pm - Visitation</div> | <div>7</div> <div>7pm - Trustee Mtg. -</div> | <div>8</div> <div>9am - Ladies Bible</div>                     | <div>9</div>   | <div>10</div> <div>10:30am - Lunch</div> <div>4:30pm - Lunch</div> | <div>11</div>   |
| <div>12</div> <div>9am - Worship</div> <div>11:15am - Worship</div>  | <div>13</div>                            | <div>14</div>                                | <div>15</div> <div>Tax Day</div> <div>9am - Ladies Bible</div> | <div>16</div> <div>6:30pm - Board Mtg</div>  | <div>17</div> <div>10:30am - Lunch</div> <div>4:30pm - Lunch</div> | <div>18</div>   |
| <div>19</div> <div>6pm - Vacation Bible School - Entire church</div> <div>9am - Worship</div> <div>11:15am - Worship</div> | <div>20</div>                            | <div>21</div>                                | <div>22</div>  | <div>23</div>  | <div>24</div> <div>10:30am - Lunch</div> <div>4:30pm - Lunch</div> | <div>25</div>   |
| <div>26</div> <div>9am - Worship</div> <div>11:15am - Worship</div>  | <div>27</div>                            | <div>28</div>                                | <div>29</div> <div>9am - Ladies Bible</div>                    | <div>30</div> <div>Mail Towers</div> <div>6:30pm - 4-H - B</div> <div>7pm - U.M. Women's</div> | <div>31</div> <div>10:30am - Lunch</div> <div>4:30pm - Lunch</div> | <div>1</div>  |

***People to remember in prayer:***



**Hoffman Sympathies:** to the family of Nancy Kinnison, as she passed away on June 5, 2020  
to the family of Nadine Thompson, as she passed away on June 11, 2020

**At Home:** Phil Blue, Nan Guthrie, Valaria Harshbarger, Cindy Johnston, Helen Keller, Kathy Kinsey,  
Terry & Wendy Long, Mary Maess, Dick & Eugenie Markley, Miriam Miller, Shirley Richhart,  
and Monica Winemiller

**At Centers:** Joetta Perry, Storypoint Troy, 1840 Towne Park Drive Rm 17, Troy, OH 45373

***Please remember all of our shut-ins with cards and prayers.***

## ***THANK YOU AND ANNOUNCEMENTS***

A special **Veterans Day** program honoring all Union Township veterans and their families will take place on Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. in the Activity Center. Everyone is invited. A video will be created to go along with stories submitted about each veteran featured. Organizers are asking anyone wanting to include family members to send pictures and stories, branch of service, and years served as quickly as possible. Your pictures will be returned. Information is sought now as it will take a while to coordinate all the information. Send your information to: Attention Nancy Studebaker, Hoffman United Methodist Church, 201 S. Main St., West Milton

Dear Church Family, Thank you for your prayers, calls, and cards in recent months. I greatly appreciate them all.  
Carol Bailey

Thank you for all prayers, cards, calls, flowers and concerns after my recent fall, during rehab and after returning home with home rehab still. I am so blessed.  
Miriam Miller

Do you have a friend or family member who would like to receive our monthly newsletter? Once you get their permission, let us know their name and address and we will add them to our mailing list.  
Call (937) 698-4401 or email: humchurch@gmail.com.

If you are watching Sunday services online, please comment how many in your family are watching.  
Special thanks to Erin Studebaker for tracking attendance during our online services. We appreciate you!

**Electronic donations** can be made directly to the church by contacting your bank. Your bank then sends a check to the church for no charge. Please contact John Ankerman, Finance Chair at (937)478-2078 with any questions.

**Grandma's Kitchen** will remain closed in July and August. We will determine at a later date, if we will open back up in September.

**Hoffman Garage Sale** for this year has been cancelled.

**The 2020 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Art Show** has been cancelled. 2021 show dates are July 30<sup>th</sup> thru August 1<sup>st</sup>. Thanks to everyone who has been involved in the show in past years. We look forward to the 2021 Show.

**Women's "The Holy Spirit and You" class** will resume on Thursdays Sept 10<sup>th</sup> – Oct 1<sup>st</sup> 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.  
Questions? call Mary Ann Martens (937)719-3043

**Save the Date! Hoffman UMC Annual Picnic will be Sunday, August 9<sup>th</sup>** at the home of Marty and Wendy Black. Swimming begins at 2:30, Dinner at 5:30 pm. More details to follow in the August newsletter.

### ***Theda's Thoughts***

Submitted by Theda Klepinger

During this month of celebration may we remember to celebrate God's unconditional, unfailing love through our Lord, Jesus Christ. We can joyfully sing the hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus". He is above all our earthly friendships and He is our greatest friend.



## Summer 2020 Updates

### **Vacation Bible School:** July 19-23 (6:00PM-7:00PM)

We have decided to do something different for this summer's VBS. We will meet each evening in the activity center and participate in the opening, music, Bible story and science experiment. Once that is all finished, we will send home the craft materials, snack materials and recreation ideas for that day. Parents will be asked to stay and participate with their children and to bring blankets to sit on in the activity center. An email will come out with a link for registering in the next few weeks.

### **Lunch Bunch:** June-August

We are currently serving 28 families between Good Shepherd Lutheran and Hoffman Church. These families are getting meals, fresh fruit and vegetables, milk, and a variety of other items to help them over the weekend. Each Friday the families come and pick up their food. If you would like to help us financially, we would appreciate it. Your check can be written out to Hoffman UMC, with Lunch Bunch in the memo line.

### **Sunday School/Nursery:**

We will not be having Sunday school or the nursery open during the month of July. I hope to have something during the month of August.

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## Missions Fund Update

As a part of the missions' fund committee, I have been asked to share what we have been using the mission money for over the past year or so. Through the amazing generosity of our congregation we have been able to help provide:

Peanut Butter for Helping Hands

Back to School Supplies

West Ohio Annual Conference Offering

Daily Bread books for Visitation

Crop Walk

United Methodist Special Sundays

Clothes for a family after a fire

Car seat for a baby in need

Bulldog Bags P.O. Box/Paperwork

Utility needs for various people

Car payments, lodgings, etc.

## Our New Member



Wendy Heisey

Welcome officially to the membership of Hoffman UMC Wendy! Currently Wendy is serving as a Trustee and is a Sunday School teacher. She lives in West Milton with her husband, Jeremy. She works at the Milton Union Public Library as the Children's librarian.



*I pray that you'll know  
how special you are.  
The Lord knows that when  
He made you, He created  
a one-of-a-kind treasure.  
I pray you'll know it, too.*

*For You formed my inward parts;  
You covered me in my mother's womb  
I will praise You, for I am fearfully and  
wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works.  
Psalm 139:13-14 NKJV*



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united methodist church  
201 S Main Street  
West Milton OH 45383

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the **open door**  
come as you are

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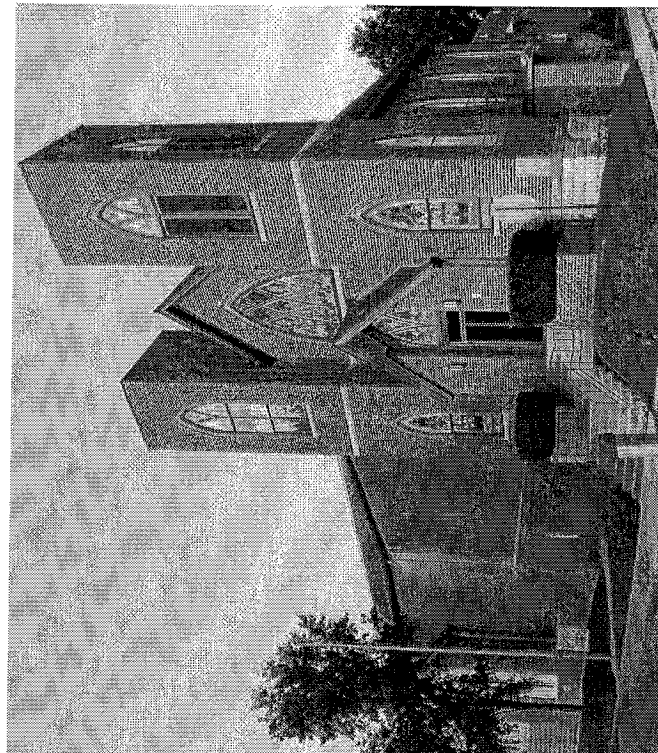
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Return Service Requested

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TOWERS  
THERS



July  
2020

**HOFFMAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Worship Time: 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.

Sunday School: 10:15 a.m.

(937) 698-4401 Website: HoffmanUMC.org

Pastor Robbie Scott