

The Magic of
Christmas
is not in the presents
but in *His*  presence



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

A Ministry Exhibiting A Spirit of Excellence!

Christmas Message from the Acting Pastor



REJOICE! ADVENT IS HERE

Advent is a time of looking back to the birth of Christ and a looking forward to the day Christ comes again. For Christians, this is also a declaration and a promise. The word "Advent" is derived from the Latin word *adventus*, meaning "coming. Advent was a season of preparation for the baptism of new Christians at the January feast of Epiphany, the celebration of God's incarnation represented by the visit of the Magi to the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:1), his baptism in the Jordan River by John the Baptist (John 1:29), and his first miracle at Cana (John 2:1).

The season of Advent covers the four Sundays leading up to Christmas. Advent symbolizes the present situation of the church in these "last days" (Acts 2:17, Hebrews 1:2), as God's people wait for the return of Christ in glory to consummate His eternal kingdom. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God's past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus, and on this basis, they called for God once again to act for them. In the same way, the church today, during Advent, looks back upon Christ's coming in celebration while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the second coming of Christ's kingdom when he returns for his people. In this light, the Advent hymn "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" perfectly represents the church's cry during the Advent season:

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, Until the Son of God appears.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

While Israel sung the song in expectation of Christ's first coming, we sing the song in commemoration of that first coming and in joyful expectation of the second coming of Christ as Lord of lords and King of kings. I invite you to join me and let's rejoice in this Advent season!

Your Servant in Christ,
Dr. Sandra K. James (AP)



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Youth Ministry on BLAST - In A Good Way!

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
 John 3:16

This month we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the person who we as Christians hopefully consider to be our greatest gift. There is an often repeated saying "The Best Gifts in Life are Free." This sentiment only tells part of the story. Although the gift may be free for the receiver, any gift given incurs a cost for the "Giver." God "gave" His only Son for our salvation. Jesus willingly gave His life for us. The cost to Him was physical and mental torture and an agonizingly painful death. This sacrifice is an incredible gift of love. Hopefully, remembering what Jesus went through for us calls us to cherish His "free" gift of salvation even more.

As Christ's instruments, we are also asked to "give" of ourselves. Supporting those in and outside the body of Christ with our time, Spiritual Gifts, talents and material goods becomes a "free" gift for the one receiving it but requires a personal sacrifice from the giver.

So, as I think of other gifts I appreciate, I would like to pause to thank our faithful Youth Ministry Servants for their "gift" of service to our FMZ Youth Ministry. No matter what is planned, it cannot be executed without their support. Most of our Youth Supporters don't have youth in the youth ministry but they "gift" their time and input to support our young people. Some of them also serve the congregation in other ways. During this Christmas season I encourage you to thank them for their "gift" of service.

I also hope this Christmas you consider "regifting" the "free" gift of love God the Father and God the Son gave to us through service to others. And if you receive the "free" gift of time, encouragement or the talents of others, I hope you will cherish it, understanding this "free" gift to you had a cost.

Submitted by
 Reverend Beverly Jiggetts

YOUTH CLOTHING GIVE-AWAY CLOSET

The Youth Clothing Give Away Closet has new and gently used free clothing for youth. It is in Room 156 (next to the Barber Shop). Confidential shopping is by appointment only. The store is open on 4th Sundays following the 11 a.m. Worship Service. Community Service hours can be earned by working in the store.

POC: Deaconess Ledora Akanni, Akanni.ledora@yahoo.com



Youth Ministry supporters Deaconess Doreatha Seth and Toshiro Stovall at Youth Group Meeting



Youth Ministry Supporter Kemi Ojumu serves dinner at the 2024 Youth Ministry Prayer Dinner



Youth Ministry Supporters Sonya Wells and Shirley Hardy at September's First Friday



Youth Ministry Supporters Rev. Cheryl Manning and Alicia Bailey at First Friday. Not pictured Youth Ministry Supporter Deborah Gayle



Rev. Jiggetts with Youth Ministry Supporters Sonya Wells, Rev. Cheryl Manning, Deacon Marion Seth, Jeff Manning, Deacon Marion Seth, Deaconess Tina Coates and Middle School Retreat Presenters Min. Ashley Cherry and Deacon Ernest Hughes. Not pictured Rev. Marlene Johnson.



Youth Ministry Supporter Stephany Stewart (far right) with our youth at the Mt. Zion Youth Explosion

Youth

on



In the Spotlight

FMZ family, please join parents Mark and Andrea Floyd in celebrating the accomplishments of their daughter and FMZ member Jordyn Floyd. Jordyn, a junior at Colgan High School, received an "Academic Achievement Letter" for the 2023-24 school year. She was also recently inducted into Colgan's National Honor Society. Jordyn has maintained a 4.1 GPA while juggling a rigorous academic schedule that includes advanced and AP courses.



Jordyn is a Center for Fine and Performing Arts (CFPA) student at Colgan High School. Students must apply and have a successful audition to be accepted into this program. She is also a member of the National Thespians Society. She appeared in the Colgan Fall musical, "Hadestown, Teen Edition," which premiered last month. In addition to her theatrical pursuits at Colgan, she is an actor with the Pied Piper Theatre Company and will perform in their production of "Les Misérables" at Hylton Chapel in January 2025.

While theatre is Jordyn's primary passion, she is also a talented singer. She loves singing with the Colgan Accelerated Treble Choir-Chamber Ensemble and the Voices of Zion Choir at First Mount Zion. Jordyn is also an active member of the FMZ Youth Ministry.

Please congratulate Jordyn and encourage her as she shares her gifts and talents with her school, First Mount Zion, and the community. We are very proud of her!

Submitted by
Mark and Andrea Floyd and
Reverend Beverly Jiggetts

COME JOIN OUR

BIBLE

ADULT Study

JOIN US IN PERSON ON
WEDNESDAYS AT
11:00AM (GYM)
7:30PM (CHAPEL)

... AND ...

IF YOU TRULY CANNOT BE
PHYSICALLY WITH US, THEN
JOIN US ONLINE AT

www.fmzbc.com

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

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

Study handouts are available online:
<https://firstmountzionbc.org/bible-study-handouts/>



O COME LET US ADORE HIM!!!

A NEW CHAPTER BEGINS . . .

We are thrilled to celebrate Reverend Brian Woolfolk as he embarks on a new chapter in his ministry. You may or may not know that he has been called to pastor Mount Zion Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. This is a significant milestone, marking the culmination of years of dedication, study, and spiritual growth. He bloomed where he was planted, laboring diligently in the First Mount Zion vineyard, but God has now repotted and replanted him on higher ground, opening the gate to a new vineyard in Washington, D.C., rich with promise and purpose.

Those of us who are familiar with Reverend Brian, know that he brought a unique blend of passion, wisdom, and compassion to his role. His commitment to God's Word and his genuine love for people were evident in everything he did. He has faithfully served our congregation for many years, even before his ordination in 1994, demonstrating exceptional leadership, unwavering faith, and a profound dedication to the spiritual growth of our members. His journey with us has been marked by his heartfelt sermons, compassionate care, listening ears, and a tireless commitment to spreading the love of Christ. We have no doubt that he will be a powerful instrument in the hands of God, inspiring and equipping his new congregation to live out their faith with boldness and purpose.

Now, God has placed a new calling on Reverend Woolfolk's heart, leading him to shepherd the congregation of Mount Zion. While we will miss his presence and guidance, we rejoice in the knowledge that his gifts and passion for ministry will continue to flourish and bless others in this new location. We earnestly pray that God will grant him abundant grace, strength, and wisdom. May he experience the joy of leading God's people and the fulfillment of seeing lives transformed. We have no doubt that he will inspire, uplift, and lead his new congregation with the same grace and fervor that have characterized his Ministry here at First Mount Zion.

We extend to Reverend Brian and his family our heartfelt congratulations, and we look forward to seeing the incredible work God will accomplish through him in this new chapter of his pastoral journey. May God bless him richly.

The Pastor's Aide Ministry



thank you



As we come to the close of another successful year of publishing the monthly newsletter, the Communications & Publicity Ministry (CPM) Team could not let the year end without thanking all of you – the contributors and the readers!

We are truly grateful for everyone who faithfully penned the spiritually uplifting articles, words of encouragement, the good news announcements, the noteworthy achievements of the young and old, the photographers, those who preserved and educated a new generation about our "Black History," and/or contributed in any way to help us document the many current events in the life of First Mount Zion throughout the year. We could not have done it without you. Your contributions have been vital to our success, and we truly appreciate having you partner with us in this labor of love.

Thank you for helping us preserve our Church history for generations to come. And, don't forget, we look forward to partnering with you again in the New Year.

God Bless!

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

*Newsletter Team
Submitted by
Deaconess Claudia Woolfolk*

*May the beautiful
memories of a special
loved one bring you
comfort and solace
during this time.
Brighter days are ahead.*

*With deepest
Sympathy*

**TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE LOST LOVED ONES
DURING THIS PAST YEAR, PLEASE KNOW THAT
WE ARE PRAYING FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY
THAT GOD WILL COMFORT AND KEEP YOU
DURING THIS VERY DIFFICULT TIME!**



2025 TRUSTEE MINISTRY OFFICERS

- Chair – Trustee James Simpson
- Vice Chair – Trustee Renaee Allen
- Chaplain – Trustee Al Durr
- Secretary – Trustee Willie Davis



Trustee James Simpson



Trustee Renaee Allen



Trustee Alfranda Durr



Trustee Willie Davis

TRUSTED TO OVERSEE

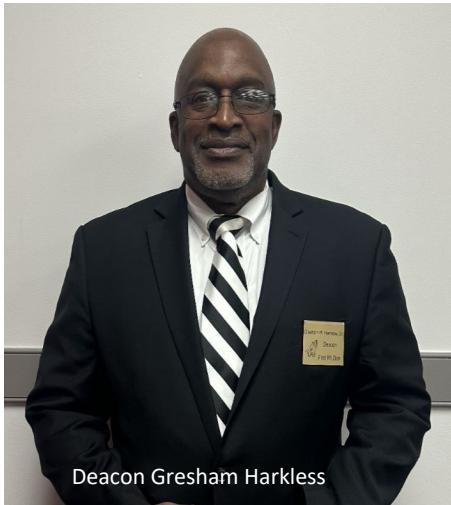


2025 DEACON MINISTRY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- **Chair:** Deacon Kavin Johnson
- **Vice Chair, Operations:** Deacon Gresham Harkless
- **Vice Chair, Communication, Education, & Policy (CEP):** Deacon Vannie Parker, IV
- **Secretary:** Deacon Mark Jessup, Sr.
- **Assistant Secretary:** Deacon Ernest Hughes
- **Chaplain:** Deacon Keith Holmes
- **Assistant Chaplain:** Deacon Everett Griggs



Deacon Kavin Johnson



Deacon Gresham Harkless



Deacon Vannie Parker, IV



Deacon Mark Jessup, Sr.



Deacon Ernest Hughes



Deacon Keith Holmes



Deacon Everett Griggs

ORDAINED TO SERVE

2025 DEACONESS MINISTRY OFFICERS

- **Chairperson** - Deaconess Vietta Williams
- **1st Vice-Chair of Operations** - Deaconess Adrienne Little
- **2nd Vice Chair of Policy, Partnership and Development** - Deaconess Sharron Johnson
- **Secretary** - Deaconess Kishema Tapp
- **Assistant Secretary** - Deaconess Debbie Singleton
- **Chaplain** - Deaconess Debbie Tribble
- **Assistant Chaplain** - Deaconess Pam Ford



Deaconess Vietta Williams



Deaconess Adrienne Little



Deaconess Sharron Johnson



Deaconess Kishema Tapp



Deaconess Debbie Singleton



Deaconess Debbie Tribble



Deaconess Pam Ford

CHOSEN FOR MINISTRY

stayCONNECTED

ONLINE/IN-PERSON EVENTS

ADULT BIBLE STUDY:

Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. (in the Gym) and 7:30 p.m. (in the Chapel), or on our website: www.fmzbc.com, or online via YouTube and Facebook.

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY is held in the Executive Conference Room on the 3rd floor. from 7:40-8:30 p.m. It can also be accessed via Zoom. To attend via Zoom, please register online. Join us as we do "Bible Study for life."

YOUTH MINISTRY

Servants Wanted!!! If you have a heart for working with our Youth Ministry, please contact Reverend Dr. Beverly Jiggetts at:

bjiggetts@firstmountzionbc.org

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY



Start the New Year off right!! Consider joining one of our Small Groups. Please contact the Director, Stephanie M. Craddock, at 703-670-0184, or email Scraddock@firstmountzionbc.org. You can also visit our website at <https://firstmountzionbc.org/small-group/>.

There is a Group waiting for you or, if you do not see a group which peaks your interest, you can always start one. Talk to Sis. Stephanie and she will help you accomplish your goal!!!



ONLINE/IN-PERSON EVENTS

PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR MINISTRY EVENTS, LOCATIONS AND/OR CANCELLATIONS

SUBMISSION OF WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRs

Announcements and weekly PRs are due by the close of business each Tuesday. Any submissions after the deadline will be processed the following week.

IT (INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY)

Help Desk needs **YOU!!!** If you have an AV or IT background, we are soliciting your help in providing AV or IT helpdesk support, when needed.

Also, if you have questions about, or need assistance with, ZOOM or OFFICE365, or need an email or password reset, including FMZ email address password resets, please contact Renee Woolfolk for assistance at:

rwoolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org

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

or

youthministry@firstmountzionbc.org

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



A volunteer **RECEPTIONIST** is needed to answer the phones while the staff receptionist attends staff meetings or trainings, or is on leave. If you are interested and able to volunteer between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and until 1:30 p.m. on Fridays, please call Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator, at 703-670-0184 or email her at:

rwoolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org

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

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

and, if you choose to volunteer in the Audio Visual Ministry, which includes Wednesday night Bible Study, Sunday Worship, Homegoing Services, Weddings, and other Ministry Activities, please contact Dijae North at:

dnorth@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

Holiday greetings from Leadership!!!

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

As we close out 2024, 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 wants to thank you for how you continued to support FMZBC with your generous giving through regular offerings. We also want to thank you for your aid to those struggling during the holidays and those impacted by Hurricanes Helene and Milton.

God's great love, grace and mercy has enabled all of us to face many challenges in 2024. As stated in Psalm 46:1 "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." When we feel stressed or anxious (as many of us may have particularly in the last few weeks) we should remember Isaiah 41:10 "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand". We serve a righteous God. As the old saying goes, "Greater is He that is in me (us) than he that is in the world."

As we enter 2025, 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 2025; however, we do know our God will have His "loving arms around all of us". Philippians 4:6-7 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God". If we collectively and individually follow this, we can look forward to the blessings God has in store for us in the new year!

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

*Trustee Ministry
Trustee James Simpson, Chair*

A MESSAGE OF GRATITUDE AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Greetings, First Mount Zion Family,

As we approach the end of another remarkable year, the Deacons Ministry offers a few reflections on the many blessings God has bestowed upon our congregation. This year has been a testament to the power of faith, love, and commitment to His service. Together, we have seen ministries flourish, lives transformed, and God's Kingdom expanded through your unwavering service, study, worship, and stewardship.

We begin by saying **thank you**. Thank you for the countless ways you support and grow the ministries of First Mount Zion. Your dedication to ministry work, small groups, SHARE, participation in Bible Study and Sunday School, heartfelt worship, and financial stewardship all contribute to the strength and unity of our church family. Every act of service makes a significant impact, and we praise God for your faithfulness.

As we move forward, we encourage you to remain steadfast in **prayer**, knowing that prayer is the foundation of all that we do. We are reminded in Philippians 4:6 to "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." Let us continue to lift up one another, our ministries, and our community in prayer as we seek God's guidance and strength for the year ahead.

We also invite you to deepen your engagement through **service**. There are many opportunities to serve within our church and beyond its walls. From supporting our youth, ushering in worship services, to participating in outreach programs, your time and talents are essential in fulfilling the mission of First Mount Zion: **Connecting people who have a desire to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.**

Furthermore, we encourage you to remain active in **participation**. Sunday School, Bible Study, worship services, and small groups provide vital opportunities for spiritual growth, fellowship,

and discipleship. These gatherings are where we strengthen our understanding of God's Word, build meaningful relationships, and equip ourselves to be effective witnesses for Christ.

We especially want to emphasize the importance of Sunday School and Bible Study. These ministries are the lifeblood of our spiritual education, and they offer a chance for all ages to come together, ask questions, and grow in their faith. Whether in person or online, your presence in these spaces enriches the learning experience for everyone.

As we close this year and prepare for the next, let us continue to be diligent stewards of the blessings God has entrusted to us. Together, we can build on this year's accomplishments and reach new heights in service, study, worship, and stewardship.

We thank you for your love, prayers, and commitment to our church. Let us press forward in unity, remembering the words of Galatians 6:9: "Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up."

With gratitude and hope,

Deacon Ministry



*To all December
celebrants*





"TIS THE SEASON - THE GIFT OF GIVING"

The Lord reminds us in Acts 20:35 that "it is more blessed to give than to receive." This year, with the help of the FMZBC congregation and the CORE Ministry, so many have been blessed by the clothing donations contributing to the grand opening of the

FMZBC Gift Closet on August 4th! Leading up to the grand opening, the Deaconess Ministry has been actively working for over a year to collect donated new or gently used clothing items for our youth. Because of your generosity, the Gift Closet Ministry has been a blessing to several families internal to our FMZBC youth and families in surrounding communities. In addition, Deaconess Ministry is grateful to God to report that from the recent youth Winter Coat Drive that we collected 55 gently used but mostly brand-new coats for students at a local title one elementary school in Woodbridge, VA. Moving forward, the Deaconess Ministry will be partnering with the SHARE and Deacon Ministries to open the Gift Closet to the public on SHARE Saturdays during the time of food distribution. Members of the congregation interested in shopping for items in the Gift Closet can e-mail Deaconess Ledora Akanni at akanni_ledora@yahoo.com to make an appointment during Church business hours. In addition, the Gift Closet will be open for one hour after Worship Service on 4th Sundays. All clothing items in the Gift Closet are free of charge. Due to the limited space capacity, only youth clothing donations from kindergarten through high school are being accepted currently.



Left to Right - Deaconesses Ivery Barnes, Cora Lynch and Mary Lively



The Gift Closet Grand Opening in August 2024

The Deaconess Ministry has also participated in donating non-perishable food items to stock in the pantry at Fannie Fitzgerald Elementary School. Every 3rd Wednesday of the

month between October and May, Deaconess Ministry servant leaders purchase food items in bulk and deliver them to the school to support their Weekend Food program for children who may not have ready access to nutritional meals over weekends.

Finally, in partnership with the FMZBC Grain of Heaven (GOH) team, the Deaconess Ministry this year was blessed to serve on three separate occasions, 30 families located at the Hilda Barg Homeless Prevention Center in Woodbridge. Families truly enjoyed the hot, home-cooked-style meals prepared by the GOH and the fellowship with the Deaconess servant leaders who brought welcome smiles and helping hands to those in need.

FITNESS-IN-PLACE

FITNESS TIPS FOR CHRISTMAS

Embrace active traditions...Take the free [Holiday Walk of Lights at Neabsco Park](#), invite your friends and family to Christmas Carol through your neighborhood, or have a [Christmas scavenger hunt](#).

When shopping, park far away...This will burn extra calories, reduce your stress levels and keep your car from getting a dent.

When going to the mall, invite a friend to shop and walk together... Burn more calories and reduce your stress levels together.

Eat in moderation...Don't try to lose weight or stick to a restrictive diet during the holidays...Enjoy your favorite foods, but in small portions.

Spread out your courses.... You don't have to eat every thing at once...Eat dinner and then take a walk before sitting down for dessert.

Don't aim for perfection or place unrealistic demands on yourself...Enjoy the imperfections and laugh. It burns calories and reduces stress!

*Sister Lori Valkenburg
Fitness Director*



During this Christmas season, let us remember that it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive. However, it is not solely needed clothing and food items that we can continue to help others with, it is also our time – our most precious gift. We are thankful to God for these and other opportunities to be a blessing to others. We could not achieve it without your spirit of generosity and your prayers.

Have a Merry Christmas FMZBC Family, and a Happy New Year!



The Hilda Barg Homeless Prevention Center



*Submitted by
Deaconess Vietta Williams
Chairperson*



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:

"Just as you instructed the people to set up stones of remembrance for each of the 12 tribes, we set aside time to remember the service men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice and lost their lives in the line of duty. Thank you for each life, service and commitment. We pray your continued peace, comfort, strength and healing power for their families and loved ones. We pray for healing and peace for our nation so that their sacrifice will not be in vain. We also pray that you will watch over and protect and provide direction for those actively serving at home and abroad.

We also remember your blessings on this nation and the body of Christ and say thank you! You are an awesome God and all the glory, honor and praise belong to you alone! In Jesus name we pray and give thanks, Amen!

Scripture:

John 8:36 NKJV

Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

John 8:36 AMPC

So if the Son liberates you [makes you free men], then you are really and unquestionably free

John 8:36 MSG

So if the Son sets you free, you are free through and through.

Galatians 5:1 NKJV

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

Galatians 5:1 AMPC

In [this] freedom Christ has made us free [and completely liberated us]; stand fast then, and do not be hampered and held ensnared and submit again to a yoke of slavery [which you have once put off].

Galatians 5:1 MSG

Christ has set us free to live a free life. So, take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you.

Praise and Worship Song: "Sacrificed His Life For My Liberty" - <https://youtu.be/96Wgc6xviGQ>

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



THE LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS

What a year it has been, and it is not even over yet! There are times we look back over this past year in wonder and amazement. It often leaves us shaking our head a bit and even saying out loud from time to time, "I never saw that coming!" Nevertheless, the year 2024 will soon be in our past, and it can't come a moment too soon.

During this year there have been months of difficulty on so many levels for so many people. Central to the difficulties is a national election season that saw candidates stoop to new lows in integrity and basic human decency. It became difficult for many of us to maintain our faith in our governmental process.

However, these challenging times have also provided us with the opportunity to exercise our faith in God. We are assured even more that while God encourages us to support our government leaders and institutions, that He is the master of the universe and holds the whole world in His hands!

It is sometimes difficult to see the good when we feel so overwhelmed by despair; but Christmas reminds us of something critical to keep in our minds, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 3:19 NIV)

Therefore, I want to remind us that we are a Christian people, and that Jesus is incarnated in every act of love and kindness we extend to one another. God can reach us beyond all the barriers and challenges the world can create and revive us by giving us strength in times of great distress. So, we can do this, and we will overcome because we are the Church, the body of the risen Christ!

Jesus overcame the world, and all its inherent problems, and Jesus is the reason for the season! May you be filled with the wonder of Mary, the obedience of Joseph, the joy of the angels, the eagerness of the shepherds, the determination of the magi, and the peace of the Christ child.

*Submitted by
Reverend Cozy Bailey*



The First Mount Zion Seniors' Ministry Leadership Team presented an awesome celebratory program during their monthly Fellowship on Wednesday, November 20, 2024, in honor of Veterans Day, while also recognizing those who have served - and still serve - as Caretakers, in honor of National Family Caregivers Month. They also made sure that Thanksgiving was a top priority as we have so much to be thankful for, simply because GOD has been good to us! The Gym was full of happy Seniors enjoying the festivities, and Sis. Pauline Hunter and Sis. Doris Johnson displayed a wonderful Veterans Memorabilia table for all to enjoy.

Our theme was: *Answering the Call to Serve: God, Country, Community* (Matthew 25:40).

The Fellowship opened with a prayer offered by Deaconess Norma Fields, followed by a Scripture reading by Deacon Tony Fields. Dr. Keith Boykin then welcomed the Seniors and their guests, during which time he asked all Caretakers to stand since it was Caregivers' Month, and we wanted them to know they are appreciated and their contributions are not overlooked. They were presented little commemorative magnets by the Leadership Team in appreciation of the contributions they made and continue to make, as Caretakers. The November birthdays and anniversaries were recognized by Sis. Hope Singleton, and Deacon Fields then blessed the delicious food, which was served by the Grain of Heaven. After lunch, the Seniors engaged in a game of Bible Trivia which was facilitated by Brother Ken and Sister Malinda Spencer, and the winners received a gift.

Sis. Oonagh Bell then asked all military spouses to stand. She delivered a tribute to them, and members of the Leadership Team presented each of them with the Tribute Scroll as a keepsake. This was followed by Brother Bassie McCain who, in recognition of Veterans' Day, delivered his timely presentation about Accepting the Call to Serve. He asked that all Veterans stand, and he had the Leadership Team distribute Veterans pins to each Veteran in the room. He then introduced three speakers who would be sharing their experiences from different perspectives: Reverend Cozy Bailey, as a Man of God and a Marine who served in the Armed Forces; Sis. Maria Fitzgerald, as an Army Veteran and a woman of God; and from Brother David DeLacy, a man of God serving the Community as a veteran of the armed forces of the South Side of Chicago (this is where his community service started). The presentations were very moving and were a blessing to all in attendance.

The Fellowship concluded with our Chaplain, Deacon Robert Creekmur, who gave the invitation to discipleship, and then closed us out in prayer.

We are looking forward to another great Fellowship in December as we close out 2024. See you there!!!

*Humbly submitted,
Seniors' Ministry Leadership Team*





AMBIGUOUS LOSS AND GRIEF – 2024 ELECTION RESULTS



The death of a loved one can be among the most distressing experiences people face. It's a clear loss with expected and validated feelings of grief and sadness. Many times, however, people can feel significant loss when there isn't a death. It can be more difficult to recognize and validate these emotions. To put simply, grief is the outcome of a significant loss.

Ambiguous loss is a person's profound sense of loss and sadness that is not associated with a death of a loved one. Examples include: Situations where the person you are grieving is physically alive but not emotionally or relationally part of your life, such as a divorce, estrangement, incarceration, relocating to a new country, or a chronic illness like dementia.

Ambiguous loss is the feelings of losses many of us experienced during the covid pandemic. People were grieving the loss of freedom and social movement, loss of employment, loss of educational opportunities, etc. And now we have a kind of loss that is causing some grief for people who wanted a different outcome of the November 5, 2024 election. It's really quite important to understand the feelings. It is a normal response if you're in the midst of something you didn't expect and you don't like, and it came suddenly, unexpectedly. It's a major loss. Be patient with yourself if you're feeling intense sorrow, numbness, bitterness, persistent longing, pain, rumination, guilt, and anger.

After the election results, you may be grieving the loss of hopes and dreams and plans that you thought were coming from the other candidate; a loss of certainty in the future; loss of faith in your fellow American citizens; the loss of trust in the world as a safe place; loss of feelings of freedom over your own body; the loss of support for people who have lesser means than the rest of us do; the loss of support for your neighbor and people who are different from you—it's grief that remains unresolved.

What can you do to cope?

Long-term: Do something active in order to deal with this situation you can't control. Be active in your neighborhoods at the grassroots level; be active in your church. You need to be active, not just sit back and grumble, and not just lash out either.

Short-term: Identify your loss. It's important to validate your ambiguous loss. One way is to journal: write down everything in your life that has changed or will change due to your loss.

Nothing is too small to include. Don't minimize your list, as that can short-circuit your journey.

Give thanks: Keep your eyes open throughout the day for reasons to say “thank you”. Make a conscious effort to notice when people do good things, whether for you or others. Tell the person you recognize their good deed, and give a sincere “thank you”.

Sources:

Bartels, M. 11/6/2024 Election Grief Is Real—Here's How to Cope
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/election-grief-is-real-heres-how-to-cope/> download 11/14/24

Mayo Clinic Health System 4/10/2023. Unnamed Pain, Coping with Ambiguous Grief <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/coping-with-ambiguous-grief> - download 11/14/24

*Submitted by
Associate Minister
Reverend Juanita Stokes, MA, LPC, NCC, MARS
Licensed Professional Counselor*

HUMILITY IS A CHOICE

"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time He will lift you up in honor." 1 Peter 5:6 (NLT)

When you're successful, it's much easier to fall hard than it is to maintain your success. When you experience success, the natural tendency is to get proud and forget about God—but success crumbles when you do that. If you find yourself forgetting about God in your success, you need to immediately take this critical step: Repent.

The Bible says, *“Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you”* (Revelation 2:5 NIV). If you’re getting proud, you must repent. When you repent, you change your mind. You go from thinking your way about your life to thinking God’s way.

Why repent? Because humility is a choice. The Bible says, *"So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor"* (1 Peter 5:6 NLT). Notice that the verse doesn't tell you to ask God to humble you. Humility is something you choose for yourself.

Here's the difference between pride and humility: Pride is when you accept credit for things that God and other people have done through you and for you. Humility doesn't mean thinking less of yourself. It means thinking of yourself less—and thinking of God and others more. If you have experienced success and are beginning to get prideful, then repent of that pride—today! Change your perspective about who you are and where your success comes from.

The Bible says, “*For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted*” (Matthew 23:12 NIV).

Pastor Rick Warren

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT ATHENS, GREECE AND SOME OF ITS HISTORIC BIBLICAL AREAS

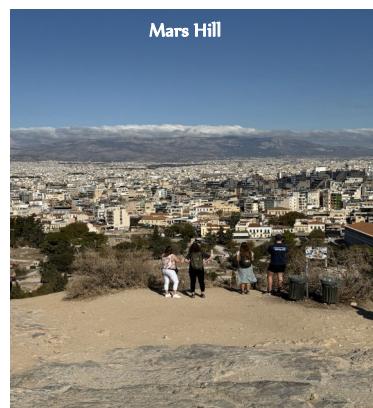
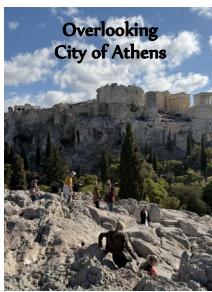
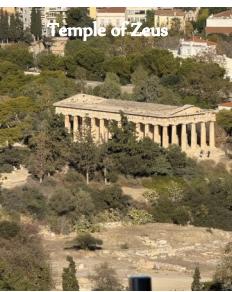
Did you know that the most popular selling shoe brand in the United States is named after a Greek god, Nike? Athens, Greece is a place of long and deep historical and personal meaning. To experience the sight, sounds and smells of Greece made many passages of Scripture real and come alive making it ultimately a journey of discipline and faith as well.

From November 11 –12, Athens was the center of the global running movement, as 74,000 runners from 151 countries and Bro. Gerry Griffin and Rev. John McNeill Jr. were among them. Brothers Griffin and McNeil trained hard for many months for the 26.2 mile run from Marathon to Athens. Bro. Gerry Griffin was celebrated in Athens for becoming a part of the 7 Continent Marathon Club. And yes, he has also traversed the frozen terrain of Antarctica and doesn't plan to stop any time soon. Rev. McNeill completed his second marathon on his second continent and plans to concentrate on much shorter races. The marathon ended in the 1896 Olympic Stadium.

A clue as to why so many people converge on this region every year, is embedded in its name — the Authentic, meaning it's where the marathon originated. The legend is told that Pheidippides, an Athenian messenger, ran from the site of the Battle of Marathon to Athens to announce a Greek victory. The Battle of Marathon was fought in 490 BCE between the Athenians and the Persian army, led by Darius the Great.

Centuries before, our Bible records that the Apostle Paul preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Athens during his second missionary journey (Acts 17:16-34) and report that there were those who worshipped idols and those who were faithful. While in Greece, Bros. Griffin and McNeill explored the Parthenon, the Acropolis and the Temples of Zeus and Poseidon and Mars Hill. They witnessed how many of the places of myths in literature books were places of religion to Greeks in the past. This was an exciting and educational trip and one which we will never forget, especially for the connection to the stories told in the Bible. Here are some pictures reflecting our journey!

Submitted by
Brother Gerry Griffin
Reverend John McNeill



Thank
you!

Thank
you!

Thank you, FMZ Family, for continuously showing your love to those less fortunate during this time of Thanksgiving. It is indeed a blessing to worship with such an amazing group of saints who think it not robbery to share their blessings with others. Again, you have gone above and beyond what was asked of you and, for that, we are extremely grateful to all who supported, and continue to support, this worthy cause. As a result of your overwhelming generosity in our Special Benevolent Offering, **1,103 Thanksgiving food packages** were delivered. 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, another opportunity to give, please help your Zone Leaders identify families in our congregation and community, who would appreciate a SHARE package. The last day to register and submit names, is December 1, 2024. SHARE distribution will take place on December 21st, from 8:30AM – Noon.



GROWING TOGETHER IN PRAYER: A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

As we continue to seek God's presence and guidance, the Growing Together Midday Prayer Call has been a beacon of hope, faith, and unity in our Ministry. We are deeply grateful to every individual who calls in faithfully to join us in prayer. Your commitment to lifting up our search for a new pastor, our members, staff, leadership, and community in prayer, is truly inspiring.

A special "thank you" goes out to our dedicated Prayer Warriors who lead us each week. Your heartfelt prayers for healing, comfort during bereavement, and intercession for the various situations our Church family faces, have made a profound impact. Through your faith and devotion, we witness the power of God's grace at work.

We are also overjoyed by the praise reports shared during our time together. These testimonies remind us of God's mighty grace and mercy, reflecting His unwavering presence in the lives of His people. Each answered prayer is a testament to His faithfulness and love.

To participate in the Growing Together Midday Prayer Call, please join us Monday through Friday at 12:00 PM. The line opens at 11:55 AM, and the Prayer Warrior begins promptly at noon. Please mute your microphones during prayer by pressing *6.

Dial-in Information:

- ◆ Dial-in Number: 305-224-1968
- ◆ Meeting ID: 881 0429 9549
- ◆ Passcode: 752600

For your convenience, you can save the following into your phone's contacts to dial in without typing numbers:

- ◆ Contact Name: Growing Together Midday Prayer Line
- ◆ Phone Number:
+13052241968,,88104299549#,,,*752600#

Let us continue growing together in prayer, trusting in the promises of our Lord. Thank you for allowing God to work through you to bless others.

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing." Thessalonians 5:11

*Blessings,
The Growing Together Midday Prayer Team*

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



Sometimes we have to wait. Isaiah 40:31 is one of my favorite Bible verses: They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

This verse has gotten me through many difficult times when I was weary and could hardly put one foot in front of the other. We live in a world of instant gratification. But if you look at nature, nature doesn't rush things. Babies, human, furry, and otherwise, all have their allotted time of gestation. The mother is in a time of waiting. She is not, however, idle. She is eating well, taking care of herself, and making the necessary preparations for a new life.

In order to grow tall, a tree needs good soil, water, and sunshine. It needs to establish a strong root system so that it can grow as tall as it can. It needs strong roots to withstand the winds and rains. Growth takes time. You cannot rush growth. Rushing goes against nature. It goes against our spiritual growth too.

Waiting is trusting. When we trust, we let go of the anxiety that comes with waiting. It's self-induced suffering. The Apostle Paul said, "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

When I look back on my life, I can see how all the experiences brought me to where I am today. Circumstances were not always very "good" at the time, however, things worked together for good. Much of that time was waiting for my life to unfold.

The following are words based on the word, wait. These are the words God put on my heart in my book, *God Notes – Daily Doses of Divine Encouragement*. It sums up why we wait.

Wait

Frustration happens easily when you have to wait. You live in a material world where you must wait.

You wait in a doctor's office.

You wait at a red light.

You wait for test results.

Don't allow anxiety and stress to fill moments when you must wait. Use this time to connect with Me.

When you ask Me for help with a sincere and grateful heart on big plans and dreams that you have, I may ask you to wait.

I am working behind the scenes on your behalf. A worthwhile request takes time.

Wait, but don't be idle.

I will renew your strength.

As you wait, I can't wait to show you what great things I have in store for you as you trust in Me.

So, wait on the Lord to renew your strength.

*Jackie Trottmann
Christian Meditation*

MESSAGE FROM THE CBA



Collectively, the Operations Team celebrates the completion of 139 years of employment by First Mount Zion Baptist Church. We are responsible for maintaining more than 100,000 square feet and the service delivery in support of over sixty ministries and twenty-one staff members. It is our humble duty to support the day-to-day operations and the Ministry activities of First Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Reflecting on this past year, I am grateful for our ongoing return from COVID. We consistently evaluate our Ministry's status and strive to anticipate evolving operational and fiscal needs amid building use requests, purchase requisitions, capital expenditures, budgeting, and more. I can honestly say, for each of us, it is an honor to do so. Though we work diligently with our available human and capital resources, we continue to strive for even more. Below is a look back at some major projects and services the team has completed in 2024:

Capital expenditures

- ◆ Digital monitors in the Sanctuary (upgrading from projector and screens)
- ◆ HVAC replacement
- ◆ Roof resurfacing
- ◆ Kitchen stove and fryer replacements

Enhance and build upon hybrid environment

- ◆ Hybrid classrooms for Sunday School Extended, Youth Bible Study and meetings throughout the building
- ◆ Live streaming capability from the Chapel for Bible Study; worship and homegoing services

Cost saving measures

- ◆ Conversion of Chapel lighting to upgraded LED
- ◆ Began LED retrofit lighting in the narthex and gym

As you can see, there is a lot to celebrate. It is through your faithful service and stewardship, along with the staff's dedication, that FMZBC is able to meet the Ministry's demands with the excellence our members expect, all in honor of the faithful God we serve.

As we approach the end of 2024, know that with grateful hearts we look forward in anticipation to what God will do and to the blessings we will experience in the new year.



*Renee M. Woolfolk
Church Business Administrator*

A PRAYER AS WE ENTER 2025

Gracious God and Father, we come before You with hearts filled with gratitude for the countless blessings bestowed upon us and our loved ones in the past year. Thank You for Your unfailing love and faithfulness. As we step into the New Year, we surrender all our aspirations, plans, and goals into Your hands. May Your divine guidance and wisdom lead us in every decision we make.

We express our gratitude for the strength and resilience You've instilled in us throughout the challenges of the past year. Grant us continued strength and courage to face the opportunities and obstacles of the coming year.

We also thank You, dear Lord, for the lessons learned in the past year. Grant us a teachable spirit and the wisdom to discern Your guidance in every circumstance we encounter in 2025. We declare that every closed door from the previous year is opened unto us in this New Year. May new opportunities, blessings, and breakthroughs flow abundantly in our lives. We pray for favor and divine connections in our relationships, career, and endeavors. May we experience favor and goodwill with everyone with whom we interact. We declare divine health and wholeness over our bodies, minds, and spirits in the New Year as we decree freedom from sickness and affliction as we walk in Your abundant grace. Lord, we ask for Your divine protection over us as well as our families, and all that concerns us in 2024. Guard us against all forms of evil, danger, and harm.

God of restoration, we pray for the restoration of everything lost or stolen in the previous year. May You turn our losses into abundant gains and blessings beyond measure. Father, we surrender our fears, worries, and anxieties to You. Grant us the peace that surpasses all understanding and fill our heart with serenity amidst life's uncertainties. And we ask for the strength to resist temptations and overcome trials that may come our way in the New Year. Grant us victory in every spiritual battle. Heavenly Father, we surrender our plans and desires to You. Let Your will be done in our lives, and may we always seek Your guidance in all we do.

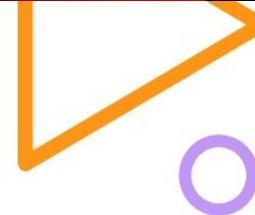
Lord, we pray for the empowerment of Your Spirit to serve others selflessly and be a vessel of Your love, compassion, and kindness in our communities. Merciful Father, we pray for the healing and restoration of broken relationships and the reconciliation of estranged loved ones. May Your love mend what is fractured. Lord, because we are trusting You to be our waymaker, our provider, our everything, and we thank You for Your promise to be with us always. We love You, Lord and are glad that You loved us first.

These and all other blessings we ask in the precious and wonderful name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ, Amen and amen!

"people who wonder if the glass is half empty or full, miss the point. The glass is refillable."
—Unknown



Join us for a Prayer Circle.

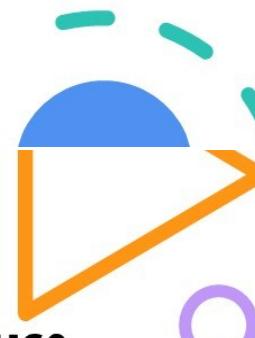


FMZBC PULPIT COMMITTEE

When: December 22nd (4th Sunday)
Time: Immediately After Service
Location: Chapel



Note: This time is for Prayer ONLY



Next time: Jan 26



FMZBC PULPIT COMMITTEE

Do you have questions for us?

All questions must be submitted in writing to pulpitcommittee@firstmountzionbc.org in order to ensure appropriate and timely responses. A response will be provided within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays.



Note: Limited questions will be taken during the December Church Meeting.



POSITIVES FROM THE BLACK

HISTORY CORNER

RELECTIONS OVER 2024

"TRIBUTE TO THE 10TH CALVARY"

Art of Our Congregation: History and Creativity

Mike Sherman's painting, "Tribute to the 10th Calvary" is a watercolor depiction of the 10th Calvary US Colored Troops during a calvary charge. The **10th Cavalry Regiment** is a unit of the United States Army. Formed as a segregated African-American unit, it was one of the original "Buffalo Soldier" . . .

FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN TO SIT ON NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

From an impoverished childhood in Tennessee, **Carl T. Rowan** would go on to become a nationally syndicated columnist and the first African American to sit in on National Security Council meetings. In 1962, President John F. Kennedy asked him to serve on the U.S. delegation to the United Nations, which according to his memoir, "Breaking Barriers" (HarperPerennial, . . .) *"It is often easier to become outraged by injustice half a world away than by oppression and discrimination half a block from home."* ~ **Carl T. Rowan**

CELEBRATING THE 58 NATIONS OF AFRICA THE LONG JOURNEY STARTED ON THESE SHORES. . .

"LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING" THE STORY BEHIND THE HYMN



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



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"

African American artists have made significant contributions to the world of art, using their creativity to preserve history, express community memory, and empower themselves and others. Throughout history, various artistic and cultural movements have been led by people of African descent, setting standards and influencing global trends.

DEAR CORETTA. . .

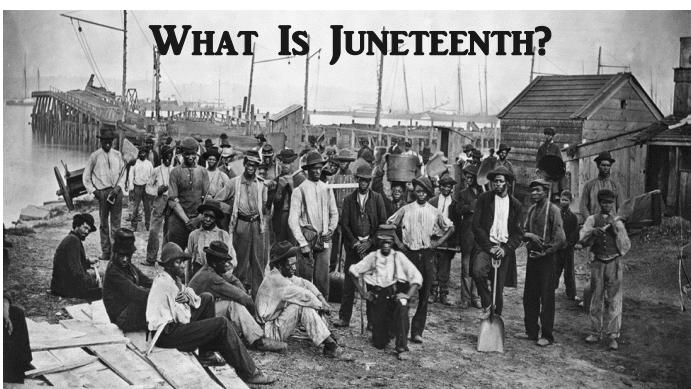
THE CORETTA SCOTT KING ROSE GALLERY: A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP CHRONICLING OUR HISTORY AND IMPACT



ED DWIGHT grew up in segregated 1930s Kansas on a farm on the edge of town. An airfield was within walking distance, and, as a boy, he'd often go to marvel at the planes and gawk at the pilots. Most were flying back from hunting trips and their cabins were messy with blood and empty beers cans on the floor. "They'd say to me, 'Hey kid, would you clean my airplane? I'll give you a dime,'" Dwight, 90, recalls. But when he was 8 or 9, Dwight asked for more than a dime. He wanted to fly.



KELLY MILLER, mathematician, advanced the intellectual life of African Americans, earning several advanced degrees. He was the first Black man to attend Johns Hopkins University and, as the first black graduate student in Mathematics. . .



JUNETEENTH: A BEACON OF FREEDOM AND THE POWER OF INDIVIDUAL IMPACT

... The significance of Juneteenth extends beyond historical reflection, highlighting the importance of individual action and community advocacy in shaping our society. Members of First Mount Zion Baptist Church exemplify this spirit of active service and transformative impact. A notable example is **Dr. George M. Hampton**, whose dedication and leadership were instrumental in recognizing Juneteenth as an official holiday in Prince William County, Virginia, in 2016. His efforts not only honored the day at a local level but also paved the way for its eventual acknowledgment as a national holiday in 2021.



NEVER GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS!!!

She became a mom at 15 but didn't give up on her dreams. Today, she's a doctor!!!

A Howard University graduate achieved her dream of becoming a doctor after becoming a mom at just 15.

"Growing up, I didn't see Black doctors," Dr. Kathryn Kelly said. "I really got into this to take care of my community and

FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN TO RECEIVE A PH.D. FROM HARVARD UNIVERSITY

In 1895, history was made when a man named William Edward Burghardt Du Bois became the first African American man to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University. This amazing accomplishment went on to open the door for hundreds of future Black American students and even led to a series of lectures, aptly named *The W. E. B. Du Bois Lectures* which, as *Harvard University Press* stated, was proudly given in recognition to "persons of outstanding achievement who have contributed to our better understanding of African American life, history, and culture."



FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN TO RECEIVE A PH.D. FROM HARVARD UNIVERSITY

In 1926, Otelia Cromwell became the first black woman to receive a degree [Ph.D.] from Yale University. She had previously been the first black graduate of Smith College. She was the eldest child of Lucy McGuinn and Republican John Wesley Cromwell, a lawyer, educator, and journalist, who was active in the reconstruction of Virginia. Otelia was born in Washington, D.C. in 1874, and her mother died when she was 12, leaving her responsible for her five younger siblings.



DAISY BATES was born on November 11, 1914 in Huttig, Arkansas. Her father, Hezekiah Gatson, supported the family by working as a lumber grader in a local mill. Her mother,

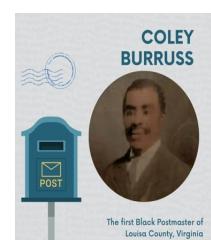
Millie Riley, was murdered when Daisy was an infant, and she was given care by her mother's close friends: Orlee Smith, a World War I veteran, and his wife Susie Smith. Her father abandoned her, and Daisy never saw him again. Her birth mother had been raped and murdered by three local white men, and her body thrown into a millpond, where it was later discovered. Learning that no one was prosecuted for her mother's murder stoked Daisy's anger about injustice. She later wrote: "My life now had a secret goal – to find the men who had done this horrible thing to my mother."

Bates was a pivotal figure in that seminal moment of the Civil Rights Movement.

EDNA LEWIS – GODMOTHER OF SOUTHERN COOKING



Edna Lewis, often revered as the "Godmother of Southern Cooking," played a pivotal role in elevating Southern cuisine to a respected and cherished culinary tradition. Born in 1916 in Freetown, Virginia, a community founded by freed slaves, Lewis grew up surrounded by the rich agricultural life that would deeply influence her cooking. Her upbringing in this close-knit, self-sufficient community was integral to her understanding and appreciation of seasonal, farm-to-table cooking long before these concepts became mainstream.



HISTORY RESIDES AMONGST US!!!!

Meet Coley Burruss (pronounced Cool-ee), the grandfather of one of our current members, Jacqueline Burruss. He is described as a true hidden gem of Black Louisa History! Coley was just 14 years old when the Civil War ended in 1865. His descendants recall him telling stories about the war and hiding horses from troops robbing the plantation he lived on. Beyond his bravery and love of horses, Coley was a pillar of his community, serving as a founder and deacon of Union Baptist Church in Louisa. He also owned and operated Trevilians Grocery Store and held the esteemed position of the first and only postmaster of the Cutalong District.

DID YOU KNOW?



SHIRLEY CHISHOLM (1924-2005)

Congress is more diverse now than it's ever been. However, when Chisholm was attempting to shatter the glass ceiling, the same couldn't be said. During the racially contentious period in the late '60s, she became the **first Black woman elected to Congress**. She represented New York's 12th District from 1969 to 1983, and in 1972, she became the first woman to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. Her campaign slogan "Unbought and unbossed" rings even louder today. Senator Kamala Harris paid tribute to Chisholm in her 2020 presidential campaign announcement by using a similar logo to Chisholm's.



BESSIE COLEMAN (1892-1926)

Despite being the **first licensed Black pilot in the world**, Coleman wasn't recognized as a pioneer in aviation until after her death. Though history has favored Amelia Earhart or the Wright brothers, Coleman—who went to flight school in France in 1920—paved the way for a new generation of diverse fliers like the Tuskegee Airmen, Blackbirds, and Flying Hobos.



ROBERT SENGSTACKE ABBOTT (1868-1940)

Without Abbott's creative vision, many of the Black publications of today—such as *Ebony*, *Essence*, *Black Enterprise*, and *Upscale*—wouldn't exist. In 1905, Abbott founded the ***Chicago Defender*** weekly newspaper. The paper originally started out as a four-page pamphlet, increasing its circulation with every edition. Abbott and his newspaper played an integral part in encouraging African Americans to migrate from the South for better economic opportunities.



GWENDOLYN BROOKS (1917-2000)

Today, Brooks is considered to be one of the most revered poets of the 20th century. She was the **first Black author to win the Pulitzer Prize** (in 1950, for *Annie Allen*), and she served as poetry consultant to the Library of Congress, becoming the first Black woman to hold that position. She was also the poet laureate of the State of Illinois, and many of her works reflected the political and social landscape of the 1960s, including the civil rights movement and the economic climate.



ETHEL WATERS (1896-1977)

Waters first entered the entertainment business in the 1920s as a blues singer and then became a Broadway star. Did you know that she was the **first African American to be nominated for an Emmy Award**? In 1962, Later in life, she made history for her work in television—she was the **first African American to star in her own TV show, *The Ethel Waters Show***, and she was nominated for an Emmy in 1962.



GORDON PARKS (1912-2006)

Parks was the **first African American photographer on the staff of *Life* magazine**, and later helped found *Essence*. He also was the first Black writer and director of a studio film, and his second movie, ***Shaft***, helping to shape the blaxploitation era in the '70s. Parks **famously told *Life*** in 1999: "I saw that the camera could be a weapon against poverty, against racism, against all sorts of social wrongs. I knew at that point I had to have a camera."



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

OUR CHILDREN NEED YOU!

Children's Church needs servants in several areas to support our children. If you want to make a difference in the life of a child, please register today by clicking the link below. Please note that volunteer screening is required of all servants that work with children. Contact information for the screening is on the form. Thank you in advance for registering!

[FMZ Children's Church Servant Registration](#)

For additional information, please contact Dr. Holley via email at tholley@firstmountzionbc.org or Sister Stephany Stewart at stephanystewart@yahoo.com.

HOLIDAY CLOSURES

Wednesday, December 25th - Christmas
Thursday, December 26 - Holiday
Friday, December 27th - Holiday

IT HELP DESK

Join us for IT4U on Tuesdays at 11:00 a.m. Please RSVP by emailing your IT needs to:

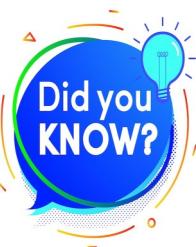
IT4U@firstmountzionbc.org or
rwoolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org

MUSIC AND ARTS MINISTRY

Please check the Church calendar for rehearsal dates and times. Interested in joining the Music and Arts Ministry? Contact Minister Sylstea Sledge at ssledge@firstmountzionbc.org

BUILDING USE REQUEST (BUR FORMS)

All meetings and events begin with a Building Use Request Form. Use the following link to schedule your next FMZBC ministry or committee meeting: [Building Use Request Form](#)



VOLUNTEER SCREENING

DECEMBER

Training begins at 9:00 a.m. Visit FMZBC website's resource tab for application and authorization forms. Bring completed forms to the training session.

TO SIGN UP,
contact Brenda Byrd
571-237-0111
byrdbj@comcast.net

Cynthia Zorn-Pettigrew
703-730-5227
zornpettigrewcl@comcast.net

DEAF MINISTRY

ASL (American Sign Language) Interpreter onsite each Sunday during the 11am Worship Service You may observe in-person and online at www.fmzbc.com. The monthly Zoom meetings are also held with an interpreter.

The next Deaf Ministry meeting will be Monday, December 11, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. For the meeting link, please email

fmzdeafministry@firstmountzionbc.org
POC is Deaconess Pamela Ford
pdford61@verizon.net



RECEPTIONIST

A volunteer receptionist is needed to answer the phones while the staff receptionist attends staff meetings or trainings or is on leave. If you are interested and able to volunteer between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday and until 1:30 p.m. on Fridays, please call Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator, at 703-670-0184 or email her at rwoolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org.

CLOSINGS AND CANCELLATIONS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

As always, during times of inclement weather, safety is of the utmost importance as we do our best to keep the congregation connected and informed while maintaining the health and welfare of all. During times of inclement weather, please check your email and the church website and calendar for listing of ministry activities and updates regarding weather closings.





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:

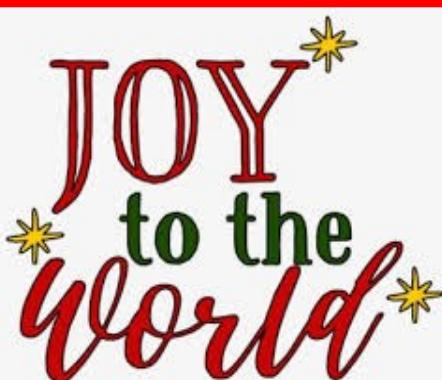
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89762921587?pwd=>

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



The last day to register for December SHARE packages is Sunday, December 8th. SHARE packages are \$23 for food valued between \$35 and \$45. POC: Thomas Bates, 703-772-8837. Distribution will be on December 21, 2024.

SUBMISSIONS FOR NEWSLETTER:

All members and/or ministries 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!

CPM Team

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

Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James, Acting Pastor
Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator
James Simpson, Chair, Trustee Ministry
Willie Brown, Chair, Deacon Ministry
Vietta Williams, Chair, Deaconess Ministry

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

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

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

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

YouVersion: https://www.youversion.in/bible/YouVersion_Bible

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



LifeStream.tv

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