



## Message from the Pastor

## WHAT'S INSIDE



### FREE INDEED

**John 8:31-36** <sup>31</sup> Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. <sup>32</sup> And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." <sup>33</sup> They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free'?" <sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. <sup>35</sup> And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. <sup>36</sup> Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed."

In this text Jesus, who is TRUTH, speaks to those who profess one thing but their actions say something else. Jesus was not speaking of a philosophical truth but the truth that leads to salvation.

We are living in difficult times. People are wrestling with a pandemic in COVID-19 that seeks to steal their life and another pandemic in racism that seeks to oppress and kill people of color. Protest for what is right and just, but I encourage all to register to vote and then VOTE in every election at every level, local, state and national. A good informational website on strategic voting is <https://votequadrant.com/>.

Founder Mike Muse says: "Vote Quadrant is a solution created to affect change within the criminal justice system, at the local level, by voting solely on the issue of ending police brutality. A recommendation for strategic voting. Vote Quadrant is a system that teaches us how to vote strategically to end police brutality. It's not enough to say vote, but it's important to know how to vote."

The Quadrant focuses on four municipal offices: mayor, district attorney, police chief, and judges. (Since the police chief is typically appointed rather than elected, your focus extends to whoever appoints them — generally the mayor or city/county manager.) That is where criminal justice reform begins; that is where we must exercise our power. Granted, it's all too easy to say "vote strategically" without providing the tools and resources to make it a reality. So it's time to do just that."

Voting is your "blood bought right" and many people marched, protested and died for your voice and your vote to matter. Use your power at the poles and vote strategically.

Finally, I want to thank you for your continued support of this Ministry through your prayers, financial support, and by staying connected through the worship and ministry opportunities available. Know that you are missed and I continue to keep you in prayer. Stay safe until we meet again!

*Living in God's Assurance,  
Pastor Luke E. Torian*

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*To all those  
celebrating in July!*



## The MESSENGER



Rev. John McNeill, Jr.

MESSAGE  
TO OUR  
YOUTHKEYS, CELL PHONE, WALLET,  
MASK, GOD!

*The LORD bless you and keep you...  
Numbers 6:24 NKJV*

I enjoy the month of June! Each year I look forward to the season of graduations and proms, summer jobs and summer vacations, and celebrations and transitions. This year, I am especially excited to acknowledge the successful completion of your school year and your efforts towards making it happen.

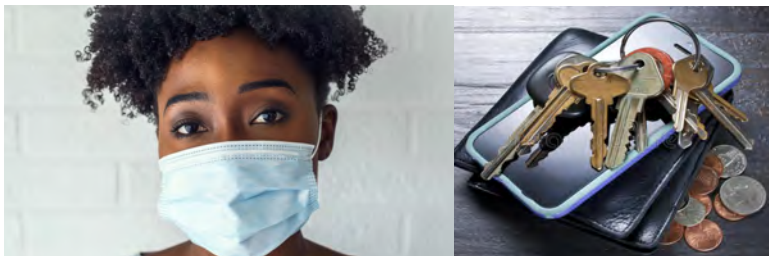
This year was quite different, though. It felt different, and the lines were blurred. We could not interact with our friends and colleagues in an expected way. Our homes and kitchen tables became work and study spaces.

I recently heard a song by an artist named Peter CottonTale entitled "Keys, Cell Phone, Wallet, God," and it prompted me to consider what is essential for us to carry these days. Simply put, keys allow us to access spaces and to come and go as we please; cell phones are mini-computers that allow us to stay connected with others, to surf the net, and to save memorable moments; wallets hold our ID's, cash and debit cards. Our ID's confirm to others who we are, and I don't believe I need to explain the value of cash and debit cards...lol.

You may have noticed the difference between my list and the song title. I added the word "mask" to my list of essential things. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, masks have become essential for daily use whenever we travel outside our homes. If I were to walk out of the house without my keys, cell phone, wallet, or mask, I would return home for them — and I have before. Should we pray to God whenever we leave home? Yes!

The writer of Numbers 6:24 provides an essential blessing for each of us. Our keys, cell phone, wallet, and mask are useful, but they cannot come close to God's essential nature and presence in our lives. God's blessing comes in the form of divine protection, provision, peace, care, and hope. It is my prayer that our Lord blesses and keeps you this summer and beyond!

*Reverend John C. McNeill, Jr.  
Youth Pastor*

Associate Ministers  
ENCOURAGEMENT AND  
ASSURANCE FOR THE SOUL

## FREEDOM!

*For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery (yoke of slavery: referencing the Mosaic law). Galatians 5:1 NRSV*

*It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. For everything we know about God's Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That's an act of true freedom. If you bite and ravage each other, watch out—in no time at all you will be annihilating each other, and where will your precious freedom be then? Galatians 5:13-15 MSG*

Our freedom to come and go as we please has been taken away due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been asked to stay at home and only go out for food and other necessities. In the midst of the pandemic, we are faced with a more visible increase in racism and brutality against people of color. The 4th of July, under normal circumstances, is the date that Independence Day is celebrated in America. Celebrations go back to the 18th century and the American Revolution, but this year will be different. The notion that this nation was founded upon the idea that God created human beings to be free has been brought into question throughout the years. The Declaration of Independence states that people "are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness." As we struggle in this country with staying safe from COVID-19 and staying safe and alive as people of color, let us not forget that while our freedom on this earth is not as we would like it to be, we, as Christians, can rest in knowing that as members of the body of Christ we are free! As Christians, we must conduct ourselves as examples of how to keep everyone safe from COVID-19, and how to effect change and bring about justice for people of color. Our weapons should be that of prayer, worship, praise, love, and peace. Keep the faith. This too shall pass.

*Rev. Kathy M. Russell*

If you keep God  
at the center of  
your life,  
everything else will  
fall into place!

## The MESSENGER

LEADERSHIP  
THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

As we made you aware in last month's Messenger, every first Friday of the month, your FMZ Leadership - Deacons, Deaconesses and Trustees, pray and fast for this Body of Believers. Below is the devotional discussion from June 5th.

During the May 31st Sunday School lesson, *The King's Eternal Throne*, Rev. Brian Woolfolk espoused the "power of music" as he taught on Psalm 45:1-17, a royal wedding song. This is the description of music that he read: "Music touches our soul because it expresses at times what we can't verbally express ourselves or that it expresses nearly exactly how we feel. Music touches a cord within us that resonates with our heart, mind, and spirit. At times, music helps us to forget our troubles for a moment and lifts us to another dimension." Morris Chapman's song, "I Know the Plans" from Jeremiah 29:11, will "touch your soul." Morris went home to be with the Lord May 2, 2020 at the age of 82, leaving a legacy of praise and worship songs. He was truly an anointed Psalmist. Short background on Jeremiah 29: the Hebrew children were in exile in Babylon when Jeremiah spoke this prophetic scripture... like our condition today, estranged from people we love, estranged from normalcy and most recently, incensed, feeling angry over the shameful death of George Floyd.

Jeremiah 29: 11 – 13 (NKJV)

11. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
12. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.
13. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Beloved, it is "such a time as this" that we all need to be reminded that, no matter our circumstances... Pandemic, Social/Racial Injustices, Sickness, Job loss, Loss of Loved Ones ... God has a Plan for YOU.

To hear this anointed song simply Google or YouTube search "Morris Chapman: I Know The Plans." Then listen, meditate, and quiet your soul." Selah

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=id9vAc\\_DeUA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=id9vAc_DeUA)

*Deacon Ronald Cooper  
on behalf of  
FMZ Leadership Chaplains*

Deaconess Ministry

DEPENDENCE ON  
GOD ON  
INDEPENDENCE DAY!

On July 4, 2020, the United States will celebrate her 244th birthday of Independence. Amid our annual celebration of "independence" we must look, again, to our dependence as Christians. As we prepare to celebrate 244 years of independence, know that we are able to do so only because of our unwavering dependence on God's mercy and grace.

What does it mean to be dependent on God in an independent world? As teens, we want independence. As women, we want independence. As a nation, we want independence. However, do we have to depend on our own strength alone? Consider the freedom in submission. Clearly, God wants us to use the gifts that he has given us and he wants us to grow in understanding, and seek to make wise choices. However, we do not have to depend on ourselves, or take His blessings for granted.

When we engage in any activity or when we are faced with a life decision, we have the option of depending on ourselves, or depending on God. The Bible makes it clear how dangerous it can be to trust our understanding. It is to our benefit as Christians, to put everything in His hands and seek His direction and guidance. This dependence begins with our evaluation of the situation. Since I believe He can help me do anything, I go to Him for everything. Independence Day reminds us to reflect on our dependence on God.

The glory of Jesus Christ is that His salvation grants us the independence we personally seek. Salvation in Christ provides everlasting-life, perfect freedom, and surpassing joy. He secured our rights with His precious blood. He maintains our rights with His irrefutable power. Nothing may come against His governing reign and He guarantees His kingdom is everlasting.

If we find consolation in celebrating the 1776 Declaration of Independence written by mortal men; we can find exceeding joy in celebrating the unfathomable glorious promises of God.

*Submitted by Cynthia R. Brown,  
FMZ Deaconess Ministry*

*I can do all things through Christ who  
strengthens me. Philippians 4:13.*



*Reverend  
Dr. Sandra K.  
Agnew James  
Doctor of Ministry*



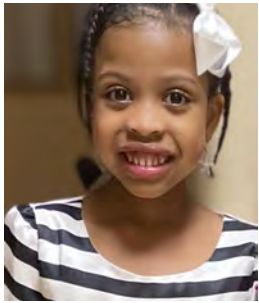
*Dr. Telia Hughes  
Doctor of Business  
Administration*



*Class of 2020*

# The MESSENGER

# 2020 GRADUATES



Taylor E. Ragin



Carter Hall



Ethan Makari Withers



Owen Carter Lewis



Lane D. Brooks



Ivy Gwynne Johnson



Destiny Lanae Jones



Dexter Jackson



Jaylen Parker Bryson



Nijah L. Simmons



Vanessa Lufuluabu



Courtney Dickerson



Damon Price, Jr.



Dominique B. Johnson



Emon H. Green



Courtney Diggs



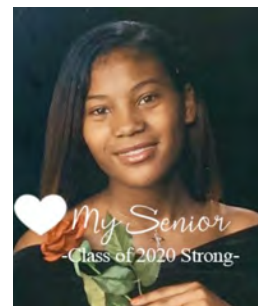
Bryce Evan Merriweather



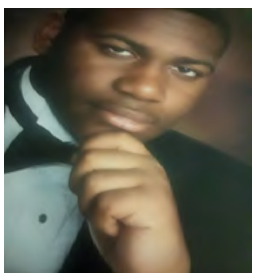
Lauryn Hill



James E. Henry, Jr.



Sarah Raye Lisbon



Xavier O. Bridges



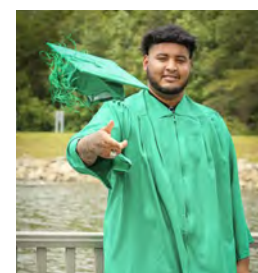
Tinia Moore



Solomon K. Davis



Staci Kiara Johnson



Reuben "RJ" Adams

CONGRATULATIONS!

# The MESSENGER

# 2020 GRADUATES



Sadara Funches



T. Alexandra Holliman



Mark Anthony Jessup, Jr.



Zoe Christophe



Owen James



Leah Boone



Alexandria Hunter



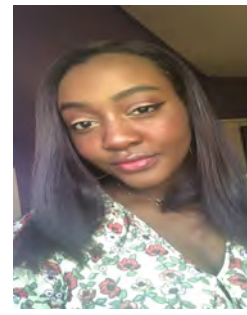
Robert Hunter



Sterling Hardeman



Maya Thompson



Cornelie Lufuluabu, AA



George C. Henderson



Siara Corprew, BA



William D. Mends-Cole II, BS



Zevin O. Holley, BS



Nicholas W. Smith, BS



Isaiah D. Woolfolk, BSC



Tayandra Allen, BM/BA



Ciara Jones, BS



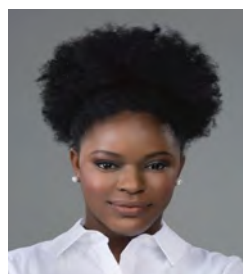
Aneisha Johnson-Morris, BA



Brandon Pitt, BA



Demetress Dawson, BSM



Zoel Mareath Stackhouse, MPS



Stacey Griggs, MA



Alyce Best, MBA



Arnita Best, M.S.

CONGRATULATIONS!

## The MESSENGER

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
AWARDS "CEREMONY"*"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12 NKJV*

## HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES HONORED

With COVID-19 "robbing" high school graduates of an opportunity to walk across the graduation stage, First Mount Zion sought to honor them on Sunday, June 28, during the 11 am Worship Service. While nothing can take the place of a young person's high school commencement, this special **"Blessing and Launch"** service was a small gesture to let graduates and their families know that we recognize their "loss." The program, which was hosted by the Christian Education Department's (CED) Youth Ministry, allowed the Pastor and other CED ministry leaders to congratulate, pray for, and launch our graduates into the next stage of their journeys, be it college, military, or the work force. The graduates processed in on Pomp and Circumstance, had their names called by Rev. John McNeill (Youth Minister), and "walked across the stage" for a photo op with Rev. Dr. Luke E. Torian (Pastor) and Rev. Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley (Minister of the CED). **The graduates honored were:** Leah Boone; Xavier Bridges; Solomon Davis; Courtney Diggs; Sadara Funches (represented by her father); Emon Green; James Henry; Tyla Holloman; Owen James; Mark Jessup Jr.; Antoinette Lennon; Dominique Johnson; and Staci Johnson. Graduates not present were: Reuben Adams (had to report to college early due to athletic requirements); Courtney Dickerson; Lauren Hill; Lillian Tapp; and Maya Thompson.

To experience this Worship service, please visit our website at [www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com) and view the June 28, 2020 service "On Demand." Thank you to the CORE Ministry, Academic Education Ministry, Youth Ministry, Security Ministry, Ushers' Ministry, Photography Ministry, AV Ministry, Leadership, Staff, and all those who served to make this day possible. To God be all the glory!

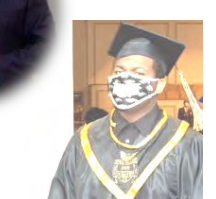
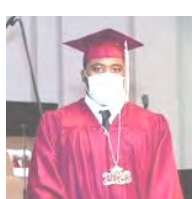
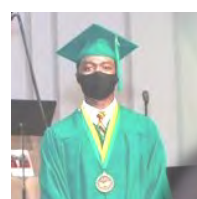
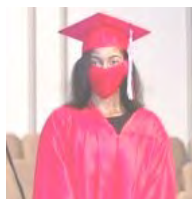
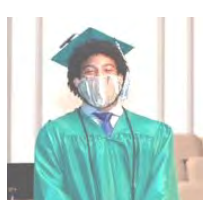
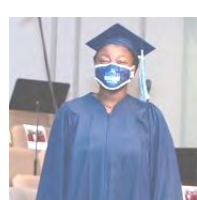
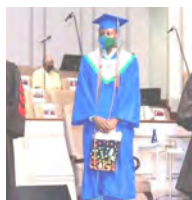
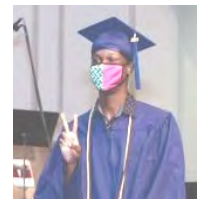
## HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS RECEIVE FMZ SCHOLARSHIPS

During the June 28, 2020 Worship Service, 11 high school graduates received either a First Mount Zion Scholar Award of \$2,500 or an Achiever Award of \$2,000. Recipients had to meet various criteria, to include ministry and community service, Church membership of at least one year, acceptance to an institution of higher learning, and submission of an essay. Students received points based on their level of activities and grade point averages, which helped determine which award they would receive. The Academic Education Ministry Chair, Mr. Gerry Griffin, along with Scholarship Committee member, Ms. Cheryl Minor, presented the following awards: Leah Boone (Scholar); Xavier Bridges (Achiever); Solomon Davis (Achiever); Courtney Diggs (Scholar); Emon Green (Scholar); Tyla Holloman (Achiever); and Dominique Johnson (Scholar). Scholarship recipients not present were: Courtney Dickerson (Achiever); Sadara Funches (Scholar); Lauren Hill (Achiever); and Lillian Tapp (Scholar). We thank God and the congregation for the resources to bless these outstanding students for their academic achievements.

## HISTORICAL HINKITCH IRVIN BELL SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

First Mount Zion Baptist Church was blessed to witness the first Hinkitch Irvin Bell Scholarship awarded to Ms. Dominique Johnson in the amount of \$2,500. This Scholarship was established by the children of Mr. Hinkitch Irvin Bell, two of whom are FMZ members (Ms. Oonagh Bell and Ms. Cheryl Bell-Brathwaite). The Scholarship is specifically for a First Mount Zion high school graduate who meets the Scholarship criteria and exemplifies the spirit of educational excellence found in Mr. Hinkitch Irvin Bell.

cont'd on page 7 - -



## The MESSENGER



- - cont'd from page 6

Ms. Cheryl Bell-Brathwaite, the Committee Chair of the Bell Scholarship, shared that their father was the "consummate educator who believed in helping others, especially those less fortunate than he, and he was always thinking of ways to better himself in the areas of life." She added that "as a young adult, his main goal was to improve public health conditions across the island of Barbados and throughout the Caribbean." Mr. Bell received many accolades throughout his life, with one of the most notable being the "first Public Health Inspector in Barbados to receive National Honors for his contribution for over 50 years to Public Health in the region." Ms. Cheryl Bell-Brathwaite, upon awarding the scholarship, shared these inspiring words for the surprised recipient: *"In reading your essay, Dominique, we see in you the determination to help those in need, excel in life, to be the best that you can be in whatever area you choose to serve, and your commitment to achieving these goals. It is our prayer that wherever life leads you, you stay determined, relevant, positive, and committed, with all your goals in sight, allowing God always to lead your life. God bless you and we look forward to hearing good things from and about you in the future."*

What a powerful example of love for family and church the Bell children have shown by establishing this scholarship in honor of their father and in love for the young people of this congregation. May the Lord continue to bless this family as they live out their father's spirit by blessing others.

*Submitted by*  
*Rev. Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley*



As we enter Summer, The CORE has had a successful Spring despite challenging circumstances presented by the Coronavirus pandemic. While facing the task of finding new and innovative ways to connect Young Adults who have a desire to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ, during social distancing parameters, The CORE delivered!

In March, The CORE began a 14-day prayer call, providing Young Adults with an opportunity to lean on prayer and positivity during uncertain times. The CORE believes in the power of prayer and truly felt that our prayers helped to make a difference. While having to maintain distance for the safety of ourselves and our loved ones, The CORE relied on technology to stay connected and maintain our network of Young Adult Christians within FMZBC. Whether it was through our group chat, social media, or ZOOM game nights, the distance mandated by Coronavirus Guidelines only helped to create closer bonds within First Mount Zion's Young Adult Ministry.

In June, Rev. Glenda Brown led The Ministry of LIFE, The CORE's monthly spiritual growth session, via ZOOM. This lesson was truly a blessing as Rev. Brown taught us so much about "Growing Up in the 21st Century". We sincerely thank her and all who participated. Later in June, men from The CORE participated in "Bruh-Man Feud" presented by the Men's Ministry. We had so much fun and had a great showing coming in 2nd place! We are grateful for the invitation and cannot wait to participate again.

Despite uncertain circumstances, we Thank God for sustaining our Ministry. He has kept us, protected us, and helped to make our ministry stronger than ever. We have already begun making plans for the future and look forward to discovering all of the ways He plans to use us as a ministry!

*Submitted by Brother Darnell Wright*



Rev. William H. Lamar IV, Pastor  
Metropolitan AME Church

As you are all aware, we have been keeping ourselves as safe as possible and staying at home due to COVID-19. Now, Summer has arrived, and with it, our usual break for the ministries which will run through August. We appreciate all of you who serve and support the many ministries in our congregation and who were able to navigate through this crisis, keeping their ministries in touch via ZOOM calls, SKYPE, conference calls, and the like. Your service and hard work make us stronger and more responsive to the needs of our members and the larger community despite the unexpected inconvenience.

Our annual Revival will be held virtually this year and only for three days, August 3rd - 5th. (Please check our Website for further information.) Revival is about spiritual renewal and a fresh perspective on God's word. It is my hope that you will attend virtually and experience the renewal of your spirit and an increased closeness with Christ. Our revivalist this year, Rev. William H Lamar IV, is no stranger to us as he blessed us during our 2019 Revival. Our 2020 Revival theme will continue to highlight "Living in God's Assurance". Please pray that the Lord will give us an awesome time of revival, that we continue to grow together, and that this pandemic will be controlled sooner, rather than later, so that we can all gather together under one roof, for worship!

*Pastor Torian*

## The MESSENGER



**Due to the temporary closure of the Church because of the threat of the Coronavirus, all activities have been suspended. PLEASE BE SAFE AND CONTINUE TO ADHERE TO THE CDC GUIDELINES!**

**ON-LINE ACTIVITIES:**

Weekly Youth Ministry Conference Calls Wednesday's conference call Middle School (6th – 8th Graders) Chat and Prayer Wednesdays from 2pm-2:30pm.

High School (9th-11th Graders) Chat and Prayer Wednesdays from 3 pm to 3:30 pm

Please dial **571-260-6833** and follow the audio prompts below:

**Conference Number: 7482#**  
**PIN:6000#**

Weekly Zoom call - Senior (12th Graders Only) Chat and Prayer Thursdays from 2 pm to 2:30 pm Dial -in from your cell phone or electronic device by clicking the following Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/250366652>.

POC: Reverend John McNeill  
Youth Minister  
703-670-0184  
[jmcneill@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:jmcneill@firstmountzionbc.org)



**All activities are postponed until further notice. Please contact the below-named individual for further information.**

POC: Pamela Knight  
[singlesministry@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:singlesministry@firstmountzionbc.org)



**SHARE FOOD DISTRIBUTION IS YET TO BE DETERMINED FOR JULY. PLEASE CALL BRO. THOMAS BATES AT 703-330-6371 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION!!**

Join us in Bible Study

**WEDNESDAY NIGHTS****THE EPISTLE TO THE PHILIPPIANS**

Live Stream: [www.FMZBC.com](http://www.FMZBC.com)

Conference Call: (571) 260-6833

conference number: 7482#

conference PIN: 6000#

Facebook Live @ 7:30p

**SUBMISSIONS FOR NEWSLETTER:**

All members are encouraged to submit articles, photos, and events for inclusion in the Newsletter. Please be sure to clear all submissions with your Ministry Leader before sending to the Communications and Publicity Ministry. Submissions **should not exceed 300-350 words** and must be received no later than **12 noon on the 15th of each month** to be considered for the upcoming newsletter. Please note that we reserve the right to edit as necessary.

Submissions should be sent to:

[cpm1@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:cpm1@firstmountzionbc.org)

or through our web form at:

[http://bit.ly/FMZBC\\_Articles](http://bit.ly/FMZBC_Articles)

We look forward to your participation!!

Thank you!

**Communications and Publicity Ministry**

Joseph Boutte, Chair  
Oonagh Bell Benson Blake  
Beverly Grant James Hawkins  
Sylvia Moore Rev. Kathy Russell  
Deaconess Claudia Woolfolk

Rev. Dr. Luke E. Torian, Pastor  
Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James, Assistant Pastor  
Sylvia Moore, Executive Assistant  
Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator  
Chesley Doctor, Chair, Trustee Ministry  
Jeffrey Manning, Chair, Deacon Ministry  
Carole Roney, Chair, Deaconess Ministry

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Email: [fmzbc@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:fmzbc@firstmountzionbc.org)  
Website: [www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com)

**Sunday Worship Service Schedule****Online and Streaming**

Sunday School – 9:45 AM (All Ages) Second Service – 11:00 AM

**Wednesday Night Bible Study Schedule****Online and Streaming**

Bible Study – 8:00 PM

**Monthly Wednesday Worship Service Schedule (last Wednesday of each month)**

Praise and Worship – 7:30 PM  
Worship Service with Associate Ministers – 8:00 PM

**Fifth Sunday Unity Worship Service Schedule**

Check website for current info through COVID  
[www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com)

**Connect with us on Social Media:**

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/fmzbcdumfries](http://www.facebook.com/fmzbcdumfries)  
Twitter: [@fmzbc1](https://twitter.com/fmzbc1)  
Instagram: [@thecore\\_fmzbc](https://www.instagram.com/thecore_fmzbc)  
Vimeo: [vimeo.com/25203195](https://vimeo.com/25203195)  
Linked In: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1890924/>



**The TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY has been temporarily suspended due to Covid-19 and will resume when full activities at the Church have been restored!**