



# He is RISEN



April 6, 2025  
Volume 21, Issue 4

## Message from the Acting Pastor



### RESTING IN YOUR STORM

When the circumstances of my life are the way I like them, I can easily rest in God. But that kind of resting is really resting in circumstances, not resting in God. The hardest thing is to rest when the circumstances are anything but the way I'd like them to be. It's like trying to sleep in the middle of a hurricane.

Come to think about it, Jesus slept in a boat in the middle of a storm. It was on the sea of Galilee. Matthew says that Jesus got into the boat and His disciples followed Him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping (Matthew 8:23-24). I've often wondered, how could He...sleep? Yes, I know Jesus was exhausted from speaking to the huge crowds and attending to their needs. But sleep in a storm? Although, I must admit some of my best sleep is during a storm.

I think the only reason Jesus could sleep was that He knew without a doubt that they were not going to sink. The disciples who were with Him were afraid because they didn't yet understand that the God who created the very water their boat sailed on was in the boat with them. They were just beginning to understand Jesus's full power.

Peter was one of the disciples in the boat that day. I think he learned a lesson, because four years later, when Peter was arrested by King Herod and put in prison, the night before his trial, Peter slept. No doubt Herod intended to put him to death the next day, because the Bible tells us that he had just had James the brother of John killed with the sword, and when he saw that it pleased the people, he arrested Peter. Here is Peter, in a prison cell the night before his trial. He's between two soldiers, bound with two chains, with centurions standing guard at the entrance and Peter is sleeping (Acts 12:1-6).

The only way you can sleep in a storm is by realizing that God is with you. Isaiah says: "He will keep you in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Jesus because they trust in you" (Isaiah 26:3). The psalmist wrote: "in peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety" (Psalm 4:8).

Where can we find rest when we don't like what we see? "Yes, my soul, finds rest in God; My hope comes from Him" (Psalm 62:5). He who sees the end from the beginning knows what He is doing.

Reflection: How may you rest in your storm(s)? As you navigate your storm(s), know that I am praying for you.

Your servant in Christ,  
Dr. Sandra K. James  
Acting Pastor

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To all those celebrating  
in April!

Happy Birthday!



# Youth Ministry on BLAST -- In A Good Way!



John 10:11, 27-28 (NKJV) I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep... My sheep hear my voice, and I know them... and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

As we prepare to celebrate Resurrection Sunday, our March Youth Ministry Bible

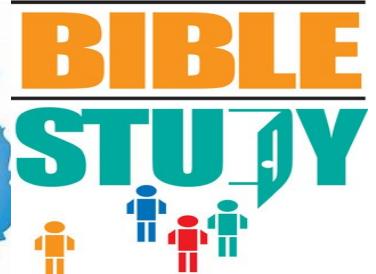
Study Sessions have explored Jesus' "I Am" statements. In our first lesson, we looked at what Jesus meant when He said, "I am the Light of the world." Most recently, we discussed how Jesus assessed His relationship to us when He proclaimed, "I am the **good** shepherd." This means as His followers, we are the sheep. *Ministry to Youth* notes "The English word 'good' doesn't do the Greek word 'kalos' any justice here. Kalos means beautiful or excellent, preeminent, lovely, honorable." Jesus is the consummate shepherd who would do anything for His sheep. Now we may not be excited about being likened to sheep but if we are honest, depicting our "spiritual" selves as sheep is fitting. In fact, in the Bible "Believers" are referred to as sheep over 200 times. Isaiah 53:6 notes, "All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, everyone to his own way." We can all probably remember several occasions when our words or actions have been contrary to what pleases God. These occasions can be considered time in which we have gone "astray." Yet when we "wander off," we do not have to be lost forever. Jesus reminds us in the parable told in Matthew and Luke that a "good shepherd," will leave his other sheep to seek the one that is lost. The shepherd will not be angry the sheep strayed but will rejoice that it was found. Jesus ends the parable by saying it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish (Matt 18:14).

This Lenten season, I hope we embrace being sheep and rejoice knowing that we belong to the "good" Shepherd who did, in fact, lay down His life for us. Let us seek to grow closer to Him so we can "hear His voice." Our shepherd, Jesus, promises to "give [us] eternal life, and [we] shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch [us] out of My hand (John 10:28).

Submitted by  
Reverend Dr. Beverly Jiggetts  
Youth Minister



FMZ Family, please let's remember to pray for our Youth as they travel to Pine Creek Retreat Center in Gore, Virginia, from April 4-6, 2025. Let's also pray that they will have a wonderful experience and return revived and refreshed with a burning desire to continue to serve God. We look forward to an amazing report!



THERE WILL BE NO YOUTH MINISTRY  
BIBLE STUDY ON APRIL 2, 9, AND 16)  
DUE TO THE SPECIAL  
EASTER-RELATED PROGRAMING!

YOUTH MINISTRY BIBLE STUDY WILL RESUME  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2025.

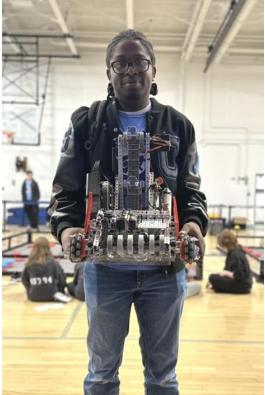


YOUTH HOSTED EASTER EGG HUNT

APRIL 12, 2025

9:00A.M. - 12:00P.M.





As a senior at Colgan High School and an active member of the FMZBC Youth Ministry, **Alexander "Alex" Godfrey** is wrapping up an incredible high school journey and preparing for the exciting next chapter: college at Virginia Tech. Reflecting on the past four years, he is deeply grateful for the numerous blessings he has received.

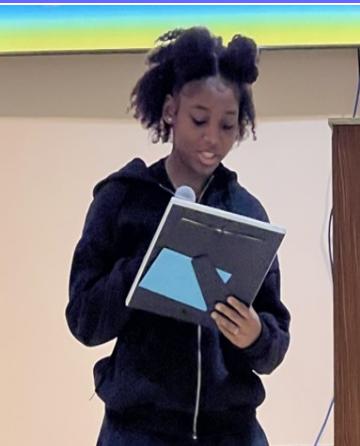
With a lifelong passion for building and understanding how things work, Alex has been a dedicated member of

the Colgan Sharkbots Robotics Team for three years. He proudly served as captain of Team 2064W, The Great Whites. Through this experience, he has participated in local, state, and signature robotics events across Virginia and the Northeast. These competitions have been incredibly rewarding, allowing him to hone his skills in engineering, coding, design, leadership, and teamwork.

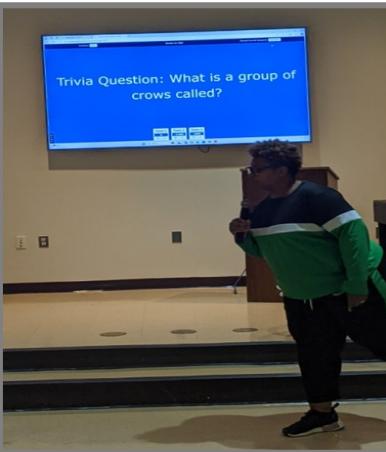
As a team leader, one of his key goals has been to recruit new students and particularly increase interest in robotics among African American boys and girls. He enthusiastically shares that robotics is not just a club, but also an "athletic sport" that combines academic rigor with competitive spirit. His dedication has earned him a Letter in robotics, a testament to his hard work and commitment.

FMZ Family, please congratulate Alex when you see him, and continue to encourage him on his path of excellence and inspiring others.

Submitted by  
Sister Michelle Godfrey



At the March First Friday, Youth Council Member Mikayla Stewart reads the framed "Thank You" message to the Youth Ministry from the Seniors' Ministry for the Valentine's Day Cards they received



Youth Supporter Stephany Stewart MC's the Jeopardy Labs Trivia Game at the March First Friday



Alyssa Godfrey races in the Chicken or the Egg Relay race as her team cheers her on



FMZ Youth "advisors" diligently work with our Seniors at the first FMZ Youth Ministry Teen-Led Tech Session for the Seniors' Ministry, on March 16, 2025



FMZ Youth Ministry "Teen" Tech Advisors, Senior Ministry participants and FMZ Youth Ministry Supporters, Rev. Jiggetts and Seniors' Ministry Co-Chair, Dr. Keith Boykin, pose for a group photo after the FMZ Youth Ministry Teen-Led Tech Session on March 16, 2025



At the March First Friday, teams get final instructions for the "Chicken or the Egg" Race



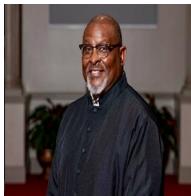
Sis. Hattie and Sis. Cricket getting technical instructions

# Associate Ministers

## ENCOURAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE FOR THE SOUL

### EASTER, A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND RENEWAL

"He is not here, but is risen: remember how He spoke to you when He was yet in Galilee" (Luke 24:6)



This month, we celebrate the joyous occasion of our risen Christ. Television networks and social media will broadcast the Vatican's Easter ceremony worldwide. Churches will hold sunrise services, and countries will host plays and pageants to echo the joy of His resurrection. In the Philippines and Oberammergau, Germany, individuals compete for the role of the crucified Jesus. The participants have nails hammered through their bodies. The elaborate and realistic reenactments of the crucifixion serve as reminders that joy follows pain.

What if we placed ourselves in the text? We were once dead in sin and now we have been resurrected in a new life. What does it look like to us? This is a time for reflection and renewal, a better opportunity than making a New Year's Resolution.

As Christ was resurrected, let us take an opportunity to rise to a new stage in our faith. Take time to reflect on our lives and determine what we should leave behind and what we should carry forward. As we consider this, we should ask ourselves: Is this helping me become a better person and a more exemplary believer? Is this enabling me to live a life which serves as a loving sermon for those around me?

Easter is a time for us to reflect on our own renewal and resurrection. We should consider the life we led before Christ and the life we now live in Him. Just as Christ was resurrected, we, too, can experience renewal. All it takes is a simple act of faith and the willingness to ask the Lord for a better relationship with Him.

Submitted by  
**Reverend Gillis Taylor**  
Associate Minister  
Sunday School Superintendent



### SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Applications are now being accepted for High School Seniors who attend post-secondary schools. The applications can be found on the website at [www.firstmountzionbc.org](http://www.firstmountzionbc.org)

The student must meet the following qualifications to apply:

- ♦ Been a member of FMZBC for at least one year prior to the deadline of April 1, 2025;
- ♦ Been accepted by an institution of higher learning; and
- ♦ Must meet other requirements contained in the Scholarship Booklets.

The deadline for applications is April 1, 2025.

The First Mount Zion Baptist Church (FMZBC) and Hinkitch Bell Memorial Scholarships applications are exclusively online for the 2025 academic year. Students are now required to participate in an FMZBC Ministry for at least six months prior to the due date to qualify. Students can apply online at the Church's website: <https://firstmountzionbc.org>. Once on the Website, navigate to the **Resources Tab, Scholarships – New**, and select 2025 FMZBC and Bell Scholarship Program.

**POC:** Brother Gerry Griffin, AEM Chair; or  
Sister Sandra Grimes, Scholarship Committee Chair  
at [AEM@FirstMountZionBC.org](mailto:AEM@FirstMountZionBC.org)

**MINISTRY SCHOLARSHIP NEWSLETTER.** Parents/Guardians and High School Seniors of FMZ, if you want to know what is happening with the FMZ and Bell Scholarships, or other available scholarships, just click the link below:

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

If you would like to be added to our distribution list for future information about other scholarship opportunities and events, please email us at: [aem@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:aem@firstmountzionbc.org) and we would be happy to share that information with you.

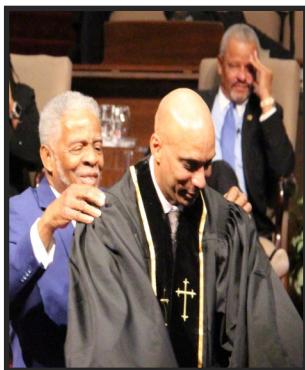
### SPRING 2025 COLLEGE VISITS

The AEM plans to coordinate a college visit in Spring 2025 during Spring Break. Tentative date is **April 14, 2025** to Howard University and George Mason University. Be on the lookout for more details in the Connection Points, Messenger, and Announcement Bulletin or, for more information, you can email [AEM@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:AEM@firstmountzionbc.org), or contact Kim Crawford at [ncrawford@gmail.com](mailto:ncrawford@gmail.com).

VISIT US ONLINE at [www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com)

## WHEN GOD CALLS . . . ALREADY PREDESTINATED

(Romans 8:30)



This statement holds true as evidenced by the Pastoral Installation Service, held on March 8, 2025, for one of the oldest sons in the Ministry here at First Mount Zion Baptist Church (FMZ). Over 50 years ago, a mother and her children joined FMZ and, like Hannah, she gave her children back to God, not knowing the outcome, but trusting God, believing every day that He had something bigger in store for her "boy". What a testimony Momma Woolfolk could share, but this story is not about her...it is about her "boy".

The Bible declares in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.", and the end result of what we witnessed on Saturday is a testimony to the fact that God's word is true and, when consistently taught and adhered to, bears fruit.

The FMZ Family experienced a moment of profound joy as we bore witness to, and participated in, the Installation Service of Reverend Brian D. Woolfolk as the new Pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church (MZBC). Rev. Woolfolk, while a member here, was licensed, later ordained, and served as an Associate Minister for a period of over 30 years. God certainly has a sense of humor because He called him into Ministry as an Associate Minister from First Mount Zion Baptist Church in Dumfries, Virginia, to Pastor Mount Zion Baptist Church in our Nation's Capital, just across the river. One is "First" and the other, simply the "Mount."

The Service was a beautiful testament to the unity and dedication of both our congregations, and it was a moving ceremony that marked the beginning of a new chapter in Reverend Woolfolk's journey. Family, church members, visiting clergy, community leaders, and well-wishers filled the sanctuary, eager to witness this sacred transition. The Service included inspiring Worship, heartfelt prayers, and powerful messages from guest speakers who spoke about the significance of pastoral leadership and the responsibilities entrusted to a servant of God.

The Reverend Dr. Luke E. Torian delivered a poignant message about embodying the new direction and possibilities for Reverend Woolfolk's ministry. He encouraged them to embrace the Vision that God had given their new Pastor, and to commit to following his leadership, wherever God would direct him, whom, they said, was "chosen by God!" More importantly, Dr. Torian's instruction to Pastor Woolfolk was to love God's people in all circumstances, and in all situations, because of the One who loved us first. That is the first commandment, and there is NOTHING greater!

The Reverend Dr. James T. Murphy, Pastor of Greater Little Zion Baptist Church, then presented the "Charge" to Pastor-Elect Woolfolk, reminding him that a pastor is not just a leader, but a servant, walking alongside his/her flock, in faith and love. He also asked the members of MZBC to come together to support their newly installed pastor and his wife, to pray for his leadership, and to look forward with anticipation and embrace the opportunities ahead for them all.

Finally, the now "Pastor" Woolfolk was officially presented to the waiting congregants and charged with the mission of leading the

Church with faith, wisdom, compassion and love, followed by the laying on of hands from the Elders and fellow clergy, with prayers lifted for strength, guidance, and blessings upon this, the new Shepherd of Mount Zion Baptist Church, Washington DC.

Pastor Woolfolk was gifted with the symbols of pastoral ministry, including a Bible, a hymnal, a robe, the keys to the new church, and a Communion kit, each representing the responsibilities and blessings of his calling. One of the presenters shared that they believed that God has sent Pastor Woolfolk to them, and he also believed that the new pastor comes to them with a wealth of experience, a deep love for ministry, and a vision to lead them with wisdom and compassion; that he will guide them in worship, provide spiritual support, and help them grow in faith as they serve both the Church and the wider community. MZBC members stood, filled with hope and anticipation, and they are convinced that, with Pastor Woolfolk at the helm, MZBC will continue to flourish as a beacon of light and love.

During Pastor Woolfolk's remarks, he gave all glory to God and lauded his mother for living a life before him, pointing him to Christ, never wavering, and reminding him at every turn who God is and what He can do in one's life. Won't HE do it? He also thanked his wife and children profusely for sticking with him through the good and the bad times, and gave a blanket "thank you" to all family members present. He then shared some of his vision for MZBC, including his desire that it not be just a church in the community, but it being a community church, with spiritual growth and intergenerational connection. It was obvious that his words resonated deeply with the members of MZBC, as they praised God with resounding hope and excitement for the future.

The Installation was a collaborative effort, with participation from both churches, the Ushers and the Parking Ministries, the Men's Choir, and the Grain of Heaven. Their contributions created a truly memorable and uplifting experience for all who attended.

Following the service, the Grain of Heaven hosted a reception, where MZBC members, under the official leadership of Pastor Brian D. Woolfolk, had the opportunity to personally greet and welcome Pastor Woolfolk and his family. Filled with warmth, fellowship, encouragement, excitement, and anticipation, the atmosphere set the tone for the years to come.

MZBC extends its deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this special occasion, expressing that they are particularly thankful to Pastor Woolfolk for accepting the call to serve their congregation, and sharing that they are confident that his leadership, compassion, and unwavering faith will guide them as they continue to grow in their relationship with God and serve their community in faith, courage, and grace, excitedly exclaiming, "May this Church (MZBC) give our community a new example of what it means to hang on the corner at the Church with the blue and red doors!" Something good is happening on **THIS** corner!

As they embark on this new journey together, we encourage MZBC to continue to uplift their Pastor in prayer, support his vision for their church, and work together in unity to fulfill God's purpose in their community. May this new season be one of growth, faith, and abundant blessings. And, FMZ, please keep Pastor Woolfolk and Mount Zion Baptist Church, 14th Street, DC, in your prayers, as they begin this new ministry together. We look forward to a future filled with God's blessings and our shared ministry.

cont'd on page 6 --





## I'LL BE THERE WITH YOU

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 that you know each of us by name.

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 us and allow our voices to be heard.

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, single households with children, and blended families, those who feel alone and may feel are under attack by the enemy. May we all remember to remain anchored in the Lord, then our communities, nation and world will experience healing and restoration. Thank you in advance! In Jesus name we pray and give thanks. Amen!"

### Scripture:

#### *Isaiah 43:2 NKJV*

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you.*

#### *Isaiah 43:2 AMP*

*When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned or scorched, nor will the flame kindle upon you.*

#### *Isaiah 43:1 MSG*

*When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you. When you're in rough waters, you will not go down. When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end.*

**Praise and Worship Song:** "My Soul Is Anchored" - [https://youtu.be/ENv7zlo\\_j9M](https://youtu.be/ENv7zlo_j9M)

Continue to pray for our families, churches, nation and world.

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



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY/KIDS'  
KINGDOM  
WORSHIP FOR PREK  
TO FIFTH GRADER



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)

PLEASE CONTINUE TO PRAY  
FOR OUR MEMBERS WHO ARE

Sick & Shut-in



"OUR LIVES BEGIN TO END THE DAY  
WE BECOME SILENT ABOUT THINGS  
THAT MATTER."

Martin Luther King Jr.



The First Mount Zion Seniors' Ministry Leadership Team did it again!!! They presented a program with the theme, "A New Beginning!" (**Ephesians** 4: 22-24) that was the brainchild of Sister Hope Singleton. Sister Singleton's vision was to begin the year anew by praising the Lord through personal testimony. The Fellowship was originally planned for January but had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. There was anticipatory excitement in the air by all.

The Fellowship opened with prayer by Deaconess Adrienne Little. The theme Scripture (**Ephesians** 4: 22-24) along with other selected passages (**Ephesians** 4:17 and **Ephesians** 5:1) were read by Deaconess Dorothy Mann. Dr. Keith Boykin then welcomed all those in attendance, especially those visiting for the first time. It was nice to see new faces. He then discussed the theme for the day, noting that in this Epistle written by Paul, Paul wanted to make Christians more aware of their position in Christ and to motivate them to draw upon their spiritual source in daily living.

Sister Hope Singleton then recognized the March birthdays and anniversaries and followed up with the Occasion. She shared how we all go through ups and downs in life, some good... some not so good... but we all have a testimony; we should all tell our story to share the goodness of God, emphasizing that our testimony may be the blessing of hope for someone listening. She then shared related scriptures which are well-known and dear to all of us: **I Thessalonians** 5:18, **Psalms** 106:1-2, **Psalms** 34:1-3, **Psalms** 105:1-2, **Psalms** 15:3-4, **Psalms** 107 (various verses), and **Luke** 19:39-40. Sis. Hope's love and passion for God came through loud and clear as she orchestrated a moment of meditation to get our minds and thoughts focused on what we were about to do.

Rev. Dr. Sandra James, Acting Pastor, also gave us welcoming remarks. Special thanks to Sis. Sharon Childs who, even though asked by Dr. Boykin in an impromptu moment to render a selection, blessed the audience with a beautiful rendition of "My Worship Is For Real" by Bishop Larry D. Trotter and Sweet Holy Spirit Combined Choirs. This was so appropriate as it brought many to tears as we reflected on the Lord's blessings down through the years.

Deaconess Adrienne Little then blessed the food and a delicious entrée of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, green beans, and muffin, was served, topped off with a decadent slice of marble pound cake for dessert and iced tea to quench the thirst. As lunch was being served, and in keeping with the theme of the Occasion, we had the pleasure of listening to "I Got a Testimony by Tawain Kelly". We were singing and praising along and had to be reminded to eat so that we could tell our testimonies.

After lunch, Sister Hope offered another moment of reflection and meditation along with music from Kurt Franklin's "For Every Mountain". Then the testimonies began. Many Seniors as well as members of the Leadership gave personal testimonies of God's goodness and mercy. We heard testimonies about overcoming illnesses and dealing with grief; medical issues and Spiritual issues and being

grateful for the love of, and from, FMZBC membership; cancer remission; cancer misdiagnosed/no cancer present; grieving and recovering from loss of a child/spouse, just to name a few. There were other testimonies shared but space does not permit us to list them all. Suffice it to say that it was a very moving part of the Fellowship and well-received. The Holy Spirit was most definitely in our presence during that time.

As the Fellowship drew to a close, Sis. Hope directed that another song of meditation be played to allow each and every one of us to just stop and reflect for a moment, on all that we had experienced during this Testimonial Blessing and say, "Thank You" as Richard Smallwood purred in the background; and Reverend Dr. Sandra K. James closed the Fellowship in Prayer.

This was a wonderful Worship Service, not only a time for testimony, but a time for reflection on the great things that GOD has done for us.

Special thanks to Dr. Tracey Dawkins-Holley, in her absence, for all your support of this Ministry; the Leadership Team, our AV Team, our Servers, the Grain of Heaven, our Administrative Department, and the Facilities Department. We love and thank you, and we truly appreciate ALL that you do to help make this Seniors' Ministry – spectacular! We also thank Dr. James for being "our ram in the bush" and for stepping in, when asked, and filling the gap. May Almighty God reward you openly!

All Seniors 55 and older are welcome to attend our Ministry. The next meeting is April 16, 2025 at noon. To join us, simply send an email to Sister Maria Fitzgerald at [seniorsministry@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:seniorsministry@firstmountzionbc.org) or call 540-538-0702.

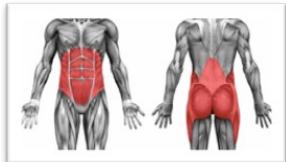
Submitted by  
**Dr. Keith B. Boykin (MD)**  
**Seniors' Ministry Co-Director**



# FITNESS-IN-PLACE

## CORE BRACING: ESTABLISH STABILITY!

Developing core strength is essential for everyday health and well-being, as a strong core protects the spine, reduces back pain, enhances movement patterns, and improves balance, stability and posture.



Core bracing teaches you how to strengthen and stabilize your core. It is the process of contracting the muscles around your spine to create a rigid midsection.

**Stand Tall:** Feet hip-distance apart and your arms by your sides with palms facing forward.

**Engage Your Core:** Think about drawing your belly button towards your spine. Focus on tightening all the muscles surrounding the abdomen. Imagine you're about to be punched in the stomach and tighten your abdominal muscles as if to protect yourself.

**Maintain a Neutral Spine:** Keep your back straight and avoid arching or rounding your spine.

**Breathe Naturally:** Continue breathing normally while bracing your core.

**Hold the Contraction:** Hold the braced position for a few seconds, then release and repeat.

**Practice Regularly:** Make it a habit to brace your core during daily activities and exercises.



You can progress this exercise by bracing the core and slowly lifting a leg in front of the body, alternate legs. The goal is to brace the core so that you are only moving the hip joint. You do not want to compensate with the torso or swing the leg with momentum. The slower the movement, the deeper you will brace the core.

**Challenge:** When working at a desk, set an alarm every 2 hours and do six sets of core bracing, 10 seconds each (when lifting a leg, do three sets on each leg). Only takes one minute!

*Sister Lori Valkenburg,  
Fitness Director*



## LINE DANCING

Six-session program, with teacher Gwen Mathews, in the gymnasium from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. April 3, 10, May 8, 15 and 29. Come learn, dance and fellowship! This is a progressive program so attendance is important. Free for members of FMZ and their guests. Members are allowed 2 guests per visit. Guests must be with a member. Come, learn, dance, and fellowship!

For more information, email Lori Valkenburg at [lvalkenburg@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:lvalkenburg@firstmountzionbc.org) or call 703-670-0225.



FMZ's Health Ministry will be holding its annual Health Fair on Saturday, **APRIL 26, 2025** from **11:00 am – 2:00 pm** in the Gym. It is **FREE** and everyone is encouraged to bring your family and invite a friend or neighbor! Some of the available services are as follows:

- ◆ Medical/Dental Professionals On-site
- ◆ Community Organizations On-site
- ◆ Health and Wellness Screenings
- ◆ Nutrition and Exercise Brochures; and
- ◆ Mental Health Awareness Information and, of course, Free Giveaways

**STAY TUNED FOR MORE INFORMATION.**



**PRAYER WARRIOR NEEDED. REGISTER AT**  
[HTTPS://WWW.SIGNUPGENIUS.COM/  
GO/10C0C48A4A82AA1FEC25-50036583-  
GOWING#/](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c48a4a82aa1fec25-50036583-gowing#/)



Grace & Peace! The Women's Ministry hosted its March Fellowship on March 8th, with the theme, "The Lord is Your Shepherd in Every Season of Your Life!" The presence of the Lord was evident through the powerful words spoken by each guest speaker, the beautiful songs of praise, and the praise dance.

We opened the fellowship with a Praise & Worship song, "That's My King," by CeCe Winans, followed by our first speaker, Evangelist Beverly Johnson. Evangelist Johnson recited Isaiah 54:17 NKJV & NLT reminding us of our theme and that no weapon formed against you shall prosper. She shared that no matter what season you are in, whether one of joy, grief, or struggles, God is with you, guiding and protecting you every step of the way. She spoke on how God is our Refuge and our Stronghold, and that we should not look to our circumstances and think that we are alone but hold on to God's unchanging hands and trust in His word. He will guide you through the still waters and restore your souls. His love is consistent, and it never fails. We were reminded that God holds the world in His hands, and He will see us through. Evangelist Johnson also shared Romans 8:38-39 NLT, "And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow — not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love." This was a powerful Word that had the ladies raising their hands and praising God. Glory Hallelujah! After Evangelist Johnson shared, Sister Stacy Griggs sang "Better Days," which provided a strong feeling of serenity knowing that Better Days are coming. We just have to believe it!

Deaconess Debbie Tribble encouraged everyone as well with her words. She reminded us that God is our Great Shepherd. He is in control, and He is our strength. We can go to God about ever situation in our lives. Because the Lord is our Shepherd, and because God is a God who keeps His promise, we can be assured that we will lack nothing. Deaconess Tribble reminded us that God restores our souls and leads us into the path of righteousness. Trusting God leads to our contentment as He supplies all our needs and leads us down the right path. She reminded us that when the Lord is your Shepherd you have all that you need! Deaconess Tribble also referenced John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep." What an anointed Word it was, that had the ladies praising God! Thank You Lord!

Associate Minister Cheryl Manning's focus was on Psalm 23 NKJV. Before she started with the word that God gave to her for the women, she acknowledged Women's History Month and Women's International Day. She thanked each one for the contributions of education and inspiring generations past, present and in the future. Rev. Manning shared powerful words that reminded us that the Lord is our Shepherd. She reminded the women that each season serves a specific purpose during our walk with God, and that we should depend on God to provide for us/his daughters. Rev. Manning read Psalm 23, after which she broke it down as follows:

**The Lord is my Shepherd – The Lord is mine, my portion, my rock, my fortress, mine, mine and mine – just like a toddler, the Lord is mine.**

**I Shall Not Want – We shall not want because we have all we need. We are content, satisfied, free, and we lack for nothing because the Shepherd is providing for all our needs.**

**He Makes Me Lie Down in Green Pastures, He Leads Me Beside the Still Waters, He restores my Soul – The perfect place to rest; Faith, Feed and Trust are all found in Jesus. We must find safety in our Shepherd and not in our situation.**

**He Leads Me in The Path of Righteousness for His Name Sake –** As sheep at times we are directly challenged and the Shepherd lovingly leads the way. Who we follow is who we trust most. We do not need to know the path in advance, we just need to trust the Shepherd. When we rely on the Shepherd then God is honored, because God is the main character in our lives.

**Yea Though I Walk Through The Valley of The Shadow of Death I Will Fear No Evil For You Are With Me Your Rod and Your Staff They Comfort Me –** There will be times that we have to walk through the valley but take heart and be encouraged, we are walking through. We are not setting up camp in the valley. If we are walking through the valley, it means there is a beginning and an end. God will use our temporary valleys to create everlasting good for us. Follow the Shepherd's voice, greener pastures are on the other side of the valley. The Shepherd did not give His daughters the spirit of fear. Love chases fear away. Fear not, and trust who you belong to, which is the Shepherd.

**You Prepare a Table Before Me in The Presence of My Enemies –** God takes time to prepare a table for blessings and favor for us. It is overflowing with God's goodness.

**You Anoint My Head with Oil –** God is honoring us with his blessings when He anoints our head. We belong to the Shepherd King. My cup runs over – Sisters, our cup runs over meaning we have more than enough. The Shepherd provides for all our needs in every season.

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me – Let it chase and catch us to experience the goodness that God has for us.**

**All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever –** We must believe that we will live in the presence of God forever and nothing shall separate us from God.

Rev. Manning also cited Psalm 23 adding various names of the women who attended within the verses. Her sharing was truly phenomenal and touched our hearts and souls. In addition, Rev. Manning also referenced Ephesians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 3:12, Romans 15:13 and Psalm 27.

Two videos reminded us of our theme, Josh Sherman's "Psalm 23 (I Am Not Alone)" by People & Songs, and "Where Peaceful Waters Flow" by Jennifer Hudson. In addition, a video presentation acknowledging Women's History Month was shown.

What a blessed fellowship it was! A sincere thank you to all who were a part of the program and those what were present. Truly, the fellowship was a success because of your servant hearts. And I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge and say thank you to my technical support team (Siara Corpew, Cynthia Wilson and Admin Lead, Michelle Washington-Barnes). In addition, a heartfelt thank you to Rev. Manning for providing us with the Invitation to Christian Discipleship and the Benediction.

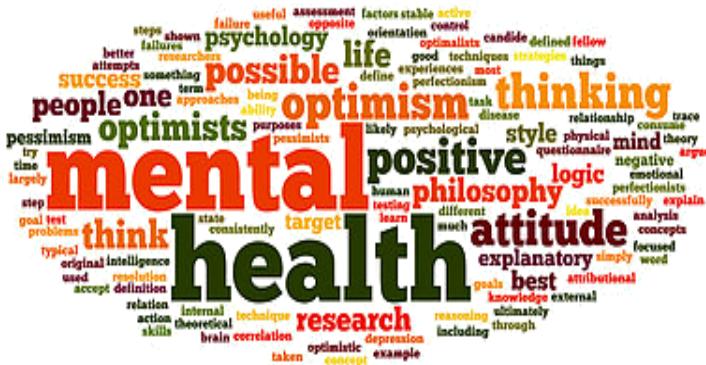
To our January, February and March Birthdays, Happy Birthday again, and may God Bless you with many more!

We look forward to seeing you on Saturday, April 8, 2025. Please invite someone, and remember that "The Lord is Your Shepherd in Every Season of Your Life!" He will always walk with, talk with, and protect you!

Humbly,  
Sister Gwen L. Holland  
Director

**Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." (Matthew 9:37 - NIV)**

His words remind us that the need is great and the time is now to share the hope of Christ with a world that desperately needs Him.



## REFLECTION EXERCISE: SELF-AWARENESS AND EMOTIONAL TRIGGERS

The emotional impact of past regrets, losses, and traumas can linger on for years. This reflection exercise, "Writing a Letter to My Past Self" is another tool to help you recognize and identify and manage your emotional triggers.

Recall a past experience that feels unresolved and continues to impact your life. Write the facts of the event, including your age at the time, what happened, and who was involved.

- ◆ Describe how this experience continues to impact your life.
- ◆ Write a letter to your past self about this unresolved experience. Address your past self with “you.” Be as honest as possible, and don’t worry about spelling or grammar.
- ◆ Tell your past self any relevant insights you now have about the struggle.
- ◆ Offer forgiveness and compassion to your younger self.

Mention anything else you feel is important to promote healing and closure. After you complete the letter to yourself, describe any insights you had while completing this activity. Describe ways you can grow from your experience along with insights into managing any emotional triggers.

## Example of Letter to My Past Self:

Dear Past Self, Decades later, I still remember the brutal grief you felt after mom died when you were just 20. You hadn't spoken to her for months because of an argument that now seems pointless. You thought you had all the time in the world to patch things up. You had only just left home and had no clue about how uncertain life can be. I cringe when I think of the intense grief and guilt you felt at that time.

Never again have I taken the presence of my friends and loved ones for granted!! Every day, I remind myself how fragile life is, how things can be taken away without warning. Mom's death motivates me to be more present to my loved one – to cherish every moment spent together.

Past self, I send you all my love and compassion for what you went through. Stop blaming yourself for your argument with mom – you were doing the best you could! You know deep down that both of you never stopped loving one another. Mom wants you to be happy and free. You owe it to her to stop beating yourself up! We can honor the memory by sharing love with others and living a full life.

If you're feeling overwhelmed most days, experiencing persistent sadness and anger, isolation from loved ones, changes in sleep patterns, increase use of substance, it may be time for you to seek professional help. Contact your primary care doctor; your employee assistance program (EAP), if your employer has one, to get counseling or ask for a referral to a mental health professional.

## Source

Provided by TherapistAid.com (2023). Letter to My Past Self Therapist Aid LLC.

*Submitted by*  
*Reverend Juanita Stokes, MA, LPC, NCC, MARS*

### *Licensed Professional Counselor*

**BetterHelp Online Therapist**

<https://www.betterhelp.com/juanita-stokes/>

# PRAYER REQUESTS

## Women Uniting in Fellowship with Love, Praise, and Worship!



Greetings to all our sisters in Christ. God is so awesome! He has answered our prayers, and He wants to answer yours too! The WM has established a

dedicated email for the women of FMZBC to submit your prayer request. We desire to continually lift your prayer needs as they arise, so please use this email to submit your prayer request. Let the saints pray for you. Prayers of the righteous availeth much! Our Intercessory Prayer Team (IPT) will intercede and faithfully pray over your prayer requests as you send them in.

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

The Outreach Committee of the Women's Ministry would like to express its appreciation and thanks for all you have done to be a blessing to others. Thank you for your continued support of our Outreach efforts. We could not have done it without you!!! Special thanks to Pi Lambda Lambda Fraternity for their financial donations.

- Wash Cloths - 259
- Hand Towels - 37
- Towels - 52
- Toilet Paper - 290
- Paper Towels - 27
- Sheets sets w/pill

Pillows - 25  
Comforters - 11  
Comforter with Sham - 2  
Comforter with Sheet sets - 8  
Throws - 1  
Pillow cases - 2



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# PROFILE IN EXCELLENCE



## *A Life of Service:*

Retired Army Major General Turned Ministry Leader In a life marked by service, discipline, and dedication, Retired Army Major General James E. Simpson has seamlessly transitioned from a distinguished military career to a deeply impactful role in ministry. With over 33 years of service in the U.S. Army, culminating in the rank of Major General, his leadership on the battlefield was matched only by his commitment to

the men and women under his command. However, it is his post-military journey that has truly defined his legacy.

## *Personal Tidbits*

Major General Simpson hails from Clinton, South Carolina, a community called Oakdale Acres, where his family moved in 1972. Some of his friends still live in the old community and he credits it for helping him as a child to understand the importance of working hard, and having families/friends taking care of each other. He recalls that families killed hogs and planted gardens together and shared with their neighbors and other families. He has been blessed to travel all over the world; however, as he puts it, there is no place like HOME. His mother still lives in Oakdale Acres and it is evident that his heart will always be there. He shares that many of the people with whom he grew up, have no college education; they are hard-working people that truly are thankful to God for what He had done for them and their families. You can sense the pride in General Simpson in having been reared in that community.

## *Inspiration*

General Simpson shared that he was inspired to pursue this career while he was attending Lander University in Greenwood, SC. His love for History propelled him in this direction and he recalls that one of his professors saw potential in him and suggested that he look into an ROTC scholarship, which he was later awarded, leading to the beginning of his military journey which lasted 33 years until he retired in 2018.

## *From Combat to Calling*

During his military career, Major General Simpson held various high-ranking positions. His first tour was in Iraq (2005-2006) during which he commanded a contracting unit, providing contracting support to over 100,000 plus troops. He shares that it was long hours, and they made mistakes every day, but he learned some valuable lessons by communicating

with God, acknowledging that God showed him ways to solve contracting and personnel problems. His leadership was instrumental in shaping military strategy and fostering resilience among soldiers. Known for his strategic thinking and personal integrity, he earned the respect of both his peers and subordinates. He currently works as a Consultant with Defense Contractors.

However, as his military career came to a close, General Simpson felt a new calling—a divine purpose that would guide him toward a second chapter in life. With a deep-seated faith that had always been a part of him, he began to explore how he could serve others in a new way, this time through ministry.

## *Ministry and Mentorship*

Today, Major General Simpson serves as the Trustee Chair at First Mount Zion Baptist Church. He was asked to join the Trustee Ministry in 2010. He says he prayed about it because he was truly concerned about the commitment of his time; he wanted to be committed to the Ministry. After numerous calls with his good friend, Trustee Juan McPhail, who prayed with him and listened to his concerns, General Simpson joined the Ministry while Trustee McPhail mentored him, helping him to understand the role of the Trustees, and his relationship with the Deaconesses and Deacons.

The Trustees play a vital role managing the Church's finances and ensuring that the Church is well-maintained. As the Chair (for the last 5 years), his goal is to ensure that the funds are being spent to support FMZBC's activities that impact the community and Prince William County. He opined that there is a great need in the county and our financial resources should be used to help support the needs of members and non-members. He reports that his contracting skills and eye for details have benefited him in this role as a part of the Team. His leadership in the Ministry reflects the same values that guided his military career: integrity, accountability, and service. As a mentor to younger leaders, he shares his experiences of discipline, leadership, and the power of faith.

His ministry work is not limited to the Trustee Ministry; it extends to the community, where he is actively involved in veteran organizations. He assists Veterans as they transition into civilian life, guiding them to people/programs and other resources, particularly those with concerns about benefits. General Simpson also provides mentorship for acquisition/contracting professionals in government and the private sector. He believes in the power of transformation - both of individuals

*cont'd on next page --*

and entire communities - and works tirelessly to bring that vision to fruition.

### Faith and Spiritual Journey

General Simpson credits the excellent preaching along with the Sunday School teachers and the constant words of encouragement he receives from his friends at FMZBC, that have helped to bolster his faith. He shares that his faith also played a significant role in his life and describes three challenging assignments he had while in the United States Army, stating that he made it through those assignments by consistent prayer and asking God to expand his leadership skills. He acknowledges that he made mistakes but God helped him to learn from those mistakes, and he became a better leader. "God will do it", he said, "just ask Him to help you". "Turn it all over to God and keep working hard. If you are knocked down seven times, get up eight times". He encourages everyone to get engaged in activities/ministries at their church, stay in the Word, and in prayer. Be committed and watch what the Lord will do for you.

### Inspirations and Vision

General Simpson says that his mother inspires him most in his faith and personal journey because she has a heart for helping those in need. She always tells him and his siblings to do what is right and stay connected to God. His favorite Bible verse is Psalms 23 – "The Lord is my shepherd, ....."

### Excellence and Encouragement

This is what General Simpson had to say when reflecting on what does "excellence" mean to him. His answer, though simple, is a powerful reminder of how we all can impact the lives of others in the smallest ways. He responded: "Excellence means getting up every day with the mindset that I am going to make a difference. We all must thrive to make a positive impact each day".

General Simpson, who has been a member of First Mount Zion for the past 24 years, is married to Zelda and has two daughters: Alexis Simpson McGee and Devin Simpson. They are his pride and joy. He says he loves to spend time with his family, making building/maintaining relationships a priority, and staying healthy (physically). He enjoys reading (he confesses that he reads the Washington Post every morning) and watching CNN. A few of his most memorable moments were graduating from college; earning the rank of Major General (the first and only African American to Command the Army Contracting Command (ACC)); and his 33 plus years of service in the United States Army. On a professional level, his desire is to continue to mentor others and help them achieve their goals; while spiritually, he wants to continue to improve in his spiritual growth – by becoming a better person every day.

### Closing Thoughts

When questioned about whether or not there was anything else he would like to share with the FMZBC family, he simply, yet eloquently stated, "The decisions we make will determine our path in life. Always ask for God's help in making decisions; He will never leave you".

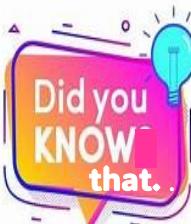
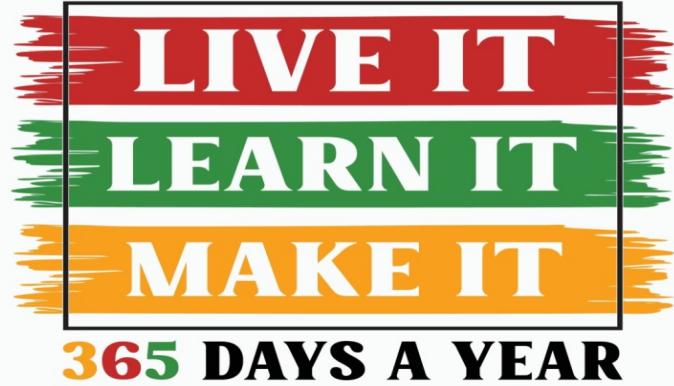
### A Legacy of Service

Retired Major General Simpson's transition into ministry is a powerful reminder that service to others doesn't end with a uniform. Whether on the battlefield or in the church, his life's mission remains rooted in helping others, guiding them with

wisdom, and offering a steady hand in times of need. His story is one of faith, courage, and dedication; a true testament to the idea that one's purpose in life is ever-evolving, and that the call to serve can take many forms—whether in military service or in the ministry.

## FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

### BLACK HISTORY



**Reverend Dr. Dorothy Ann White** was the first female Assistant Pastor here at **First Mount Zion Baptist Church**? The Rev. Dr. White is the fourth of five children born to Oscar and Dorothy White of Knoxville, Tennessee. She earned a B.A. degree in Sociology from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. She went on to earn a M.A. in Theology from Oral Roberts University and, in 1995, was ordained as a Baptist minister and later served here at First Mount Zion Baptist Church in Dumfries, Virginia, as the Assistant Pastor. She subsequently relocated from the area, moving to Richmond in 2001 to work on her Doctor of Ministry degree at the Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University, graduating in 2005. During that time, she served at St. Catherine's Episcopal School, and was ordained first, as a Transitional Deacon in 2014 and, in 2015, as an Episcopal priest. In July 2022, Dorothy relocated to Minneapolis to serve as the Interim Chaplain and Religion Department Chair at Breck School in Golden Valley. She currently serves as Interim Rector at St. George's Episcopal Church in Germantown, Tennessee.

### ... AND THAT

**General Dennis L. Via**, one of our long-standing members, is a retired United States Army four-star general? He was born in 1958 in Martinsville, Virginia to Curtis and Margaret Via. He is the first Signal Corps officer since General Henry H. Arnold to achieve four-star rank. He retired from the Army on 30 September 2016 after over 36 years of service. He received his B.A. degree in 1980 from Virginia State University in Petersburg, Virginia and his M.A. degree in management in 1988 from the Boston University Wheelock College of Education and Human Development in Boston, Massachusetts. Via graduated from the United States Army Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas in 1991, and from the United States Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1999. His last tour of duty was serving as the 18th Commanding General of the United States Army Materiel Command from 7 August 2012 to 30 September 2016.





## SARAH RECTOR: MEET THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN LEGALLY DECLARED WHITE FOR BEING TOO RICH

**SARAH RECTOR**, also known as **Sarah Rector Campbell** and **Sarah Campbell Crawford**, was an American oil magnate since childhood. Born in 1902 to African descendants of the Muscogee Nation, Rector was granted 160 acres of barren land in Indian Territory by the Federal Government at the age of 12 as a result of the Dawes Allotment Act of 1887. Rector's land was located in Glenpool, Oklahoma, about 60 miles from her family's home and was considered inferior soil that was not suitable for farming. Under the Treaty of 1866, due to birthright as a Black grandchild of Creek Indians born before the American Civil War, she inherited land because of her status as a "freedman". No one expected it to make her one of the richest Black children in America. She was only 11 years old. However, in 1913, an oil well on her property began producing 2,500 barrels a day, earning her over \$300 daily—it was surprisingly discovered oil-rich and produced over US\$300. This allotment would soon prove highly profitable, resulting in Rector becoming known as "The Richest Colored Girl in the World" because of the royalties she collected from the Prairie Oil and Gas Company. Due to Rector's status as a minor, guardianship of this land and its royalties were overseen by Rector's father; however, once the royalties grew to a certain size, it was deemed necessary for a white man to "oversee the girl's finances." Under Oklahoma law, wealthy Native Americans and Freedmen were assigned white guardians. Rector's parents appointed T.J. Porter, a family associate, though suspicions of financial mismanagement promoted an NAACP investigation.

Rector and her family became burdened with paying land taxes on the property, and in 1911, the family leased the parcel to the Standard Oil Company. In February of 1913, an independent oil driller named B.B. Jones drilled a well on the Rector property which produced more than 2,000 barrels of oil a day. Rector began receiving an income of \$300 (equivalent to \$10,100 in 2024) per day from this oil strike. In October 1913, the property became part of the Cushing-Drumright Oil Field, and as a result Rector began receiving royalties of over \$11,000, making her the richest 12-year-old Black woman in the United States.

Rector's sudden wealth drew national attention. Newspapers sensationalized her story with racist headlines, referring to her as a "pickaninny" who had become a millionaire. She also became a target for opportunists, receiving marriage proposals and financial requests despite being a child. Like many wealthy Black landowners, she faced the threat of exploitation and violence, mirroring the deadly schemes against the oil-rich Osage people.



Sarah was born in 1902 near the all-black town of Taft, located in Indian Territory, which became the eastern portion of Oklahoma. She had five siblings. Her parents were Rose McQueen and husband Joseph Rector (both born 1881), who were the Black grandchildren of Creek Indians before the Civil War, and were descendants of the Muscogee Creek Nation after the Treaty of 1866. As such, they and their descendants were listed as Freedmen on the Dawes Rolls, by which they were entitled to land allotments under the Treaty of 1866 made by the United States with the Five Civilized Tribes. Sarah's father, Joseph, was the son of John Rector, a Creek Freedman. John Rector's father, Benjamin McQueen, was enslaved by Reilly Grayson, who was a Creek Indian. John Rector's mother, Mollie McQueen was enslaved by the Muscogee Opothleyahola, who fought in the Seminole Wars and split the tribe, moving his followers to Kansas. Sarah Rector was allotted 159.14 acres (64 hectares). This was a mandatory step in the process of integration of the Indian Territory with Oklahoma Territory to form what is now the State of Oklahoma.

By the time Rector turned 18, her net worth was already over \$1 million (about \$11 million today). Rector and her family relocated to Kansas City, Missouri, and settled in a large stone American foursquare home located at 2000 East 12th Street that still stands today.

At age 20, Rector married Kansas City businessman Kenneth Campbell and had three sons. She and her family were recognized as local celebrities and entertained guests such as Duke Ellington and Count Basie in the home. Unfortunately, Rector lost a majority of her wealth during The Great Depression and moved out of her mansion on 12th Street to 2440 Brooklyn Avenue.

Sarah Rector died on July 22, 1967, from a stroke at the age of 65. She is interred in Blackjack Cemetery in her childhood hometown of Taft, Oklahoma.



## THE GULLAH GEECHEE COMMUNITY

The Gullah Geechee people are the descendants of West and Central Africans who were enslaved and brought to the lower Atlantic states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia to work on the coastal rice, Sea Island cotton and indigo plantations. Because their enslavement was on isolated coastal plantations, sea and barrier islands, they were able to retain many of their indigenous African traditions. These traditions are reflected in their foodways, arts and crafts, and spiritual traditions. They also created a new language, Gullah, a creole language spoken nowhere else in the world.



Sapelo Island, located 40 miles south of Savannah and 7 miles off the coast of Georgia, is home to the Gullah Geechee (Guale) community, who have lived there for over 400 years. Accessible only by ferry or private boat, the island is a cultural treasure, preserving the unique heritage and traditions of its inhabitants. The Gullah Geechee people have maintained a distinct way of life deeply connected to their history and the island's natural environment.

The Gullah Geechee culture is renowned for its rich oral traditions, music, cuisine, and language, which blends African, European, and Indigenous influences. Life on Sapelo Island is closely tied to the land and sea, with residents relying on fishing, farming, and craftsmanship to sustain their community. Despite challenges such as land encroachment and economic pressures, the Gullah Geechee people have worked tirelessly to preserve their heritage for future generations.

Today, Sapelo Island stands as a symbol of resilience and cultural preservation. Efforts by the Gullah Geechee community to protect their land and traditions have garnered support from historians, activists, and cultural organizations. Visitors to the island have the rare opportunity to engage with this vibrant culture, gaining insight into a legacy that is both historically significant and enduringly vital.

**Cultural Context:** The Gullah Geechee people (referred to in the text as Geechee) are an ethnic group who live on the Sea Islands of the Atlantic coast, also known as the South Carolina Lowcountry. The Gullah Geechee are descended from enslaved Central and West Africans who were brought to the Sea Islands to work on rice, cotton, and indigo plantations. These enslaved people brought with them a multitude of distinct languages and cultures, and the creole culture that arose from the mixture of these influences became known as Gullah Geechee.

Several circumstances encouraged the development and proliferation of a unique culture on the Sea Islands. Mosquito-borne illnesses proliferated in the hot and marshy region. While the enslaved Africans had already developed some immunity to these diseases, Europeans had not, and the rapid spread of yellow fever and malaria drove white enslavers away from the islands. Enslavers continued to

bring enslaved people to the islands to work on the profitable plantations; however, the enslaved people were then left largely to their own devices, leading to the development of a culture that had little interaction with white society.

After the Civil War, most free Black people in the South chose to forego working in the Sea Islands due to the dangerous terrain and the risk of illness.

### What is the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor?

The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, and the federal Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission established to oversee it, were designated by an act of Congress on October 12, 2006 through the National Heritage Areas Act of 2006. The Corridor runs from Pender County North Carolina to St. John's County Florida. The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission is charged with helping to achieve the goals of the Corridor designation: to recognize, sustain, and celebrate the important contributions made to American culture and history by the Gullah Geechee; to assist state and local governments and public and private entities in South Carolina, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida in interpreting the story of the Gullah Geechee and preserving Gullah Geechee folklore, arts, crafts, and music; and to assist in identifying and preserving sites, historical data, artifacts, and objects associated with Gullah Geechee people and culture for the benefit and education of the public.

*Watch the full story about the lives of these incredible people, the Peazants, a Gullah-Geechee family living primarily on Dawtuh Island off the South Carolina coast, depicted in the 1991 movie "Daughters of the Dust" directed by Julie Dash.*



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



## SEVERAL WAYS TO LEARN OF UPDATES DURING INCLEMENT WEATHER

- ◆ Visit the Church Website: [WWW.FMZBC.COM](http://WWW.FMZBC.COM)
- ◆ Church Calendar
- ◆ Call the Church at (703) 670-0184 for a recorded message.
- ◆ Email your Zone Leader
- ◆ Tune in to WTOP



## FMZBC JOB VACANCIES

Accounts Payable/Payroll Clerk  
(PT - 20 Hours per week)

Please see detailed announcement  
and employment application at:

[First Mount Zion Baptist Church Careers and Employment | Indeed.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.  
Position will remain open until filled.

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



SATURDAY,  
APRIL 5,  
2025  
AT  
10:00 A.M.

## VOLUNTEER SCREENING:

All Servant Volunteers are encouraged to be screened. To sign up, please visit FMZBC website, Resource tab, for application and authorization forms. Bring completed forms to the Training Session. If you have previously been screened, please turn in the completed annual Volunteer Screening Code of Conduct Form to your Ministry Lead.

## SIGN-UP DATE

Training begins at 9:00 am

17 May  
20 September  
15 November

POC: Brenda Byrd  
571-237-0111

VaShawn Veal  
202-257-8557

[VolunteerScreening@Firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:VolunteerScreening@Firstmountzionbc.org)

## GRIEFSHARE HOSTED BY FMZBC JOURNEY TO JOY MINISTRY

GriefShare is a support program for people who have lost loved ones -- a spouse, child, other family member, or friend through death. GriefShare considers the loss of a pet as the loss of a loved one.

For additional information, contact

Reverend Kathy Russell  
[journeytojoy@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:journeytojoy@firstmountzionbc.org)

*Rise, My Sisters, and Know Your  
Worth/Designed for Purpose!!*

APRIL 12, 2025  
9:00AM – 10:30AM

Women's Ministry Fellowship

Reverend Kathy Russell  
Associate Minister

Reverend Sharon Wallace  
Associate Minister

zoom

Embracing and Celebrating  
Earth Stewardship!  
Genesis 2:15

JOIN THE  
FELLOWSHIP ON  
APRIL 16, 2025  
12:00 – 2:00 PM

Special Guest Speaker  
Mr. Rico Fleshman, Executive Director of  
Keep Prince William Beautiful

Email us at [seniorsministry@fmzbc.org](mailto:seniorsministry@fmzbc.org) or  
call Sister Maria Fitzgerald at (540-538-0702)



FMZBC PULPIT COMMITTEE

## Transition Plan Phases

- ✓ Phase 1 – Church Governance & Selecting a Pulpit Committee
- ✓ Phase 2 – Defining Requirements and Expectations
- ✓ Phase 3 – Search and Recruitment
- ✓ Phase 4 – Evaluating and Shortlisting

### Phase 5 – Interview and Further Assessment

Phase 6 – Presentation to the Congregation

Phase 7 – Decision Making

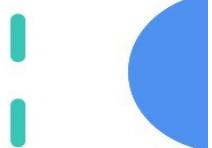
Phase 8 – Transition and Installation

**Join us for a Prayer Circle.**



FMZBC PULPIT COMMITTEE

**When: April 27<sup>th</sup> (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday)**  
**Time: Immediately After Service**  
**Location: Chapel**



**Note:** This time is for Prayer ONLY



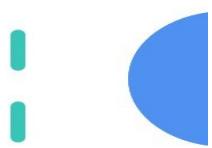
**Next time:** May 25<sup>th</sup>



FMZBC PULPIT COMMITTEE

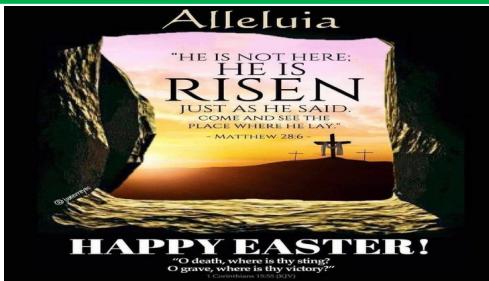
**Do you have questions for us?**

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

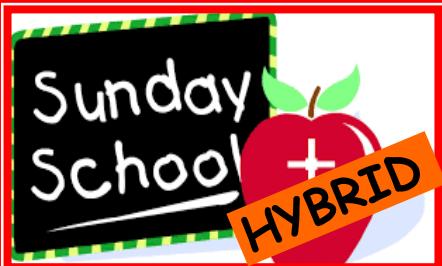


**Note:** Pulpit Committee's FAQ can be found on the Church Website. Credentials required.





April 6, 2025  
Volume 21, Issue 4



## 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 us for Sunday School in Rooms 229/230. 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)

## MIGHTY MEN OF GOD

For questions about the Men's Ministry, please contact Director, Brother James Gaskins at:

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

We would love to hear from you!

## BELOVED WOMEN OF GOD

For questions about the Women's Ministry, please contact Director, Sister Gwen L. Holland, at [WomensMinistry@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:WomensMinistry@firstmountzionbc.org)



The last day to register for April SHARE packages is Sunday, April 13th. SHARE packages are \$23 for food valued between \$35 and \$45. POC: Thomas Bates, 703-772-8837. Distribution will be on April 26, 2025.

## 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  
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  
Kavin D. Johnson, Chair, Deacon Ministry  
Vietta 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  
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/fmzcdumfries>

YouTube:

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

## SOCIAL MEDIA CONNECTIONS

Connect with us on:

Lifestream:

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

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/fmzcdumfries](https://www.facebook.com/fmzcdumfries)

Instagram: [@thecore\\_fmzbc](https://www.instagram.com/thecore_fmzbc)

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

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

YouVersion: <https://www.youversion.in/bible>

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



**LifeStream**.tv

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