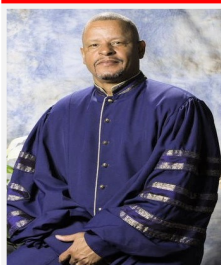




*A Ministry Exhibiting
A Spirit of Excellence!*

*2022 Theme:
We Are Stronger Together - Ecclesiastes 4:9*

Christmas Message from the Pastor



CELEBRATE THE GOODNESS OF GOD WITH THANKSGIVING

Psalm 107:1-2 "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.² Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy;"

The psalmist reminds us to give thanks. As we move toward the end of another year, we have many reasons to be thankful. This year has been a great year of celebration for the First Mount Zion Baptist Church family. We live in our "new Normal" as we move to in person worship and Bible Study in addition to our online virtual worship (Hybrid). We have celebrated great milestones in the history of our Church's 155th Anniversary and the burning of our Church mortgage.

We are thankful for the gathering of family and friends. But most of all we are thankful for the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I invite you to join us in worship as we remember the best gift of all...the gift of salvation.

Remember those in prayer who may find this time of year difficult due to the illness or death of someone they love. Through it all God is still good to us, and we are thankful.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

*We Are Stronger Together
Pastor Torian*



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WELCOME WELCOME WELCOME



Youth

on

on
BLAST - - In A Good Way!



DEVYNNE CAMILLE BEST Is a 2022 graduate of North Point High School in Waldorf, MD. Devynne was on the Principal's Honor Roll throughout her years in school and graduated Summa Cum Laude with a grade point average of 4.36. She maintained her GPA throughout high school while taking Advanced Placement and Honors classes.

Devynne joined and was baptized at FMZBC in 2010 and has participated in various ministries to include: the Jewels Choir, Children's Church, Vacation Bible School, Youth Ministry, Youth Explosions, and the Voices of Zion Choir.

She thanks her Church family for their continued support and prayers. Let us continue to pray for this young lady as the Lord continues to direct her path.

Submitted by
Reverend Dr. Tracey Dawkins-Holley

COME JOIN OUR
BIBLE

Study

**JOIN US IN PERSON
ON
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS
AT 7:30PM.**

. . . AND . . .

**IF YOU TRULY CANNOT BE PHYSI-
CALLY WITH US, THEN JOIN US
ONLINE @**

<https://live.lifestream.tv/first-mount-zion-baptist-church>

<https://www.facebook.com/fmzbcumfries>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzFC03nn-QRn0bzNDEefeGQ>

<https://firstmountzionbc.org/bible-study-handouts/>





In the Spotlight

In the Spotlight

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR OWN

Lena M. Gooden

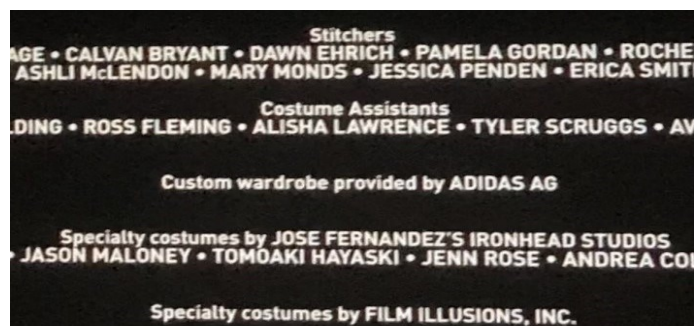


Congratulations to one of our own

ALISHA LAWRENCE

who is one of the Costume Assistants for the movie
Wakanda Forever!

YOU ROCK!!!!



Lena is a member of Zone M-2 and a Senior at Osborn Park High School in Manassas, VA, Class of 2023, and is destined for greatness. Here is just a little snippet of her achievements to date: Her Academic GPA is 4.16; she ranks in the top 12% of her class; she is a three-time All-American in the Long Jump and, for the third time, she is the Virginia State Long Jump Champion (both Indoor and Outdoor). Her academic history is impressive and, just to name a few, she is (and has been) enrolled in the Bio-technology Program at Osborn Park High School and, during that same time period, Lena completed/enrolled in seven science courses and six AP courses. Not only are her academic achievements impressive, her extracurricular activities do not fall far behind. Again, just to name a few, for the past five years, Lena was a Junior Usher at First Mount Zion; was President of the Black Student Union for one year and has served on the BSU for three years, She served as President of Jack and Jill of America Teen Group after having been a member for nine years; she served on the Principal's Advisory Council and, for four years, she was a member of the track team, three of which she served as track captain and, to top this all off, she was named Gatorade Virginia High School Female Athlete of the Year! This is only the beginning for Lisa and we know that God has great things in store for her. She wants to become an OB/GYN, and we have no doubt that she will do just that! Not only have you made your parents proud, the entire First Mount Zion Family is proud of your commitment, dedication and the hard work that you have put in to make a positive mark in this world!

Kudos to you!!!



These photos reflect Lena signing with Vanderbilt University for Track & Field.

"I'm ecstatic to choose Vanderbilt as my next home and blessed to have this opportunity. Track and field has opened doors for me I previously never thought possible."

- - Lena Gooden



ARE YOU READY FOR CHRISTMAS?

The closer we get to Christmas Day, the more you'll hear this question:

"Are you ready for Christmas?"

What exactly does this question mean to you?

"Have you finished your shopping?"

"Have you wrapped all your presents?"

"Have you bought all the food you'll need for that perfect Christmas dinner?"

"Have you finished buying those last-minute stocking stuffers?"

I think these are the thoughts that pop into our head when people ask, "Are you ready for Christmas?"

But deep down in my heart, I'm never comfortable answering this question. If Christmas is truly about the coming of Jesus to save us from our sins, then perhaps the question we should *really* be asking is this:

Are we ready for Christ?

Are we ready to humbly admit our need for a savior?

Are we ready for Jesus to continue refining the rough places of our ugly flesh?

Are we ready to surrender that one area of our lives that keeps tripping us up?

Are we ready to say yes to Him when our fear compels us to say no?

I'd much rather answer the questions about whether my shopping is done and if my kids' stockings are ready (they're not!). It's easier to smile and say I still have that one last gift to wrap and those last few items to get at Kroger for our Christmas brunch.

But it's much harder to admit that my flesh is still fighting against selfish pride. Every. Single. Day.

I need a savior every moment of every day!

It's hard to confess that there are several rough places in my soul needing a gentle touch and smoothing out by the grace of God.

I need Jesus to not only be my redeemer, but my holy refiner!

It's hard to own up to the fact that I'm fearful of the unknown and what lurks around the corner of the next phase of my life.

I need the peace of Jesus to calm my fears!

Am I ready for Christ?

Yes.

I'm ready for Him to take all the yucky, ugly, shameful, fearful things in my flesh and make them into something beautiful that only HE can accomplish. Yes, I'm ready. Because my way of doing things—apart from Him—doesn't usually turn out very well.

On Christmas Day, the gifts will be unwrapped, the stockings will be emptied, and the food will be gobbled up. And just days afterward, the tree will come down, the Christmas decorations boxed up and the after-Christmas sales will expire.

Nobody will ask you again until next year, "Are you ready for Christmas?"

But each and every day after Christmas, we must answer this question: **Are you ready for Christ?**

Ready for Him to interfere with your plans?

Ready for Him to lead you out of your comfort zone?

Ready for Him to take you to the next step of His purpose for you?

So dear friend, I ask you to answer honestly.....**Are you ready for Christ?**

I pray God's richest blessings upon you and your families. May you have a Merry Christmas! But most importantly, I pray you will embrace Jesus Christ every day of the year.

Lisa Preuett
December 24, 2014



WHAT A PHENOMENA!!!



Three of our FMZ Deacons and their beautiful wives have the same Wedding Anniversary and year: Deacon Joe Boutte (Jackie); Deacon Marvin Watson (Jessica); and Deacon Lonnie Wilson (Laurie). They all were married on **December 27, 1986**, hence 108 total years of marriage Bliss!! The Bouttes were married in Talladega, AL. The Watsons were married in Wilmington, NC. The Wilsons were married in Sumpter, SC.

He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the LORD. Proverbs 18:22

These three fellas did well! Praise the Lord!

Submitted by
Deacon Ron Cooper
Chaplain, Deacons' Ministry



I pray that this finds everyone doing well and staying safe. Continue to pray wherever you are during the noon hour, or whenever you can get a break to pray.

Scripture:

1 Timothy 2:1-2 NKJV

Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, [2] for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

1 Timothy 2:1-3 MSG

The first thing I want you to do is pray. Pray every way you know how, for everyone you know. Pray especially for rulers and their governments to rule well so we can be quietly about our business of living simply, in humble contemplation. This is the way our Savior God wants us to live.

Prayer:

Lord, we thank and praise You that You are a Sovereign, Almighty God. No matter how bad or chaotic things may seem, YOU are still in control and Your plan and purpose will prevail. Praying for a peaceful and safe election for workers and voters. May each of us take seriously our right and responsibility to allow our voices to be heard through our vote. When we, Your people, who are called by Your name, humble ourselves and pray and seek Your face and turn from our wicked ways, then, we will hear from heaven, forgive our sin and heal our broken and divided nation so that the hearts of the people will turn back to You.

We place the outcome of these elections into Your hands as we do our part and vote. We continue to pray for wisdom and clear direction for our current and future leaders. Help them to make good decisions as you turn hearts the way that You will have them to go.

We are praying and believing for a great harvest of souls and for Your perfect Will as we strive to be the salt and light that You have called us to be. All the glory, honor and praise belong to YOU! In Jesus Name we pray and give thanks, Amen!

*Sister Carol-Ann Benjamin
Deaconess Pamela Ford
Reverend Maxine Thompson*

ADVENT—A SEASON OF HOPE, PEACE, JOY AND LOVE

“Then the angel of the Lord said to them, Do not be afraid, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:10-11)

We are in the midst of Advent and although the message of Christ is as real today as it was over two thousand years ago, we still get caught up in the materialism of Christmas. Planning parties, buying gifts, and decorating Christmas trees. We tend to forget the humility of Christ's birth - born in a manger not a Hilton. Surrounded by animals not heads of state. Despite Christ's humble beginnings, the cherubim celebrated the birth of the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, and wise men still sought this child. A child whose life would one day be sacrificed to save all humanity.

During this beautiful season of Advent, bask in the good tidings the angel spoke about a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. A savior who has brought us through eleven months filled with gun violence, inflation, hurricanes, and the discovery of more Covid variants. Yet we have almost come to the end of 2022 and some would say we are “blessed by the best.” It's time to seek God's simple blessings of joy...friends, family, or listening to the innocent laugh of a child.

Rachel Cruze writes in a Bible commentary, “...humility is about valuing others above yourself.”¹ We are to humble ourselves by allowing God to bless others through us. Someone may be desperately seeking a kind word, a thoughtful gesture, or a genuine smile. Advent is the perfect time of year to share the hope, peace, love and joy of the season. “Good tidings of great joy” are meant for “all people”—share them!

¹ “Humility It's Not What You Think”

<https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/19047>

*Submitted by
Reverend Cynthia Ball*



LEADERSHIP THE CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Greetings FMZ Family!! Please see the FMZ Leadership First Friday Prayer and Fasting Devotional from November 4, 2022.

Prayer and Fasting Topic: Anchoring our Souls

Sub-Topic: Anchoring our Souls through Speaking and Teaching the Truth in Love!

Source: Bible YouVersion: Moorings - Anchor for the Soul /Soul Keeping – John Ortberg

Discussion: Christians often talk about the need to “speak the truth in love,” a command found in Ephesians 4:15. Many times what they mean is the need to share difficult truths in a gentle, kind, inoffensive manner. From a practical standpoint, we know that difficult things are best heard when our defenses are not up. In a loving, non-threatening environment, hard truths are more readily received. So it is biblical to share hard truths with others “in love,” in the manner that the phrase is commonly used. Looking at the context of Ephesians 4:15, however, gives us deeper insight on what it means to “speak the truth in love.”

Lesson: In the verses prior to the command to speak the truth in love, Paul writes about unity in the body of Christ. He urges the Ephesians, and all Christians by extension, to “live a life worthy of the calling you have received” (Ephesians 4:1). He describes this life as one in which we are humble, gentle, patient, bearing with one another in love, and making efforts toward unity. Paul reminds his readers that we all serve the same Lord and are part of the same body. He talks about Christ giving apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers “to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12–13). Having reached maturity, we will not be spiritual infants, easily deceived, and tossed to and fro “by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming” (Ephesians 4:14).

In this context - of church unity and spiritual maturity - Paul writes, “Speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the Head, that is, Christ” (Ephesians 4:15). Rather than be spiritually immature and easily deceived, we are to speak the truth to one another, with love, so that we can all grow in maturity. We are to train/teach one another in truth - the foundational gospel truths, truths about who God is and what He has called us to do, hard truths of correction, etc. - and our motivation to do so is love.

The “love” referred to in this verse is agape love, a self-sacrificial love that works for the benefit of the loved one. We speak truth in order to build up. Our words should be beneficial to the hearers of those words. We should speak truth in love.

Meditational Song(s)/Videos:

<https://youtu.be/8hBhRv-640s>

(Teaching the Truth in Love - by Acappella)

<https://youtu.be/gkHSwCyyvY>

(Speaking the Truth in Love African Chant)

*Deacon Ronald Cooper
on behalf of
FMZ Leadership Chaplains*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM THE TRUSTEE MINISTRY

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to the faithful congregation of First Mount Zion Baptist Church. As we close out 2022, the Trustee Ministry would like to thank the congregation for their support. As we all are dealing with price increases in groceries, gas and many other items, the Trustee Ministry certainly appreciates how the congregation has continued to support FMZBC with your generous giving.

God's great love, grace, and mercy have enabled all of us to face many challenges in 2022. As stated in Lamentations 3:22-23 – “Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” It is because of His provisions that are provided through family and friends that we were not consumed by the many trials. His goodness has allowed all of us to be renewed and refreshed every day.

As we enter 2023, let's continue to support our Church and each other. God will continue to heal us with His grace. Let's surrender to His will and watch the awesome things He will do for all of us. None of us knows what will happen in 2023; however, we do know our God will have His “loving arms around all of us”.

Again, Happy Holidays from the Trustee Ministry and may God continue to Bless the congregation of First Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Trustee James Simpson



POSITIVES FROM THE BLACK

HISTORY

CORNER

“A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots.”

— Marcus Garvey

December 1847: Frederick Douglass began publishing the North Star, his antislavery newspaper.

December 1938: The Supreme Court decided the case Missouri ex rel. Gaines vs Canada and ruled that states must provide equal educational facilities for blacks. Lloyd Gaines, whose complaint sparked the case, disappeared shortly after the decision. The reason for his disappearance remains a mystery.

December 1941: Japanese forces attacked Pearl Harbor. Dorie Miller, who was serving on the USS West Virginia in Hawaii, received the Navy Cross for his heroic actions during the attack. He was the first Black American to be awarded the Navy Cross, the highest decoration for valor presented by the US Navy, and the second highest in the United States after the Medal of Honor.

December 10, 1950: Dr. Ralph Bunche became the first African American man awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, for his efforts in mediation between Israel and nearby Arab states the previous year.

December 1, 1955: The birth of the modern American civil rights movement occurred as Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery, Alabama, for refusing to give up her seat to a white man and move to the back section of a municipal bus. Her arrest resulted in a year-long boycott of the city bus system by African Americans and led to legal actions ending racial segregation on municipal buses throughout the South.

December 3, 1962: Edith Sampson was sworn in as the first African American female judge, after she was elected associate judge of the Municipal Court in Chicago.

December 2009: President Barack Obama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in a ceremony in Oslo, Norway.

December: Historian Carter Woodson (1875-1950) was born in New Canton, Virginia. He introduced black studies to American colleges and universities. His works included; *The Negro in Our History* and *The Education of the Negro prior to 1861*.

December: Celebrated between December 26 - January 1, Kwanzaa, an African American family observance established in 1966 celebrating traditional African harvest festivals, focusing on family unity, with a community harvest feast on the seventh day. Kwanzaa means "first fruit" in Swahili.

Marcus Mosiah Garvey Sr. ONH (he was conferred with the *Order of the National Hero* in 1969 as per the second schedule of the *National Honours and Awards Act*), was a Jamaican political activist, publisher, journalist, entrepreneur, and orator. He was the founder and first President-General of the Universal Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League, through which he declared himself Provisional President of Africa. Ideologically a black nationalist and Pan-Africanist, his ideas came to be known as Garveyism.

Below are some of his most profound sayings which can be found in *Marcus Garvey, Selected Writings and Speeches of Marcus Garvey*:

“Some of us seem to accept the fatalist position, the fatalist attitude, that God accorded to us a certain position and condition, and therefore there is no need trying to be otherwise. The moment you accept such an attitude, the moment you accept such an opinion, the moment you harbor such an idea, you hurl an insult at the great God who created you, because you question Him for His love, you question Him for His mercy.”

“If you haven't confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence, you have won even before you have started.”

“Intelligence rules the world, ignorance carries the burden...”

“God and Nature first made us what we are, and then, out of our own created genius, we make ourselves what we want to be. Follow always that great law. Let the sky and God be our limit and Eternity our measurement.”

“Having had the wrong education as a start in his racial career, the Negro has become his own greatest enemy. Most of the trouble I have had in advancing the cause of the race has come from Negroes. Booker Washington aptly described the race in one of his lectures by stating that we were like crabs in a barrel, that none would allow the other to climb over, but on any such attempt all would continue to pull back into the barrel the one crab that would make the effort to climb out. Yet, those of us with vision cannot desert the race, leaving it to suffer and die.”



Women's Ministry SEEKING HIM SERVING OTHERS Ministry

Women's Ministry Concert and Conference 2022

"S.O.A.R." (SISTERS OVERCOMING WITH ANOINTED RESILIENCE!)

The Women's Ministry hosted the 2022 S.O.A.R. Concert and Conference on November 4-5, 2022, and oh, what a Concert and Conference! Get Ready for your Blessing, Get Ready for your Miracle! Both were filled with anointed voices of faith through song and WORD!

Let's start first with thanking those that made it a huge success: Pastor Luke E. Torian for opening the Concert, our Mistress of Ceremony, Deaconess Andrea Bailey, and our Facilitator for the Conference, Sister Veronica Hackett. Truly their leadership and anointing were powerful as they led us through each program. This weekend could not have been such a success without the following Ministries playing an integral part: Women's Ministry Committee, FMZ AudioVisual, Ushers, Security, Facilities, Parking, and the Grain of Heaven. Thanks to each of you for your support, your dedication of time and sharing of your talents.

The S.O.A.R. Concert featured Mervyn Mayo, "The Singing Cop," who graced us with melodies of contemporary songs of praise that had us up on our feet! Sister and Songstress Kimberly Caree Maxwell, along with her phenomenal piano skills, allowed her melodious voice to usher us in praise that filled the sanctuary and made you want to surrender all to our Heavenly Father. Lyrical 7, with her spoken word artistry, had us attentively listening as she shared on matters that affect us today. Our own Andre Porter allowed his anointed fingers to tickle the ivories with a musical melody that made you want to lift your hands in praise! Our outstanding FMZ Men's Choir closed us out with one of their riveting, harmonizing vocals and, WOW, what a closing! Lastly, our anointed Worship and Praise Ensemble (WPE) set the atmosphere by opening the Concert with a praise vibe that got us going! Thank you to all who attended in-person and via streaming, we pray your soul was lifted, that you felt the presence of the Holy Spirit, and that His praise will continually be in your mouth, heart, mind, and spirit.

As we moved into the Conference, Whew! If only we knew what the Lord had in store for us! The Lord came in and ushered us right into the throne room! Our God laid upon the heart of our director, Sister Gwen Holland, a vision that came together seamlessly. Thank you, Sister Gwen, for allowing God to use you in such a powerful way!

Pastor Danell Perkins gave us an anointed Word on what it looks like to SOAR! What **REST** (Resilience, Endurance, Salvation, and Trust) means amid adversity. Sometimes adversity is self-inflicted and sometimes it just comes to us! In the midst of

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-- cont'd from page 7



adversity, we must take flight like an eagle and climb to the highest cliff, spread our wings and STAY (be still), bask in the sun until we are healed. When you are fighting, you must remember WHO you have a relationship with and recount what you know of the Lord, your Father, for HE is a good, good Father. HE preserves the faithful. Recount Isaiah 61:1-11, that the spirit of the Lord God is upon you, because HE has anointed and commissioned you to bring forth good news to the humble and afflicted...He is your refuge. Isn't it good to know that you have a safe place to hide and seek comfort? Don't deal with the adversity, go directly to your Heavenly Father, praise Him with philotimia love (Love for God or love by God, which is associated with the concepts of worship, and devotions towards God). Pour your heart out, even during your adversity. By choosing to do so, you submit to God's will for you.

Reverend Kimberli Meadows shared another anointed message on being **ANCHORED**, having strength in the struggle. There is no manual on how to handle some of life's adversities, but God has empowered us to be overcomers regardless of the circumstances. God gives us favor that provides access to HIM through Christ. By faith we can seek quiet time to allow God's word to sink within us. Sometimes you just must cry out, but like Paul, have joy and fortitude to rise and overcome. We have access, so when you're feeling pressed and persecuted, use that access of grace so that God can strengthen you. We were created to function as leaders and shine in God. Each of our struggles makes us stronger. The stronger we become in Him and in our relationship in Him, the more we realize we can trust in God. There are some things in life others cannot do for you,

developing your relationship with the Lord is one of them. When you realize just how much the Lord loves you and has empowered you, you will know that any adversity can be overcome through HIS strength.

And finally, **Reverend Dr. E. Montrez Nicholson** delivered a powerful sermonette on what it means to **R.E.S.T.** in the Lord so that we can **SOAR**. Sometimes, we must realize that our situation isn't always about us individually, it's about others looking into the furnace at you so that they can see the goodness of the Lord. God is our strength in the midst of struggle, and through HIS strength (in you), we are overcomers. We must be like eagles and not be intimidated by adversity. We can mount upon wings like that of an eagle and change the battleground, making our enemy unable to strike. The battle is not our own, it's the Lord's! Change your mind-set by taking on the mind of Christ; learn how to pray in the Spirit; and on all occasions, *"Rejoice always and delight in your faith. In every situation [no matter what the circumstances] be thankful and continually give thanks to GOD; for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus."* (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19). Do not quench [subdue or be unresponsive to the working and guidance of] the [Holy] Spirit. Prayer should be an automatic activity. Do you need refreshing? Do you need renewal? Do you need to quench that unknown thirst? Pray while you're at rest, being still....and wait on the Lord!

A special thank you to **Rev. Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley**, our Minister of Christian Education, for her ongoing support and for sharing closing remarks during the Conference; and to all those who had a part in making this weekend an awesome success and a blessing. The IPT (Intercessory Prayer Team) prayed for both the concert and conference the entire week prior to the event, and we are grateful! And last, but definitely not least, ALL the ladies (and gentlemen) who attended and participated, we appreciate you. We

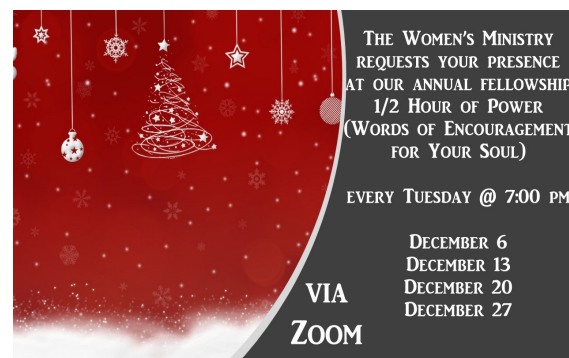
thank God for each of you and pray you were blessed.

Please join us every Tuesday during December for our Half Hour of Power at 7pm (EST), as we come together in prayer and worship to thank the Lord for blessing and sustaining us. Information will be forthcoming via email.



Humbly,
Sister Lisa Johnson
Women's Ministry Co-Director

cont'd on page 8



Won't you join us? We would love to have you!



WOMEN'S MINISTRY CONFERENCE NOVEMBER 5, 2022

FITNESS-IN-PLACE

ARE SIT-UPS NECESSARY?

Sit-ups focus on the movement of spinal flexion and use only a few muscles, the hip flexors, the external obliques, and the rectus abdominis, which are all located in the front region of the mid-section.

Sit-ups use more of the hip flexor muscles, which attach between the thigh bones and lower back (lumbar spine), than the actual rectus abdominis (the "six-pack" muscle). Unfortunately, the hip flexor muscles commonly become tight and weak from excessive sitting. Since the hip flexors attach to the front of the lumbar spine, if they become tight and weak and you attempt to perform sit-ups or crunches you may experience low back pain.

If sit-ups cause back pain, skip that exercise, and choose others that will strengthen both the front and back sides of the core.

Other exercises that will strengthen the whole core, both front and back:

(Click on exercise for directions and demonstration)

[Front plank](#)

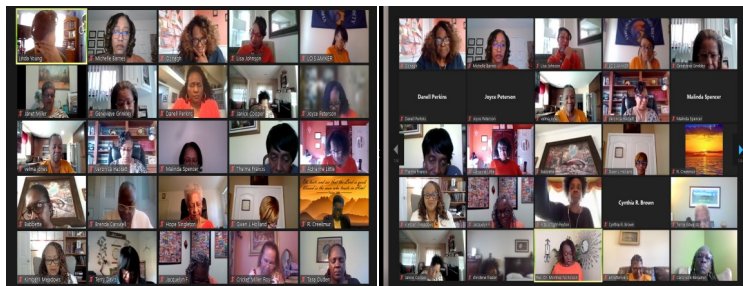
[Side plank](#)

[Glute bridge](#)

[Standing Hay Baler](#): The hay baler mimics activities of daily living more so than many other abdominal exercises. Lifting groceries out of the trunk of your car, putting a suitcase in an overhead compartment, and lifting a child all require you to brace your core and stabilize while moving a heavy object up and away, just like the hay baler exercise. The hay baler exercise is part of functional training. Functional training can be especially beneficial as we age. It can improve the way that our muscles work together so we feel more coordinated, allowing us to maintain our independence for longer.

Challenge: Perform the [Standing Hay Baler](#). This is a great standing abdominal exercise. No need to get down on the floor. When first learning the hay baler exercise, use something small and light weight. A light medicine ball is best, but you can use a small dumbbell or a gallon bottle of water. Start with 5 to 7 repetitions on one side, then change sides and complete 5 to 7 repetitions on the other side. Add repetitions before increasing weight. As you become more comfortable with the move and begin to increase your abdominal strength, you can use heavier objects.

*Sister Lori Valkenburg
Fitness Director*





TO THE MIGHTY MEN OF VALOR,

We enlarged our territory this weekend...! [1 Chronicles 4:10](#) We met men from California, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Texas and as far away as Bermuda. We broke bread with them since we stayed at the same hotel. God was in this convention! Just imagine seeing 800 to 1000 Men of God, all in one place, shouting praises to God as they worked on their Puzzle Pieces (Every Piece Fits)!

This was the 20th anniversary of the Mighty Men of Valor National Men's Conference (my third). This conference offered 18 different workshops that focused on Manhood, Fatherhood, Marriage, Family, Finances, and our Christian Journey focusing on following GOD's lead, with some dynamic facilitators. Here are some of the comments made after attending the conference:

I attended classes that were outstanding, providing information pertaining to *Eight Pieces to the Manhood Puzzle* (Faith, Family, Fitness, Field, Finances, Fun, Friend, and Future) and *The Fatherhood Puzzle* - a Father's Three Rooms (Training Room, Board Room, and Prayer Room)" - **Deacon Randy Hardy**

"The Mighty Men of Valor National Men's Conference (also known as MVM), seeks to build confidence, boldness, and enthusiasm in men to enable them to serve Christ with a passion. They want to equip men with the tools they need to overcome the daily challenges with which they are confronted, so that they can make a difference in the Kingdom. MVM brings men together as enthusiastic role models, eager to share their experiences with other men, and trains young men in Discipleship and Leadership." - **Bro. Edward Jones, Men's Ministry Director**

My take away was each featured speaker, as well as each breakout session, was designed to help you figure out what your puzzle would look like once you had all pieces in place. One particular part of the program that really stood out was the ***Eight pieces to the manhood*** puzzle as presented by Rev. Keith Battle. The 8 Fs of which Family and Friends stood out to me the most. Family and Friends can be an asset and also a detriment in your walk with God. There are some who will be happy for you and will stay with you as you praise the Lord; but there also will be some that can pull you down and allow the enemy in and give you doubt about your purpose. Being able to let go of some Family and Friends may be necessary for you to receive all the blessings God has in store for you" - **Deacon Andre Robinson**

"The Mighty Men of Valor was an eye opener - a "new" experience for me because I had never before attended any ***Spiritual*** conference. One of my takeaway was seeing men of all ages praising the Lord; what a feeling and blessing to witness. My other take away is to connect my spiritual pieces of the puzzle with the determination to develop into being a better spiritual man, husband, and father" - **Bro Bassie McCain III**

Each of the Brothers who attended the MVM Conference came away feeling inspired and motivated to continue to serve GOD with passion and do his work. I know several friends that enjoy family puzzle time. So how does this theme "Every Piece Fits" tie into our lives? When you stop and look back at where God has brought you from and through, start putting the puzzle pieces together. How many times have you looked at your life and said, "what's next, what is my next move, only



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SOME OF FMZ's MIGHTY MEN OF VALOR (MVM)

L-R:

Neal Patterson, Marcus Cobb, Bassie McCain III, Andre Robinson, Ed Jones, Everett Griggs, Sr.



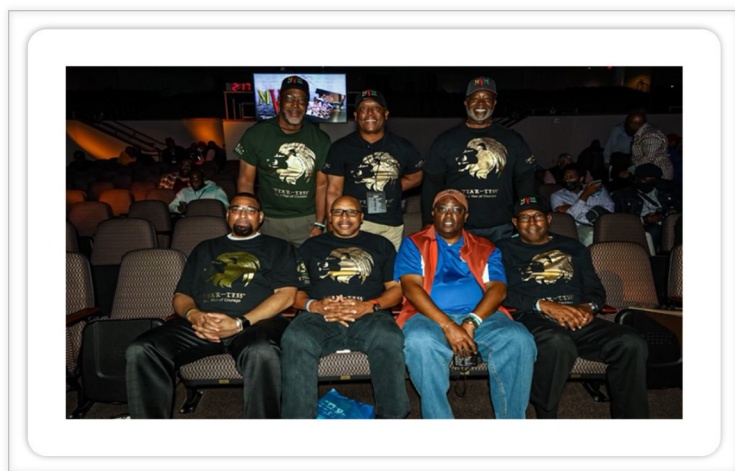
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to find out that the next piece of the puzzle was missing? God led me to one of my pieces when I joined First Mount Zion. "Why here, Lord? What do you need me to do in the vineyard? Who am I to minister to?" The pieces were falling into place, as soon as I stopped magnifying my problems and started magnifying my God. I know God is more than a conquer. He has done a good work in me.

I will leave you with this last puzzle piece, "Are you chasing God or are you chasing something else to put all your puzzle pieces in place? Eyes have not seen, nor ears heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him. **Isaiah 64:4**

DON'T FORCE IT. EVERY PIECE FITS!!!

*In His Service,
Deacon, Everett Griggs, Sr.
Outreach Ministry Co-Lead*



The Outreach Group and other Men of God of First Mount Zion, gathered for a weekend of Fellowship and Learning, at the Mighty Men of Valor Conference held November 11-12, 2022 at First Baptist Church of Glenarden. The Conference theme was **"Every Piece Fits"**

Seated Left to Right: Brothers Ed Jones, Marcus Cobb, Bassie McCain III, Neal Patterson
Standing Left to Right: Deacons Randy Hardy, Andre Robinson, Everett Griggs Sr.



MEN'S MINISTRY CONFERENCE

The First Mount Zion Baptist Church Men's Ministry Conference held on October 29, 2022, challenged men to deepen their love for God and recognize that the life-long relationship they develop with Christ is as deep and profound as any other friendship.

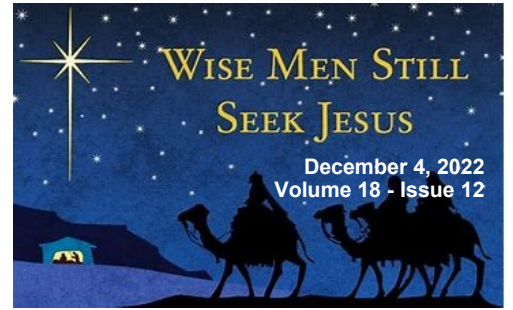
"Possessing the Mountain" was the theme of the conference that attracted over 130 participants and volunteers in the first in-person conference since the start of the pandemic. First Mount Zion teaches men to be of "bedrock faith, who have the courage to entrust the whole of our lives to God." Our Pastor teaches that when we entrust our lives to God, we must master ourselves, overcome sins, and change sinful attitudes that put us at enmity with God. No one at enmity with God can intentionally cooperate with His plans. We are taught how to say 'yes' to God, even when we have questions, and to roll up our sleeves when we know God is calling us to do His will. We must glorify and talk about God all the time, but we must use words less than one percent of the time.

Three dynamic speakers presented compelling messages supporting the theme. There was ample time during the conference to listen to music, fellowship, discuss speakers' presentations, reconnect, and explore the various vendors and exhibits. One attendee stated, "At this time in my Christian journey, it's time to really improve; it's time to reconnect and pray and fellowship with other people. Being together in community gives a feeling of being closer to the Lord in another way. I don't know what else I would be doing other than having fellowship with my brothers."

*Bro. Edward Jones
Director, Men's Ministry*



cont'd on page 11 --





...from the desk of the
Church Business Administrator

Connection Points

Thank you to all who contributed to the weekly publication and circulation of Connection Points. I am thankful for how we have been able to maintain a connection through keeping the congregation up to date on ministry and operational activities.



Special thanks to all those volunteers who worked tirelessly, in any capacity, to help make things run smoothly during this pandemic. God sees ALL, and HE knows ALL, and HE will reward you openly! God bless you all!

*Sister Renee Woolfolk
Business Administrator*



During this pandemic, we can still support the Ministry by giving our Tithes and Offerings through these means:

Use our **ONLINE GIVING** at www.fmzbc.com, or access it using this link: <http://bit.ly/FMZ-Online-Giving>

Vanco is our online giving platform. When using a credit card, please check the expiration date, it is important to keep it current. It is problematic when online giving accounts are set up for recurring contributions and the credit card is expired.

OR via Mail to: First Mount Zion Baptist Church
16622 Dumfries, Road
Dumfries, VA 22025

OR you can schedule a time with your **Zone Leader** for pick up from your home!

Thank you in advance for your contributions.



PERSONAL INFORMATION

If your personal information is not current, please access this link to update on line: <https://form.jotform.com/12155242234> or, if you prefer, you may do so in person by coming to the office Monday - Friday, or on Sundays to the Leadership Desk in the Narthex. End of Year statements will be mailed to the address on record with the Church. Thank you!

BE IN THE KNOW!

1. Check In at door A or B for 11am Sunday worship service.
2. The parking lot is fully open
3. Door Q Check-In Station when back parking lot is in use.
4. Two temperature stations at Doors A and B on Sunday
5. Check-In sign-in sheets for contact tracing are no longer in use.
6. The Fitness Center Locker Rooms are now open.



CHURCH MEETING

Saturday, December 3, 2022, at 10am.

You may attend in-person or via Zoom (check back for the Zoom link)

END OF YEAR

As we prepare to close out 2022 be mindful to submit any 2022 purchase requisition expenditures for processing no later than, Tuesday, December 21, 2022.



**JOIN US ON YOUTUBE
AT 11 AM EVERY 3RD SUNDAY.**

**SUBSCRIBE TO
FMZBC KIDS' KINGDOM WORSHIP
YOUTUBE CHANNEL, OR CLICK ON THE
KIDS' KINGDOM SLIDE ON THE
FMZ WEBSITE,
WWW.FMZBC.COM**

**TO WATCH THE LATEST KIDS'
KINGDOM WORSHIP SERVICE.**

**KIDS' KINGDOM -
[HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/HQUJA1E1CZ8](https://youtu.be/HQUJA1E1CZ8)**

POC: Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley, Director
of Christian Education



Thank you!

Thank you!

Thank you, FMZ Family, for your continual heart of compassion during the Thanksgiving holiday, which was exhibited even the more during this pandemic. You have outdone yourselves and, for that, we are extremely grateful to all of you who supported, and continue to support, this worthy cause. As a result of your overwhelming generosity in our Special Benevolent Offering, we were able to provide Share packages to 1,000+ families. We are so very grateful to the SHARE Ministry Servants who worked diligently to package the groceries in advance so that when the families arrived to pick up, everything was ready for distribution. It was a great success! To GOD be the glory!

Now, as we enter the Christmas season, a time of giving, please help your Zone Leaders identify families in our congregation and community, who would appreciate a SHARE package. Names are due to Zone Leaders by December 11th. SHARE distribution will take place on December 21st, from 10AM – Noon.

Thank you

The Pastor's Aide Ministry would like to publicly thank each and everyone of you for your support of our Pastor and his Family, our Assistant Pastor, and all the Associate Ministers during this year.

Even though the pandemic continues to rear its ugly head, we have begun to worship together again in the sanctuary, and God is well-pleased with our efforts.

May Almighty God bless, keep, and protect each and every one of us as we continue to share the greatest gift of all - **LOVE.**

We would like to wish you all . . .



**CALLING ALL
MIDDLE AND HIGH
SCHOOL YOUTH**



Calling the return of middle school and high school youth to
First Fridays!

Join in on the fun, food,
And fellowship!

Monthly from 7pm-8:45pm
Enter Check-In at Door B

(Proof of vaccination and temperature checks required)

Looking forward to seeing you
ALL there!!!

First Mount Zion welcomes its newest member to our Family, our Financial Secretary,

Ms. Tameca Miles

effective Monday, November 14th.
She can be reached through the front office at extension 1106 or by email, at tmiles@firstmountzionbc.org.

Let's show her some LOVE!!!

EVERY GOOD
AND *perfect* gift
COMES FROM ABOVE...



Sundays at 9:45 a.m. on ZOOM

Register in advance at
<https://zoom.us/join/register/tJwrfu-upjlsH9VMx4eB-Fk3D3siWI9YJZAF4>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email and information about joining, including the meeting link and dial-in phone number.



The last day to register for December SHARE packages is Sunday, December 4th. SHARE packages are \$23 for food valued between \$35 and \$45. POC: Thomas Bates, 703-772-8837. Distribution will be on December 17, 2022.

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:

cpm@firstmountzionbc.org

or through our web form at:

http://bit.ly/FMZBC_Articles

We look forward to your participation!! Thank you!

Communications and Publicity Ministry

Deacon Joseph Boutte, Chair
Sister Oonagh Bell
Brother Benson Blake
Deaconess Janice Cooper
Trustee Alfranda Durr
Brother James Gaskins
Deacon James Hawkins
Sister Sylvia Moore
Sister Roslyn Parker
Reverend Kathy Russell
Deaconess Claudia Woolfolk



THE TRANSPORTATION MINISTRY HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED DUE TO COVID-19 AND WILL RESUME WHEN FULL ACTIVITIES AT THE CHURCH HAVE BEEN RESTORED!

Rev. Dr. Luke E. Torian, Senior Pastor
Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James, Assistant Pastor
Sylvia Moore, Executive Assistant
Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator
James Simpson, Chair, Trustee Ministry
Keith H. Holmes, Chair, Deacon Ministry
Cynthia Brown, Chair, Deaconess Ministry

16622 Dumfries Road
Dumfries, Virginia 22025-1920
Telephone: 703-670-0184
Email: fmzbc@firstmountzionbc.org
Website: www.fmzbc.com

UPDATED ADJUSTED SERVICE SCHEDULE DURING PANDEMIC

Sunday School
9:45 AM (VIA ZOOM & CALL-IN)

Worship Service – 11:00 AM (ONLY)
in Sanctuary or view us on line at

FMZ Life Stream:
<https://live.lifestream.tv/first-mount-zion-baptist-church>

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/fmzbcdumfries>

YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzFCO3nn-QRnObzNDEefeGQ>

SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Connect with us on:

Lifestream:
<https://live.lifestream.tv/first-mount-zion-baptist-church>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/fmzbcdumfries

Instagram: [@the_core_fmzbc](https://www.instagram.com/the_core_fmzbc)

Linked In: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1890924/>

Twitter: [@fmzbc1](https://twitter.com/fmzbc1)

Vimeo: vimeo.com/25203195

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/>

