



Emanuel United Church of Christ “THE MUD CHURCH”

13989 Twp. Rd. 127, P.O. Box 121
Upper Sandusky, OH 43351
419-294-4144
www.themudchurch.com

Heritage Sunday

Our annual Heritage Sunday celebration began with the re-enactment of something the Mud Church did in 1909. While the present church was being built, worship services were held in the one-room school – Bardon School - just north of the church. On the day they laid the cornerstone of the new building, the congregation met at the school, then walked south to the church while singing “Onward Christian Soldiers. Thanks to the family of the late Karl Gerber, who saved the engraved stone containing the school identification along with some bricks from the old building, we created a monument to the Bardon School, and the day the congregation made the march down the road.

Heritage Sunday also included a special worship service, homemade stew cooked over a fire in front of the church, and a hayride.



At the Corner of Corn and Beans

Honoring our heritage is important for many reasons. At the Mud Church, we celebrate our history with our annual Heritage Sunday. This issue of our neighborhood newsletter contains many pictures from that day. To further celebrate, I want to take some space in this column to acknowledge the very beginning of Emanuel United Church of Christ.

For every action there is an equal, and opposite, reaction. This scientific principle applies to our neighborhood. The departure of the Wyandottes from Ohio in 1843, while an unfortunate story in American history, had an equal and opposite reaction as it made it possible for German immigrants to settle their families in the wooded areas around the rivers and streams of this area. Among them were “reformers” who, like Martin Luther (namesake of the Lutheran Church) were caused to worship differently from the Roman Catholic Church when the church leaders in Rome would not make certain changes.

A group of these reformers, families who mostly spoke only German, began to worship together in each other's homes. This was in 1850 – only seven years after the Wyandottes left. As more and more settlers poured into the area, there became enough German reformers that they decided to build a church.

In 1855, they constructed a rudimentary, one-room structure similar to the houses in the neighborhood. To keep out the bad weather, they filled the cracks and gaps in the walls with a plaster made of mud and straw.

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Corn & Beans

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As a result of that construction technique, the church gained the nickname "Mud Church." As the neighborhood grew over the years, so did the church membership until, in 1870, they built a larger, brick structure. While there is only an artist's drawing of what the original Mud Church probably looked like, we have photographs of the first brick church. In 1909, the church had outgrown this building and they built the present church building.



Side note: The bell in the tower is the original church bell, and we have the receipt for it. Purchased from the Cincinnati Bell Company, it cost \$89 and came with a handwritten note, "Lifetime warranty."

In many ways, the folks who attend today's Mud Church are also reformers. Our neighborhood, nation, and world have been through many transformational events since 1850. The Civil War and two world wars, The Great Depression, a baby boom, as well as the dramatic and rapid advancement in modern machinery and technology. No more building churches with horses and block-and-tackle equipment. Perhaps the most important transformation in our lifetime has been life after the covid pandemic. The closing of church buildings due to that virus forced us to change how we "did church," and reformed our way of thinking.

Honoring our heritage is important for many reasons, but the reformation in our society in the past few years tells us the Mud Church is not our grand-parents' church anymore. It's our church, and with it comes the responsibility to not just put people in the pews, but to spread the news of Jesus Christ that will always be relevant no matter how much the neighborhood our world around us changes.

- Pastor Jay



Look through this newsletter at the smiles on the people of the Mud Church as they carry out the mission of Christ to find new followers for Him. Then, make your own reformational decision to join us where "no matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here."

Trunk or Treat

The threat of rain moved our annual Trunk or Treat activity inside, but we still had a great time greeting neighborhood kids in costume who came to visit. We ended the day with chili cooked over a fire.



Shoebbox Project

The Mud Church again this year participated in the Samaritan's Purse Shoebbox Project, filling special boxes with Christmas gifts for children in Africa. We filled 38 boxes with a total value of approximately \$1,100!

Hymn Sing

We gathered with folks from the neighborhood for our annual Hymn Sing on August 27. We spent a couple of hours singing our favorite hymns, heard some special music from special singers, and then ate ice cream!



Pie Day

It was Pie Day at the Mud Church on Sunday, November 12. Dale Wolfe, Mike Hetzel and auctioneer Doug Walton judged the pies entered in the contest, then Doug auctioned off the pies raising \$635 for our adopt-a-family gifts and for local food banks. While the judges took their time, the church folks ate chicken pot pie and shepherd's pie.

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EMANUEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

"The Mud Church"

*Support
Your
Neighborhood
Church*



Sunday Service - 10 a.m.
Sunday School - 9:15 a.m.

419-294-4144

themudchurch.com

13989 Township Rd. 127, Upper Sandusky, OH



Join Us for Advent Season



Peace
Joy
Love
Hope

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

**Sunday,
December 24, 2023
7:00 p.m.**

Join us for our annual Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at 7:00 p.m. on December 24. We'll honor the birth of Jesus with great music, Pastor Jay's Christmas message, Holy Communion, and the lighting of candles as we sing "Silent Night, Holy Night." Always a truly inspirational night of worship and praise. You and your family will not be disappointed.

