

2024 Theme:

From Generation to Generation, Growing Deeper, Growing Stronger, Reaching Higher  
"Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations. Ask your father and he will show you; Your elders, and they will tell you, . . ."

Deuteronomy 32:7



# Message from the Assistant Pastor

# INSIDE THIS ISSUE

## WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT ...



"I have put wisdom in the heart of every skilled artisan in order to make all that I have commanded you" (Exodus 31:6).

I love the arts! The 2024 theme for Black History Month is "African Americans and the Arts" spanning the impacts Black Americans have had on visual arts, music, cultural movements, and more. From the reimaging of the Color Purple the musical to the Book of Clarence, black superheroes, toys, dancers, music, poetry and more African Americans continue to make history in the Arts. In the fields of visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, folklore, language, film, music, architecture, culinary and other forms of cultural expression, the African American influence has been paramount in serving as change agents through their crafts. African Americans have used their gifts and talents in the arts to preserve our history, tell our stories and empower our communities.

Carter G. Woodson, historian and Founding Father of Black History Month says, "Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history."

Just as God in Exodus chapter 31 had already appointed the craftsman by name and given him everything he needs; selected men and "gifted them with Godly abilities and knowledge in all kinds of crafts to make artistic designs of work", God has gifted his people today to do the same and we are the recipients of these gifts. Therefore, I want to encourage you to be intentional this month and explore the arts, visit the National Museum of African American History, which is highlighting the 'art of the resistance' and the artists who used their craft to uplift the race, speak truth to power and inspire a nation. Or visit other small Black owned art galleries, or artist displays in the area and appreciate these gifts from God.

*Your Servant in Christ,  
Dr. Sandra K. James  
Assistant Pastor*

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## Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Presents the 2024 MLK Experience

### STEM LEARNING

*"Ignite your Love for Math & Science & Discover the STEM Experience."*

#### Special Guest Speaker

Greg Robinson former NASA James Webb Space Telescope Project Director

Learn more about STEM careers through interactive stations/vendors...Drones, Gaming, Robotics, Forensic Science and more.

Saturday, February 17, 2024, 2pm

Forest Park High School  
15721 Forest Park Dr

For details visit: <https://www.pwcacdst.org/mlk>



**"THOSE WHO FAIL TO  
LEARN FROM HISTORY  
ARE DOOMED TO  
REPEAT IT!"**

George Santayana



## ANNOUNCEMENT: UPCOMING CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING AT FIRST MOUNT ZION

### A CALL TO ACTION

Dear Members of First Mount Zion,

We are excited to announce an important Church Business Meeting scheduled for February 3 at 10:00 AM. This meeting is a valuable opportunity for our Church community to come together, discuss vital topics, and make collaborative decisions that shape the future of our congregation.

#### Key Agenda Items:

**Review of Proposed Constitution and Bylaws:** We will be examining two significant proposals for updating our Church's Constitution and ByLaws. This is a crucial step in ensuring that our Church governance remains effective, transparent, and aligned with our mission and values.

**Updates from Leadership Ministries:** Leaders of various ministries will provide updates on recent activities, upcoming projects, and ongoing initiatives. This segment is an excellent chance to understand the work being done in different areas of our Church life.

**Open Forum for Questions:** We encourage you to engage with the leadership by asking questions about our programs, events, and opportunities to serve. This open forum is designed to foster transparency and open communication within our Church family.

Your presence and participation are highly valued, as they contribute to the democratic process of our Church's governance and the advancement of our collective mission. We look forward to seeing you there and engaging in meaningful discussions. Check for updates and additional information at [www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com) or call your Zone Leaders for specific questions and comments.

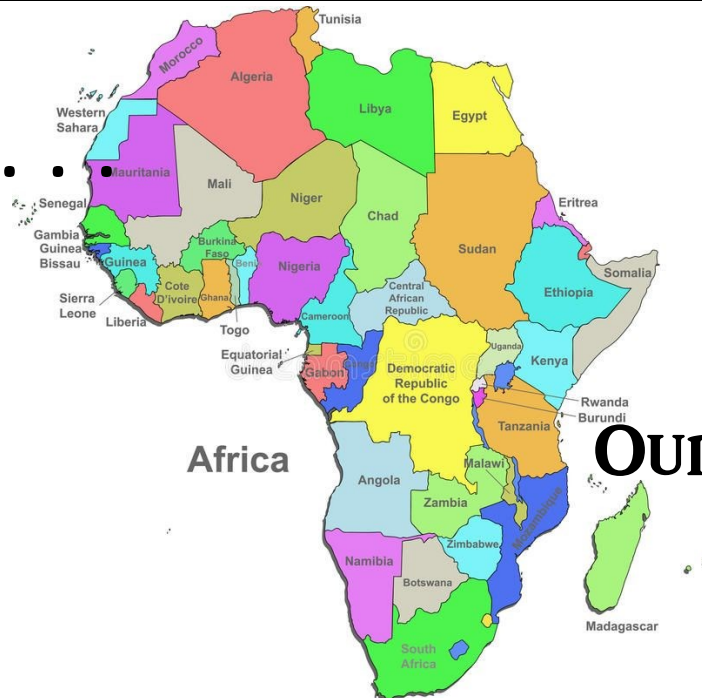
*Communications and Publicity Ministry*

# Celebrating the 58 Nations of Africa

## The Long Journey Started on these shores. . .

# THEIR

# HISTORY . . .



Africa

# . . . IS OUR HISTORY!!

# Youth Ministry



# Youth



The Youth Ministry started 2024 with a “blast” with our first “First Friday” of the year on January 5, 2024. The evening was hosted by the young adult “C.O.R.E” ministry. After the pizza dinner, C.O.R.E. member Sade Akanni presented the theme of the evening, “You can do great things. Standing on Business.” She advised attendees “Standing on Business” means to “take care of our responsibilities, practice what you preach, and show that you mean what you say.”

Youth learned about Claudette Colvin, a 15-year-old who refused to relinquish her seat across the row from a white woman passenger on a Montgomery bus in 1955. (Sitting in the same row as the white passenger would infer Claudette was equal to her). Claudette was arrested because she refused to get up and the white woman refused to sit down across from her. Claudette’s courage echoed our Bible Study lessons on courageous teenagers in the Bible who were “standing on business” and had a significant role in the advancement of God’s kingdom. Although Claudette was unknown to most of us, she was important to the Civil Rights Movement. Not only was she an example of courage but she was also one of the plaintiffs in the federal case that ultimately led to the desegregation of Montgomery’s buses.

After this lesson, youth formed groups and presented “raps” with a “standing on business” theme. The winning rap was entitled “Pray Yee.” Following the rap contest, teams competed in several games including “Tug of War,” and “Don’t Break the Chain.”

We again thank the C.O.R.E. for hosting “First Friday.” We invite youth in grades 6-12 who attend First Mount Zion and their guests to join us for onsite youth ministry events as we “grow in our faith, grow together and have fun.”

*Submitted by  
Reverend Beverly Jiggetts  
Youth Minister*

## Alyssa Godfrey



First Mount Zion, Michele Godfrey is understandably proud of her daughter Alyssa Godfrey. Alyssa, a 9<sup>th</sup> grade student at Colgan High School was one of 6 finalists selected to give a speech at the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Prince William County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, Incorporated’s annual Martin Luther King, Jr Youth Oratorical Competition and Program on January 15, 2024. Alyssa, also a regional finalist, earned the right to present at the final program by winning the preliminary oratorical competition at her school.

The competition is open to all middle and high school students in the Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park school systems. Each participant was asked to write and then present their speech on the topic “If America is to Remain a Great Nation, We Must ...” At the January 15<sup>th</sup> program, Alyssa was recognized as a finalist. She was also presented with a Certificate of Service by the Prince William County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., a book from the League of Women Voters, and her name was entered in the Congressional Record by Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger. She also received a letter of congratulations from the Honorable Deshundra Jefferson, Chair of the Prince William County Board of Supervisors.

In addition to her speech-writing and oratorical skills, Alyssa is a Colgan Freshman Cheerleader, Basketball Manager, and in the Creative Writing Program. She is a Delta GEM with the Prince William County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.

Congratulations, again to Alyssa for achieving this high honor!

*Submitted by  
Reverend Beverly Jiggetts*



# FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH SAYS FAREWELL TO REVEREND DR. LUKE E. TORIAN

After serving the First Mount Zion congregation for the past 28.5 years, Reverend Dr. Luke E. Torian said his final farewell during a two-day celebration on January 13-14, 2024. On Saturday, January 13th, Pastor and Mrs. Clarice Torian and their daughter, Constance, were treated to a memorable escorted tour throughout the House that God allowed His Under Shepherd, Dr. Torian, to Build, a reminder of the impact Pastor Torian made on this Ministry over the years.

Leaders and members of the various Ministries shared reflections and gifts with Pastor Torian and his family. The Ministries thanked him for his service, and he thanked them for theirs. During the tour, one of the C.O.R.E. Young Adult Ministry members, made a very poignant remark when he said that “the mark of a great man is someone who leaves things better than they were initially.” That is a true statement because Dr. Torian accomplished that.

The celebration was continued on Sunday, January 14th, during worship with a very special Retirement Service. Reverend Dr. Sandra K. James and Reverend Brian Woolfolk led the procession into the Church and served as Worship Leaders. Several dignitaries were in the congregation. Some presented plaques and proclamations and shared their thoughts on their relationships with our Pastor and the contributions he has made over the years, to the State of Virginia and the local communities at-large. They were very gracious and complimentary, and we were all so proud of our Pastor.

Nevertheless, it was a very bittersweet moment for many, but despite that, everyone thanked God for Pastor Torian’s life, his service, his dedication, and his commitment to this Ministry. Although we will miss him, we look forward with great anticipation to the next Under Shepherd God has already chosen to be his replacement, as we continue to make First Mount Zion that Ministry that sits on a hill whose light cannot be hidden!

Thank you, First Mount Zion, for your expressions of love to the First Family over the two-day celebration. Special thanks to the Pastor’s Retirement Committee for the outstanding celebration in honor of our Pastor. Your tireless work is much appreciated, and we believe that God is pleased with your service.

And to you, Dr. Luke Torian, Mrs. Clarice, and Ms. Constance, as you ride off into the sunset, we thank you for your unwavering service. May God continue to richly bless you all!

## *Pastor’s Aide Ministry*







## ONLINE/IN-PERSON EVENTS

**YOUTH BIBLE STUDY:** Youth are encouraged to join us on Wednesdays as we do "Bible Study for Life," in person, in the Executive Conference Room on the first floor, from 7:40-8:30 p.m. or via ZOOM. For ZOOM, please register using the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register?ZAsceurrjkuH9Rm8sk243fTqpJjWk-btSxl>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

## NEW MEMBERS' ORIENTATION CLASS (NMOC) - 2024

Feb 04 — 09:45 AM	The Bible
Feb 11 — 09:45 AM	Small Groups
Feb 18 — 09:45 AM	Prayer
Feb 25 — 09:45 AM	Stewardship

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88280338054?pwd=TGI4NVNJYzdYQVAYd2Z4ZF14UDZBUT09>

Meeting ID: 882 8033 8054  
Passcode: 569157  
(309) 205-3325 US

**YOUTH MINISTRY ON BLAST!** This is an opportunity to highlight the amazing youth at First Mount Zion and their notable accomplishments. If you know of a youth that you would like to have profiled in the Newsletter, please send their name, picture, contact information, and accomplishments to Rev. Beverly Jiggetts at:

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

or

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

Accomplishments can be in athletics, community service, scholastics, overcoming personal challenges, or simply a youth who needs encouragement.

## ONLINE/IN-PERSON EVENTS



Worship for PreK to 5th graders on third Sundays, during the 11 am service.

For additional information, please contact Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley at:

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

or Sister Stephany Stewart at :

[stephanystewart@yahoo.com](mailto:stephanystewart@yahoo.com).

Can't wait to see you!

Youth 16 and older who are interested in serving with Childrens' Church will need to complete Volunteer Screening, Please contact Dr. Holley for additional information.

## SMALL GROUPS MINISTRY



### Schedule

Interest Based Small Groups meet for two semesters each year.

Fall Semester: October - January  
Spring semester: February - June

### Consider joining the Interest Based Small Groups Ministry!

We have a variety of groups within three categories from discipleship, sports, shared interest, outreach, health, support, and book groups for all ages. Regardless of the type of group, through that common interest, we seek to love God, grow in God, serve God, and share God together as a group, and with others. There is a group for everyone, including YOU!

For additional information, please contact:

Stephanie M. Craddock, MS, CDP, ACE  
Small Groups Director  
703-670-0184

[Scraddock@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:Scraddock@firstmountzionbc.org)  
<https://firstmountzionbc.org/small-group/>

## SUBMISSION OF WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRS

**Connection Point** entries are due by **NOON** on Mondays. Announcements and weekly PRs are due by **NOON** each Tuesday. Any submissions after the deadline will be processed the following week.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Are **YOU** looking for a way to serve others? Are you in need of volunteer hours or simply want to support the Ministry activities of the Church helping with event set-ups and break-downs? Please contact Ernest Robbins, Facilities Manager, at:

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

or, if you would prefer to serve in food service with the Grain of Heaven, contact Sherise Campbell, Food Service Director, at:

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

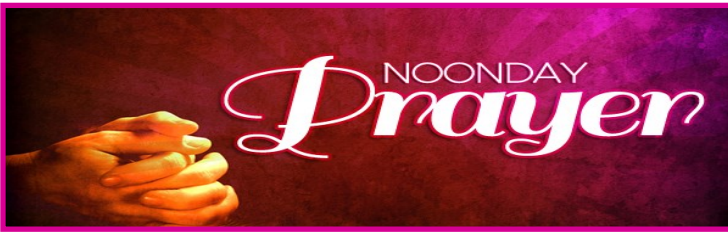
and, if you choose to volunteer in the Audio Visual Ministry, which includes Wednesday Bible Study (11am and 7:30pm), Sunday Worship, Homegoing Services, Weddings, and other Ministry Activities, please contact Renee Woolfolk at:

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

## FMZ PRINT SHOP.

Volunteers are needed to print large format posters for Ministry events. If you are interested and/or have experience please contact Walter Holmes, Assistant Facilities Manager at [wholmes@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:wholmes@firstmountzionbc.org).

**AEM follows the Prince William County schools schedule for closures.**



# FITNESS-IN-PLACE

## STICKING TO IT!

### WE ARE FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

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.

#### Prayer:

*"Thank you, Lord, that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and you have a special plan and purpose for each of us. Thank you for your sacrificial and unconditional love for us and for knowing each of us by name. We are a "Designer's Original".*

*Help us to remind our children, youth, and young adults that their lives matter and that they are a precious gift from you. May we help them to discover, develop and exercise the gifts and talents that you have placed in each of them so that they will become the men and women that you have called them to be. Strengthen and encourage them so that their faith and foundation will hold. May we allow their voices to be heard and help us to discern when they are in trouble or going astray.*

*We pray for your healing touch for those who may be dealing with health issues or struggling with addictions or strongholds. Also praying for healing and strengthening of marriages and families which are under attack by the enemy. As individuals, marriages and families are healed, then our communities, nation and world will also experience healing and restoration.*

*Thank you in advance! All the glory, honor and praise belong to you alone! In the mighty and precious name of Jesus we pray and give thanks. Amen!"*

#### Scripture:

*Psalm 139:13-14 NKJV  
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, and that my soul knows very well.*

*Psalm 139:13-14 MSG  
Oh yes, you shaped me first inside, then out; you formed me in my mother's womb. I thank you, High God-you're breathtaking! Body and soul, I am marvelously made! I worship in adoration-what a creation!*

**Worship Song:** "You Know My Name" - <https://youtu.be/JpYzwASoEVO>

Continue to pray for our families, churches, nation, and world. More than ever, we need to be united and fervent in prayer.

Noon Prayer Team  
Deaconess Pamela Ford  
Sister Carol-Ann Benjamin  
Reverend Maxine Thompson

This New Year, did you set and start some healthy behavior goals? Examples include "I will walk 3 times per week" or "I will eat veggies in at least 2 of my meals per day"? Now it is time to sustain these behaviors and stick to it! Avoid the pitfalls of slow progress, exercise discomfort, stress, or social pressures to eat, which can overwhelm your best intentions.

Here are some Tips for Sticking to it:

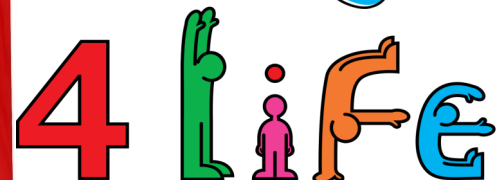
- A) **Talk Kindly to Yourself:** Talk to yourself the way you'd talk to your best friend. If you really want to change, you need to start talking to yourself like you deserve change. And you DO deserve it! God Loves You! Psalm 139:14 "for I am fearfully and wonderfully made".
- B) **Track small-scale progress:** Yes, progress is progress, no matter how small. Any step forward, no matter how incremental, is still a step in the right direction. It is a healthy form of climbing up and getting ahead. Philippians 3:12 "Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me".
- C) **Muscle Recovery:** When you introduce a new physical activity, the muscles generally get sore, and it takes a few days for this soreness to resolve. While muscle recovery takes time (1 to 3 days), there are some things you can do to potentially feel better quicker. Stay hydrated, get proper sleep, eat nutritious food, indulge in a sauna, or get a massage. If you feel joint pain, sharp pain, or if it's localized to a certain area, then you might need to consult a professional.
- D) **10-Second Breather:** It's easy to jump into a snack, or treat, when you are anxious or stressed. If you come up on a box of donuts, take a deep 10-second breather, dial into what your body really needs. By allowing yourself those 10 seconds, you may ease stress and anxiety, and make a choice about what would really feel good for your body and get you closer to your goals.

For any assistance, please visit FMZBC's Fit by God Fitness Complex which is now open Monday thru Thursday 9am to 4pm, Fridays and Saturdays 9am to 1pm. For questions call the fitness complex 703-670-0225.

Sister Lori Valkenburg  
Fitness Director



# change



Eat well Move more Live longer



### FREEDOM REIGNS IN THE LORD



January 15, 2024 was Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's 95th birthday. Dr. King day is a day when we take time from our schedules to commemorate and pause to reflect on the sacrifices the civil rights leaders made in the fight for equality and voting rights for all citizens of our nation. It's a day of civic service to remind ourselves that we are to be our brothers and sisters keepers. What a catalyst for the celebration and commemoration of Black History month. The struggle for equality continues nearly sixty years later.

God created us as free will beings but contrary to God, humans seem to struggle with the concept of freedom for all and want to control and oppress those whose skin is black or brown. But as African Americans, those of us who are believers in Jesus the Christ are children of the Most High God, which means we are free. God is no respecter of persons and have gifted us with equal rights in His righteousness. "Who the Son sets free is free indeed (John 8:36). We have to teach our children from generation to generation about the biblical origin of humanity and that we were not an afterthought or made to be lesser than because all humanity has its origin in Adam and the three sons of Noah (Genesis 9:18-19). God blessed them and His command for them to repopulate the earth.

As believers, we are to be the salt and light of the world for the kingdom of God. It is our responsibility to spread the Good News about our Savior and to take care of those less fortunate. It is our responsibility to allow the world to know who Jesus is because His Spirit is shining so bright within us. Remember that the word of God says that we must overcome evil with good! (Romans 12:21) God bless you and make sure that the light of Christ within you is shining ever so brightly!


Submitted by Reverend Carolyn Taylor



DEAF MINISTRY: ASL (American Sign Language) Interpreter onsite each Sunday during the 11am in person worship service and at the monthly Deaf Ministry ZOOM meetings.

The next meeting is February 12, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. POC for the ZOOM link is Deaconess Pamela Ford, pdford61@verizon.net

### ACADEMIC EDUCATION MINISTRY



Parents/Guardians and High School Seniors of FMZ, we would like to forward you information about other scholarship opportunities! Interested? Please forward your email address to [aem@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:aem@firstmountzionbc.org) and we will add you to the distribution list.

**ATTENTION ALL HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS:**

The Academic Education Ministry's Scholarship Newsletter, Fall 2023 Edition, is available on line now. Please click on the link below! Also, the FMZBC Scholarship and the Bell Scholarship applications are also available online. Please be sure to review the requirements and deadline submissions. **DONT MISS OUT!!!**

<https://firstmountzionbc.org/scholarships-2/>

POC: Brother Gerry Griffin, Chair, AEM  
Email: [AEM@FirstMountZionBC.org](mailto:AEM@FirstMountZionBC.org)

# To all those celebrating in February! Happy Birthday!



"It is Time To Pray - Our Breakthroughs Come Through Prayer"

The Men's and Women's Ministries will be hosting their **Joint Prayer Fellowship**

**FEBRUARY 10, 2024**  
**8:00 AM TO 11:00 AM**

Breakfast will be served 8:00 am - 9:00 am

Prayer Fellowship 9:15 am - 11:00 am




PLEASE SIGN UP THROUGH SIGNUP GENIUS

FELLOWSHIP WILL BE IN PERSON AND ON FMZ VIRTUAL PLATFORMS. MORE INFORMATION TO COME





## SELF-CARE INCLUDES MENTAL HEALTH CARE

Self-care is developing and maintaining healthy practices that promote and preserve good physical, spiritual, and mental well-being. While the three areas of well-

ness (physical, spiritual, mental) are intertwined and inseparable, many Christian clergy and ministry leaders give more attention to physical and spiritual health. Mental health is often neglected, often resulting in the diminishment of all three. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social well-being.

A common but naïve misconception is that clergy and ministry leaders, or persons with strong religious faith are exempt from mental distress. Even the Apostle Paul who is noted for his courageous ministry confessed the pressures and anxiety of his work in 2 Corinthians 11:28. The Message reads: “And that’s not the half of it, when you throw in the daily pressures and anxieties of all the churches.” NIV reads: “Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.”

Self-care is not selfish. In the Book “*Surviving the Stained-Glass Jungle*” by veteran Pastor William L. Self, he contended that self-care is not destructive self-indulgence. Rather it is “being a steward of some rather special gifts—the human body and soul, along with the capacity of bringing joy to others as well as experiencing it”. Those in all vocations experience varying levels of stress, distress, and duress. However, the pastoral and ministry tasks require remarkable investment in the lives of others. So, pastors or ministry leaders who neglect mental hygiene can gradually slip into a state of melancholy or emotional chaos and then compound the dilemma by ignoring the symptoms for fear of stigmatizing his or her ministry.

### Self-care Plan:

1. Acknowledge your feelings, including helplessness, dejection and sadness—and find a way to share them.
2. Limitations. Learn to regularly set limits and boundaries for yourself.
3. Rest. Take breaks from talking, texting and working at your desk and/or laptop.
4. Know your own signals for burnout.
5. Prayer: Set aside moments for quiet, relaxation, perspective and validation of feeling through prayer. Ask for what you need and express every complaint (the psalmist did).
6. Listening to your life. Journal each day or several times a week. Write down how you feel (again the psalmists did).
7. Exercise. The body absorbs stress in many ways and needs renewal. Exercise is a stress buster.
8. Remember to pace yourself. And as always, give yourself some grace.

### Sources:

Columbia Theological Seminary (5/24/22). Clergy Self Care - Columbia Theological Seminary (ctsnet.edu). Download 01/12/24.

Guarding the Temple, Self-care for Clergy (2020). PowerPoint Presentation (archmil.org). Download 01/22.

Jamieson, R., Fausset, A.R., & Brown, D (1997) Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible (Vol. 2, p. 318). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

Self, W. L. (2011). *Surviving the Stained-Glass*. Mercer University Press.

Submitted by  
 Reverend Juanita Stokes  
 Licensed Professional Counselor  
 Associate Minister

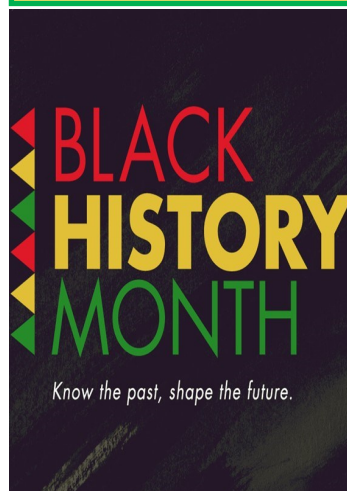


At First Mount Zion, we are blessed with a congregation rich in talent and knowledge and, most importantly, a willingness to serve. To celebrate service, which is one of the features of our 4-Step Strategy of worship, study, stewardship, and service, our Messenger newsletter will feature, monthly, members who have been recommended for their positive impact, as well as those ministries quietly making significant contributions. Our aim is to acknowledge the contributions of all our members. We invite everyone to share the names of individuals or ministries that have positively influenced others or are deserving of recognition. Our diverse talents and service to God and each other are our strength, embodying the spirit of 1 Corinthians 12:12 NLT: Just as “the human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.” And, so it is with us as a body of believers in Christ and members of First Mount Zion.

We look forward to receiving your submissions and thank you in advance for doing so. Please send your submissions to:

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

“Speak up, speak out, get in the way. Get in good trouble, necessary trouble, and help redeem the soul of America.”  
 — John Lewis



You are invited to join the  
 Seniors' Ministry for their celebration of  
 Black History Month  
 Wednesday, February 21, 2024, at Noon  
 in the Gym following Bible Study  
 Our theme is:  
 “Our Life - Our Stories, God Sustained Us”  
 Isaiah 46:4  
 Please reserve your seat with Sis. Hope Singleton at  
[hopesing@verizon.net](mailto:hopesing@verizon.net) or call 703-987-5665 no later  
 than February 1, 2024.



## SHOWING LOVE TO ALL... EVEN THE UNLOVELY!

In one of her many teachings, televangelist Joyce Meyer spoke of when she used to feed her children when they were babies. She would notice that she had no problem whatsoever feeding them pears and peaches out of the glass jar. Her kids would just eat to their hearts' content. But, when it was time to feed them

the bitter tasting but nutritious spinach, the spoonful of food would be spat out quicker than it went in. So, she tried a different way to get her children to eat both. She put a little bit of peaches on one side of the spoon and a little bit of spinach on the other side so that both would be eaten at the same time. Kids can't grow up solely on peaches or things that taste good. There must be a balance. Spinach may not taste good, but it is good for you and gives you the strength that you need to be healthy.

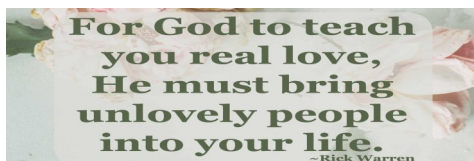
In the same vein, when reading the Word of God, many of us tend to migrate to our favorite Scripture passages like a welcomed treat of favorite fruit. But we cannot solely turn to Scripture that makes us feel good. We must read it in its entirety; even those passages that convict us to do things that God has called us to do but, we don't really like doing. One of those things is loving the *unlovely*. Know any of them? We all do.

Jesus speaks about loving our enemies throughout the New Testament. Specifically, in the Gospel according to Luke 6:27-28, Jesus said to "love your enemies; do good to those who hate you; bless those who curse you; pray for those who mistreat you." You might say..." well that's kind of hard to do, given how he or she treated me." You are right in that in our own strength it is pretty much impossible to do what Jesus is asking. But, when we gave our lives over to God in accordance with Romans 10:9-10, we experienced the beginning of an evolutionary and deliberate life transformation from the inside out. We are reminded in Philippians 4:13 that we "*can do all things through Christ which strengthens*" us. If Jesus could forgive His persecutors, why would we be absolved of the same responsibility? You might say: "But, then they get away with what they did... how can I still love them?" Answer: through prayer and supplication.

God is always watching and none of us do things in secret. He sees it all. Loving our enemies doesn't mean being a "doormat" for them to use or abuse us. It means we are to pray for them, ask God to bless them by convicting their hearts toward repentance, think before we speak or type and not conspire or rejoice over their downfall. We must ask ourselves, "*how many people think that I'm being unlovely?*" Would we want people to exact revenge or celebrate in our sadness and struggles? Of course not. We appreciate their grace and kindness despite how we behave. I'll never forget what Reverend Bill Curtis, guest preacher at our 2011 Church Revival once said. He said: "*Beloved, you are better than you are acting!*" He reminded us of who lives within us and our potential to be our best selves. With God, we are more than conquerors!

When we show love to God and put Him first, it is first demonstrated by how we treat each other. It is serving God and all His people with grace, kindness, gentleness, patience, and most of all self-control. Ask God to work within you to love the unlovely --that bite of spinach will help you grow in your love relationship with Him for the good of all.

Submitted by  
Deaconess Vietta Williams  
Chair, Deaconess Ministry



## WORDS TO LIVE BY . . .

### *The Valuable Time of Maturity*

I counted my years  
and realized that  
I have less time to live by,  
than I have lived so far.  
I have more past than future.

I feel like that boy who got a bowl of cherries.  
At first, he gobbled them,  
but when he realized there were only few left,  
he began to taste them intensely.

I no longer have time to deal with mediocrity.  
I do not want to be in meetings where flamed egos parade.

I am bothered by the envious,  
who seek to discredit the most able,  
to usurp their places, coveting their seats,  
talent, achievements and luck.

I do not have time for endless conversations,  
useless to discuss about the lives of others  
who are not part of mine.

I no longer have the time to manage  
sensitivities of people who despite their  
chronological age, are immature.

I hate to confront those that struggle for power,  
those that 'do not debate content, just the labels'.  
My time has become scarce to debate labels,  
I want the essence.

My soul is in a hurry. . .  
Not many cherries in my bowl,  
I want to live close to human people, very human,  
who laugh at their own stumbles,  
and away from those turned smug  
and overconfident with their triumphs,  
away from those filled with self-importance.  
The essential is what makes life worthwhile.  
And for me, the essentials are enough!

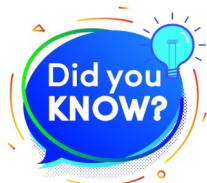
Yes, I'm in a hurry.  
I'm in a hurry to live with the intensity  
that only maturity can give.  
I do not intend to waste any of the remaining cherries.  
I am sure they will be exquisite,  
much more than those eaten so far.  
My goal is to reach the end satisfied  
and at peace with my loved ones  
and my conscience.

And per Confucius "We have two lives  
and the second begins when you realize you only have one."

-- Mário de Andrade

Education is the passport to the  
future, for tomorrow belongs to  
those who prepare for it today!

-- Malcolm X



## HISTORICAL FACTS ABOUT FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH – DUMFRIES

- ◆ The first Pastor of First Mount Zion (Rev. Jacob Byrd) was also the first Pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church–Triangle, VA. When the original Church split, the courts intervened. Mt. Zion Baptist Church–Triangle, retained the name. We were named First Mount Zion. Rev. Byrd was Pastor when the two Churches were together as Mount Zion Baptist Church and elected to stay with First Mount Zion after the split.
- ◆ Since 1867 when the Church was founded, there have been a total of five church edifices: the original Mt. Zion cabin Church (mysteriously burned); the second First Mt. Zion Church that was built along Joplin Road (not to be confused with current Mt. Zion Baptist Church on Joplin Road) was purchased in 1942 by Marine Corps Base Quantico; the 1947 First Mt. Zion Church built on Rt. 234 by Rev. Oscar Jackson; the 1981 First Mount Zion Baptist Church that was connected to the 1947 Church; and the current 2001 First Mount Zion Church.
- ◆ Between 1867 and 1942, seven pastors served First Mount Zion: Reverends Jacob Byrd, Horace Crutcher, Richard Jackson, Charles Gibson, Henry J. Vines, William Henry Miller and William A. Gibson. Between 1945 and 2024 (79 years) there have been only four FMZ pastors (Reverends Oscar Jackson, James Wynne, Augustus Gaskins, and Luke E. Torian). Photos of the latter Pastors hang in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ The second FMZ Church was purchased by Marine Corps Base Quantico in 1942 through eminent domain. A photo of the Church is in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ Mrs. Evelyn Gaskins (wife of Pastor Augustus Gaskins) started the first Vacation Bible School at FMZ. Her photo is in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ Only two serving Pastors are buried in the FMZ cemetery: Rev. Oscar Jackson and Rev. Augustus T. Gaskins. Their photos are in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ Rev. Oscar Jackson, a carpenter by trade, is credited with constructing the 1947 FMZ Church without hiring any contractors.
- ◆ On July 18, 1981, the founder and President (Rev. Orrick Hampton) of the Rio Hondo Preparatory School, Arcadia, California, was the guest speaker at the cornerstone ceremony for the 1981 Church. A copy of his speech and the ceremony program, along with photos of Rev. Hampton, are in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ In 1981, Route 234 was a two-lane highway and wooded lands surrounded the “Little White Church on the Side of the Road” (no hotels, no restaurants, no Potomac Mills, etc. in the immediate area). A photo of 2-lane Rt. 234 is in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ Mrs. Sarah E. Butler served as Church Clerk for 65 years and 6 months (July 1909 – January 4, 1975). Her photo and letter of resignation are in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ We have a photo of the three FMZ Churches (1947, 1981, and 2001) together, because a helicopter pilot was hired to fly over the three Churches and photograph them before the first two Churches (1947 and 1981) were demolished during construction of the current Church (2001).
- ◆ Rev. Dorothy A. White was the first female Assistant Pastor of FMZ. Her photo is in the FMZ archives.
- ◆ Mr. Ernest Robbins has been the only building/facility manager of FMZ (2004 – present). He is ever present in the halls of FMZ.

We are grateful to the Archives Ministry (Sis. Gwen Hopson and her Team) for pulling these important facts together to share with us. Know your history...don't let it be a mystery!

## FMZ's BLACK HISTORY 365

First Mount Zion celebrates and highlights Black History throughout the year. The 2024 national theme is “African Americans and the Arts.” As the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) describes, “our art is infused with African, Caribbean, and the Black American lived experiences.” This year’s theme spotlights the richness of the past and present with an eye toward what the rest of the twenty-first century will bring. In 2023, we began sharing Black History each month in the Messenger. This year, we will expand our focus on history in our Black History 365 Project. The project aims to remember, celebrate, highlight, and share history through announcements, The Messenger, Connection Points, videos, slides, and various activities. As part of our Black History 365, we invite members to share their art throughout the year (see submission guidelines below). Black History is American History!

### BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

February is Black History Month and part of our Black History 365 Project. We encourage members from visual and performing arts, literature, fashion, folklore, language, film, music, architecture, culinary arts, quilting, and other forms of cultural expression to share their creative talents. Our activities for February are:

- February 15th - articles, photos, and inputs to the Messenger due to [cpm1@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:cpm1@firstmountzionbc.org)
- **February 18th – American University and Bowie State University Gospel Chorus joins us for worship; Small Group displays in the narthex; Youth Ministry activities**
- **February 25 – Celebration of Divine 9 and HBCUs and Youth Ministry Moments in Black History**

We want to highlight the creativity of our artists to preserve history and community memory as a form of empowerment. Please get in touch with [CPM1@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:CPM1@firstmountzionbc.org) to learn more and reserve a table or area to display your creativity. In addition to the art displays on February 11th, the American University and Bowie State University Gospel Choirs will be part of the worship service on February 18th. On February 25th, we will highlight and celebrate Divine 9 members and current students and graduates of HBCUs.

In keeping with the 2024 Black History Month theme of “African Americans and the Arts,” sponsored by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, First Mount Zion honors creative members with exhibits throughout the year. All submissions must be governed by the CPM Guidelines for African American Arts Exhibits. See additional information and submission guidelines at: <https://bit.ly/FMZBC-BHM365> Contact: [CPM1@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:CPM1@firstmountzionbc.org)

We eagerly look forward to your participation!





## The Changing of the Guards . . . From Generation to Generation



After 20 years serving as First Mount Zion's Church Clerk, we have the Changing of the Guards.

**SIS. SUE CLARK**, without pomp and circumstance, relinquished her position as Church Clerk to Sister Sherry Stone at the end of 2023. However, because of the contributions that Sis. Sue has made to this Ministry,

we wanted to publicly recognize her service as stated in Romans 13:7a (NMB), *"Give to all persons therefore that which is due to them: tribute to whom tribute belongs..."* Sue was the latest FMZ Church Clerk and served admirably. If you know Sue, you would not be surprised that her departure was low-key because, while she can be feisty (when that is necessary), she is, for the most part, quite easy-going and amenable. We are sure that while some of you may know the things that Sis. Sue is involved in, there are others who have no idea what she does other than what they see at the Church. We assure you that there is more to Sis. Sue than meets the eye. We have included her bio below for your ease of reference so that you can get a sense of where her heart really lies.

So, we say farewell to Sis. Sue, with the prayer that God's blessings will follow her all the days of her life and that she will continue to serve God wherever He leads her! We love you and shall miss you!

Sue Lee-Clark was born February 16, 1959, in Chicago, Illinois. She graduated from John Marshall High School at the age of 16 as the Salutatorian. Hired by the community health center upon graduation, she stayed there one year until she was old enough to join the U.S. Army Women's Army Corps (WAC). She spent seven years on active duty, including an overseas tour in Mainz, Germany. She attained an Associate of Arts Degree from Columbia College while on active duty in 1982 and a Bachelor of Science Degree from The Evergreen State College in 1986, after being honorably discharged from the Army. Sue remained connected to the Army as a Staff Sergeant in the Inactive Reserves, for about ten years before she resigned. She married the love of her life, Michell Clark, in 1983 and followed him around the world. She was employed by the City of West Lafayette, Indiana, as an Office Manager and worked there until the birth of their first son, Michell, in 1989, and thereafter became a stay-at-home mother. Their second son, Nathanael, was born in 1994. They have been married 40 years and counting to date!

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### SHARON "SHERRY" STONE, MHA, CDFM



Sis. "Sherry" Stone, as she is affectionately called, was elected to serve as the Assistant Clerk to Sis. Sue in 2017, to relieve some of the duties in that Office (Kemi Ojumu was already serving as an Assistant Clerk), and they have been the dynamic trio ever since. Sis. Sherry served admirably in her role as Assistant and created a niche for herself. This resulted in the torch being passed on as Sister Sue elected to retire after twenty-one years of service and Sis. Stone being elected to that position in December 2023. We welcome Sis. Stone in her official capacity as Church Clerk and, for your edification, we have included her bio below in recognition of her abilities and service to the community.

Sis. Stone is a highly respected public servant and a committed advocacy community leader. She is mission driven and a proven leader. Sharon is a Certified Defense Financial Manager with the Department of Defense with over 40 years of civilian service. She received the Meritorious Service Award Civilian Service for her tremendous, dedicated service as a Senior Financial Analyst and Performance Planning Program Manager. She develops, implements, evaluates, and continuously evolves an annual strategic planning program. These programs integrate healthcare clinical and business operations in a standard process. She is the recipient of the Spirit of Service Award from the Department of Defense for Public and Community Service. Additionally, she is the recipient of numerous awards at the local level to include Delta Sigma Theta Dorothy I. Height Community Activist Award. Lastly, Sharon is a graduate of the December 2022 Sorensen Political Leaders Program.

Sharon demonstrates her leadership abilities through successfully serving the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Inc. at the national, state, and local levels. She serves as the National 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of Finance, and local President, Prince William County Chapter. Sharon serves as National Public Policy Chair, NCBW Virginia Public Policy, and other committees to advocate on behalf of black women and girls.

One of her many professional organizational attributes is that she served as Board Member and volunteered at the Army Board for Correction of Military Records. Sharon is the Church Clerk at First Mount Zion Baptist Church, Dumfries, VA. where she humbly serves.

Sharon is also owner/CEO of ClayStone Coaching, LLC, helping women to define what it is they desire and empower them to achieve their goals and aspirations. Her love language is Acts of Service which is displayed in her volunteer activities in her community, church, and career. In her spare time, Ms. Stone enjoys traveling, reading and outdoor adventure.

Sue Clark – continued

The family joined First Mount Zion in January 1993. In 1995 she founded the Children’s Ministry, which included Children’s Church, the Christian Character Coin Program, and the Nursery and served as Children’s Ministry Director until 1998. She also was the editor of the Proverbs 22:6 Children’s Ministry Newsletter. She served with over 100 volunteers to share God’s Word with the children of First Mount Zion.

Sister Sue was first Consecrated as a Deaconess in Indianapolis, Indiana. She was consecrated again as a Deaconess at First Mount Zion where she served as a Zone Leader for Zone F2 along with Deacon Clark until her resignation in 1996. She continued serving as a Kindergarten Sunday School Teacher and VBS Volunteer for more than 10 years.

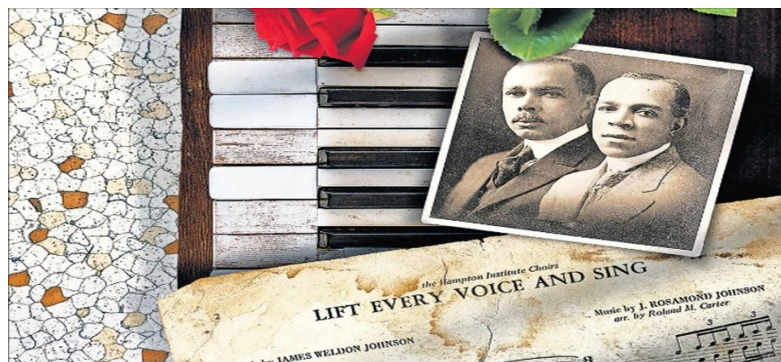
In 2003 she was elected as an Assistant Church Clerk of First Mount Zion and then elected yearly, thereafter, as Church Clerk for twenty years, serving in the office of the Church Clerk for a total of twenty-one years. Sue’s community service included serving as a Prince William County Election Officer, a Red Cross Volunteer, member of the PWC Superintendent’s Community Council, and School Volunteer.

In 1999 Sue started a stationery company, Sumi Enterprises, LLC, which evolved into a Print and Design Company, and a Christian Retail and Gift Studio. From the beginning, the mission of the company has been “Helping You To Share The WORD!” All company profit is used to support missionaries.....student stipends, and to help build fresh water wells in Uganda. During the pandemic, Sumi Enterprises expanded again to include apparel decoration, and drinkware sublimation. The company continues to be her personal ministry to encourage and uplift believers and to share God’s love through her work.



## “Lift Every Voice and Sing”

THE STORY BEHIND THE HYMN



James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938) and his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson (1873-1954)

*A group of young men in Jacksonville, Florida, arranged to celebrate Lincoln’s birthday in 1900. My brother, J. Rosamond Johnson, and I decided to write a song to be sung at the exercises. I wrote the words, and he wrote the music. Our New York publisher, Edward B. Marks, made mimeographed copies for us, and the song was taught to and sung by a chorus of five hundred colored school children.*

*Shortly afterwards my brother and I moved away from Jacksonville to New York, and the song passed out of our minds. But the school children of Jacksonville kept singing it; they went off to other schools and sang it; they became teachers and taught it to other children. Within twenty years it was being sung over the South and in some other parts of the country. Today the song, popularly known as the Negro National Hymn, is quite generally used.*

*The lines of this song repay me in an elation, almost of exquisite anguish, whenever I hear them sung by Negro children. Source: Complete Poems (2000) Every Voice and Sing by James Weldon Johnson | Poetry Foundation*

**James Weldon Johnson** was born in Jacksonville, Florida. He distinguished himself equally as a man of letters and as a civil rights leader in the early decades of the 20th century. A talented poet and novelist, Johnson brought a high standard of artistry and realism to Black literature in such works as *God’s Trombones* (1927), [which includes his famous poem “The Creation”] and *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (1912).

His pioneering studies of Black poetry, music, and theater in the 1920s introduced many white Americans to the rich African American creative spirit, hitherto known mainly through the distortions of the minstrel show and dialect poetry. Meanwhile, as head of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) during the 1920s, Johnson led determined civil rights campaigns in an effort to remove the legal, political, and social obstacles hindering Black achievement.

THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY

# THE BLACK HISTORY MONTH FESTIVAL

2024

FEATURES THE RETURN OF THE 98TH ANNUAL BLACK HISTORY MONTH LUNCHEON

February 24, 2024

Westin Hotel  
999 9th Street, NW  
Washington, DC

WWW.ASALH.ORG

FEATURING: CONGRESSMAN HAKEEM JEFFRIES, DR. HASAN JEFFRIES, & MS. DENISE ROLARK BARNES AS EMCEE

2024 BLACK HISTORY MONTH AFRICAN AMERICANS THE ARTS

\$175 GENERAL TICKETS	\$200 SILVER TICKETS	\$225 GOLD TICKETS
\$1,750 GENERAL TABLE	\$2,000 SILVER TABLE	\$2,250 GOLD TABLE

-- cont'd on page 13

Both his father, a resort hotel headwaiter, and his mother, a school-teacher, had lived in the North and had never been enslaved, and James and his brother John Rosamond grew up in broadly cultured and economically secure surroundings that were unusual among Southern Black families at the time. Johnson's mother stimulated his early interests in reading, drawing, and music, and he attended the segregated Stanton School, where she taught, until the eighth grade.

Since high schools were closed to Blacks in Jacksonville, Johnson left home to attend both secondary school and college at Atlanta University, where he earned his BA in 1894. It was during his college years, as Johnson recalled in his autobiography, *Along This Way* (1933), that he first became aware of the depth of the racial problem in the United States. Race questions were vigorously debated on campus, and Johnson's experience teaching Black schoolchildren in a poor district of rural Georgia during two summers deeply impressed him with the need to improve the lives of his people. The struggles and aspirations of American Blacks form a central theme in the 30 or so poems that Johnson wrote as a student.

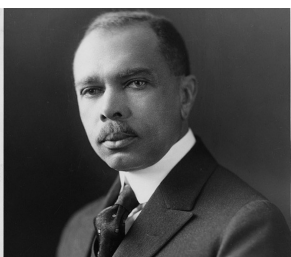
Returning to Jacksonville in 1894, Johnson was appointed a teacher and principal of the Stanton School and managed to expand the curriculum to include high school-level classes. He also became an active local spokesman on Black social and political issues.

In 1895 he founded the *Daily American*, the first Black-oriented daily newspaper in the United States. During its brief life, the newspaper became a voice against racial injustice and served to encourage Black advancement through individual effort—a "self-help" position that echoed the more conservative civil rights leadership of the day. Although the newspaper folded for lack of readership the following year, Johnson's ambitious publishing effort attracted the attention of such prominent Black leaders as [W.E.B. Du Bois](#) and Booker T. Washington.

Meanwhile, Johnson read law with the help of a local white lawyer, and in 1898 he became the first Black lawyer admitted to the Florida Bar since Reconstruction. Johnson practiced law in Jacksonville for several years in partnership with a former Atlanta University classmate while continuing to serve as the Stanton School's principal. He also continued to write poetry and discovered his gift for songwriting in collaboration with his brother Rosamond, a talented composer. Among other songs in a spiritual-influenced popular idiom, Johnson penned the lyrics to "[Lift Every Voice and Sing](#)," a tribute to Black endurance, hope, and religious faith that was later adopted by the NAACP and dubbed "the Negro National Anthem."

James Weldon Johnson's multifaceted career (including stints as a diplomat in Latin America and a successful Tin Pan Alley songwriter) testifies to his intellectual breadth, self-confidence, and deep-rooted belief that the future held unlimited new opportunities for Black Americans. For the full article see: [James Weldon Johnson | Poetry Foundation](#)

In 2020, a 1.5 acre historic park in the heart of Jacksonville, Florida was renamed in honor of native son, civil rights leader, poet, educator, lawyer, diplomat and song writer James Weldon Johnson Park: [Home | James Weldon Johnson Park | Jacksonville, FL](#)



James Weldon Johnson (1871-1938)



James Weldon Johnson and his brother, J. Rosamond Johnson wrote and composed the music to "Lift Every Voice and Sing"



## Lift every voice and sing

Till earth and heaven ring,  
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;  
Let our rejoicing rise  
High as the listening skies,  
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.  
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,  
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us.  
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,  
Let us march on till victory is won.

Stony the road we trod,  
Bitter the chastening rod,  
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;  
Yet with a steady beat,  
Have not our weary feet  
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?  
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,  
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,  
Out from the gloomy past,  
Till now we stand at last  
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

God of our weary years,  
God of our silent tears,  
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;  
Thou who hast by Thy might  
Led us into the light,  
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.  
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,  
Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;  
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,  
May we forever stand.  
True to our God,  
True to our native land.

—James Weldon Johnson, 1899



### Making history in Dumfries: Town has Virginia's only all-Black council

With all 140 General Assembly seats on last November's ballot, the elections included a record number of Black legislators heading to Richmond in 2024. But the town of Dumfries has been making history of its own since 2020: It holds the distinction of having the state's only...

**THE BLACK HISTORY THEME FOR  
2024  
CELEBRATES  
"AFRICAN AMERICANS  
AND THE ARTS"**

In 1918, a groundbreaking movement emerged in New York City. Known today as the Harlem Renaissance, this "golden age" of art, literature, and music transformed the Harlem neighborhood into a cultural hub for African Americans, with Augusta Savage's many contributions at its core.



**Augusta Savage** was born on February 29, 1892 in Green Cove Springs, Florida, a lush city in Florida named—and known—for its natural landscape which was built around a warm mineral spring; the city is rich in red clay and with this medium conveniently at her disposal, Savage spent her childhood crafting small ceramic animals. While her Methodist minister father

disapproved of her hobby, a teenaged Savage taught sculpting in high school—a stint that shaped the foundation for a career in arts education.

In 1919, she solidified her role as an innovative sculptor when her work won an award for originality at a Florida fair. Two years later, she moved to New York City, where she applied to The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, a progressive, scholarship-based university in Manhattan. Though up against 142 male applicants, Savage was accepted, and, in 1923, she earned her degree—an entire year early.

While Savage was rightly recognized for her talents at Cooper Union, her early career experiences were not without racism and sexism. In 1923, a committee rejected her application for a summer art program in France due to her race. Savage contested the decision to no avail. However, committee member and sculptor Hermon Atkins MacNeil championed Savage's work, eventually becoming her teacher.

Savage's role in the Renaissance is mostly attached to teaching and advocacy. In 1935, she co-founded the Harlem Artists Guild, an organization that advised the neighborhood's African American artists; and, in 1937, she established the Harlem Community Art Center where she led sculpting classes and helped launch the careers of African American **artists**, including Jacob Lawrence. Her most notable work, entitled "**Realization**" was created in 1938.

Savage received her first big commission from the Harlem Library to create a bust of civil rights activist and writer W. E. B. Du Bois—a piece that put her on the map. Though struggling financially, over the next few years, she was granted scholarships, won prizes, became an outspoken advocate against "negro primitive" art, and (thanks to donations) studied in Paris—all before making Harlem Renaissance history.

In 1929, Savage created "**Gamin**", a bust depicting a young African American boy, modeled after the artist's own "little nephew." He had come to live with Savage after his home in Florida was damaged by a hurricane. At the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, curator Jeffrey M. Hayes found the following quotation from Savage in a 1935 interview with the Federal Art Commission: "I bought some materials, set a dry goods box on the living room table, stood my nephew alongside the table, and worked practically all night, till we were both exhausted."

Made from plaster and covered in gold paint, Savage depicted the boy wearing a wrinkled shirt and a bebop cap. He has a somber look on his face, suggesting his awareness of his hardship and poverty, even though he's still a child. *Gamin* marked a turning point in Savage's career as it was met with acclaim. In May 1929, the sculpture helped Savage win the first Rosenwald Fund fellowship ever awarded to a visual artist. And the president of the Rosenwald Fund, Edwin Embree, even ordered a cast of *Gamin* for himself.

In 1939, Savage was selected to create a sculpture for the Board of Design of the 1939 New York World's Fair. Her piece, *The Harp* (originally titled "Lift Every Voice and Sing"), was among the exposition's most popular works. Comprising 12 Black singers (the "strings") standing on the hand of God (the "sounding board"), the 16-foot sculpture was celebrated for its symbolic composition. Unfortunately, financial troubles did not allow Savage to explore its full potential. "No funds were available to cast *The Harp*, nor were there any facilities to store it," the Smithsonian American Art Museum explains. "After the fair closed it was demolished as was all the art."

Working to celebrate and elevate Black culture and experience, as a key presence within the famous Harlem Renaissance, she helped raise the profile of the movement, and of Black female artists, by gaining international recognition for busts of the movement's leading political and cultural figures, including W.E.B. Du Bois, Marcus Garvey, and Dr. William Pickens Sr..

Savage's realistic renderings of her subjects offered a challenge to the stereotypical ways that African Americans tended to be depicted in art and popular culture. She also helped to expand the roles of Black Americans trying to make their mark on the New York art scene based solely on the merits of their work. On opening the first gallery dedicated to Black American artists, she declared, "we do not ask any special favors as artists because of our race. We only want to represent to you our works and ask you to judge them on their merits. We accept your verdict on this basis and gladly rise or fall on our merit".

Chief amongst Savage's achievements were her roles in launching the famed Harlem Community Art Center, and by becoming the first African American woman to open and manage a dedicated Black commercial art gallery. She played a vital role as an educator and supporter of some of the finest next generation African American artists, including Jacob Lawrence and Norman Lewis. Curator Tammi Lawson writes, "[Savage] created a pathway for careers for Black artists. She taught them, she gave them the tools, and she got them work".

Savage placed great value in children, with young boys becoming something of a motif in her art. She humanized working-class African American children in a way that challenged their popular image as rascals and mischief-makers. This worldview, expressed in works such as *Gamin* (1929) and *Boy on a Stump* (1940), dovetailed perfectly with her commitment to promoting arts education and appreciation of fine art amongst African American youth.

"We are in a moment where the canon is being challenged and expanded because of how history overlooks women and artists of color," Jeffrey Hayes, the curator of the 2019 exhibition *Augusta Savage: Renaissance Woman*, said. "For many of us in the art world who have spent our careers researching, writing, and curating exhibitions about women and artists of color, these artists have always had a place in art, regardless of their social or racial identity. When thinking about Savage, her place has always been an artist who was a brilliant sculptor who used her art to forge a path for staying true to one's artistic passion."

Exploring both Savage's self-described "monument" and her own striking sculptures, this exhibition revealed the artist for what she is: "one of America's most influential 20th-century artists."

More information can be found at: <https://www.theartstory.org/artist/savage-augusta>

"I have created nothing really beautiful, really lasting, but if I can inspire one of these youngsters to develop the talent I know they possess, then my monument will be in their work."

Augusta Savage

... from the desk of the  
Church Business Administrator  
Sis. Renee Woolfolk



## NEW YEAR, WE NEED TO KNOW . . .

- ◆ your member number
- ◆ full name associated with your member number
- ◆ current mailing address
- ◆ phone number

### PLEASE NOTE:

The office will be closed on Presidents' Day, **Monday, February 19, 2024.**

Remember to please check the Church website ([www.FMZBC.com](http://www.FMZBC.com)) and voicemail for closings and cancellation during times of inclement weather. Notices are also posted to WTOP and WJLA. You may also register to receive notifications from:

[www.cancellations.com](http://www.cancellations.com)

Please use the following link to update your contact information. Please remember to also update your information in VANCO. As a registered user, you can make changes to your VANCO profile, giving schedule and password reset. In the event you are locked out, the system will refresh within 2-4 hours, and you will be able to reset your password. Final reminder, include your member number on your tithing envelope. Please feel free to contact the office to confirm your member number.

### Member Name and Number:

It is important to confirm that you are using the correct member number and the correct corresponding name. One way to verify is to review your online giving account. You may also confirm your member number by calling the office, 703-670-0184.

### Maintain the Connection:

Change of address or phone number? Updates may be made through the FMZ website using the following link: <https://form.jotform.com/12155242234>



## FMZBC JOB VACANCIES

### FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Finance Manager Accounts  
Receivable and Reporting

### IT DEPARTMENT

Church Management Software Administrator

Please see detailed announcement and employment application at:

[First Mount Zion Baptist Church Careers and Employment | Indeed.com](http://FirstMountZionBaptistChurchCareersandEmploymentIndeed.com)

You may return the completed application and resume by email to:

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

or in person during office hours,  
Monday through Thursday 9am-4pm  
Fridays 9am-1pm.

Applications will also be accepted by mail.  
Positions will remain open until filled.

First Mount Zion Baptist Church  
16622 Dumfries Road  
Dumfries, Virginia 22025  
Attention: Renee Woolfolk  
Church Business Administrator  
[woolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:woolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org)

## VANCO ON-LINE GIVING

VANCO, FMZBC's on-line giving **and mobile app**. platform, operates with an elevated level of security. As a result, access to users on the same network (FMZ IP address) will be blocked. When off site individual users may be denied access temporarily because of too many failed login attempts. After some time (up to 4 hours) the account will automatically reset to allow users to select the forgotten password option. To avoid this issue onsite please consider using the VANCO/FMZ mobile app for giving. As a Vanco registered user you should see this option when you sign in. You may also access the app using the following QR code.



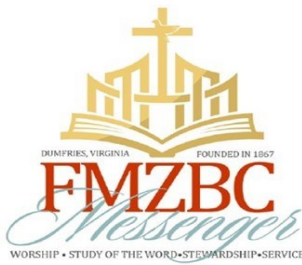
You may give online using the following online giving link:  
[https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco\\_ver3.vps?appver3=wWsk24ZWJSTZKsGd1RMKlq0BDvsSG3VIWQCPJNNx\\_D8upkiY7JlDavDsozUE7KG0nFx2Ns08LdJkGuGuF396vbc-jOdOpuGh5p9VUzbG-MUX6XHubq5Z7ap5JVmPErc4ZeYHCKCZheSjGNQmZ5B-6dxxaHhzX-YjOncGsSrUtYU7E=&ver=3](https://www.eservicepayments.com/cgi-bin/Vanco_ver3.vps?appver3=wWsk24ZWJSTZKsGd1RMKlq0BDvsSG3VIWQCPJNNx_D8upkiY7JlDavDsozUE7KG0nFx2Ns08LdJkGuGuF396vbc-jOdOpuGh5p9VUzbG-MUX6XHubq5Z7ap5JVmPErc4ZeYHCKCZheSjGNQmZ5B-6dxxaHhzX-YjOncGsSrUtYU7E=&ver=3)

Or access the link through the FMZBC website: <https://firstmountzionbc.org/> and click on ONLINE GIVING (VANCO) at any time. To avoid failed transaction fees, please regularly review your online giving account to ensure contact and payment sources are up to date. If you are interested in learning more about VANCO or have any questions as a VANCO online giver, please contact the front office, (703) 670-0184.

The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.

-- Martin Luther King, Jr.



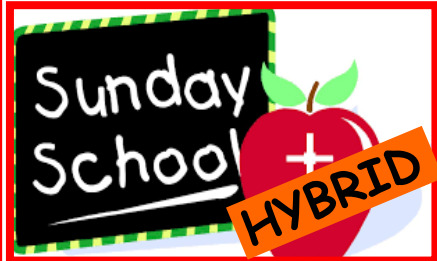


2024 Theme:

From Generation to Generation, Growing Deeper, Growing Stronger, Reaching Higher

*"Remember the days of old, Consider the years of many generations. Ask your father and he will show you; Your elders, and they will tell you, . . ."*

Deuteronomy 32:7



## SS-HYBRID IS HERE!!

Back Together Again!  
(Ecclesiastes 4:9, GMT version)

"Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth I tell you of them." (Isaiah 42:9)

Join Sunday School Hybrid each Sunday in the Chapel. For those attending the class via ZOOM, please use the link below to register:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89762921587?pwd=>

We look forward to seeing you there!!

Sunday School Extended Lesson Guides Handouts are available for download from the FMZ website using the following link:

<https://firstmountzionbc.org/weekly-sunday-school-lessons/>

POC: Rev. Gillis Taylor  
Sunday School Superintendent  
[SundaySchool@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:SundaySchool@firstmountzionbc.org)

**ATTENTION!!!**  
**PLEASE CHECK FMZ'S WEBSITE REGULARLY FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF MINISTRY ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS UPDATES REGARDING WEATHER CLOSINGS DURING OFFICE HOURS.**



The last day to register for February SHARE packages is Sunday, February 11th. SHARE packages are \$23 for food valued between \$35 and \$45. POC: Thomas Bates, 703-772-8837. Distribution will be on February 24, 2024.

## 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](mailto:cpm@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!

## CPM Team

Deacon Joseph Boutte, Chair  
Sister Oonagh Bell  
Brother Benson Blake  
Deaconess Mary Lively  
Trustee Alfranda Durr  
Dr. Sandra Flowers  
Brother James Gaskins  
Sister Sylvia Moore  
Sister Roslyn Parker  
Reverend Kathy Russell  
Deaconess Claudia Woolfolk

Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James, Assistant Pastor  
Sylvia Moore, Executive Assistant  
Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator  
James Simpson, Chair, Trustee Ministry  
Willie Brown, Chair, Deacon Ministry  
Vieta Williams, Chair, Deaconess Ministry

16622 Dumfries Road  
Dumfries, Virginia 22025-1920  
Telephone: 703-670-0184  
Email: [fmzbc@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:fmzbc@firstmountzionbc.org)  
Website: [www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com)

## SERVICE SCHEDULE

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/UCzFC03nn-QRnObzNDEefeGQ>

## SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Connect with us on:

Lifestream:

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

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/fmzbcdumfries](http://www.facebook.com/fmzbcdumfries)

Instagram: [@the\\_core\\_fmzbc](https://www.instagram.com/the_core_fmzbc)

Linked In: [First Mount Zion Baptist Church, Dumfries VA. | Groups | LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/first-mount-zion-baptist-church/)

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

YouVersion: [https://bit.ly/FMZBC-YouVersion Bible](https://bit.ly/FMZBC-YouVersionBible)

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



LifeStream.tv

indeed <https://www.indeed.com/cmp/First-Mount-Zion-Baptist-Church>