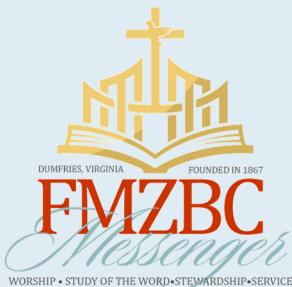


FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH



THE MESSENGER

October 5, 2025
Volume 21, Issue 10

SAVE THE DATE

Installation of

Pastor-Elect

Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James

NOVEMBER 22, 2025
2:00 P.M.

First Mount Zion Baptist Church
16622 Dumfries Road
Dumfries, Virginia 22025
(703) 670-0184



With hearts full of gratitude and joy, we celebrate the calling and confirmation of our new Pastor-Elect. This sacred appointment is not only a reflection of divine purpose but also a testament to faithful service, spiritual integrity, and unwavering commitment to the body of Christ. As you step into this new season of leadership, may you be strengthened by grace, guided by wisdom, and surrounded by a community that uplifts and honors the mantle you now carry. We rejoice with you and look forward to the unfolding of God's vision through your under-shepherding.

Welcome, Pastor-Elect...

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MESSAGE FROM THE PASTOR-ELECT



A BEAUTIFUL CREATION: MY HEART TO FIRST MOUNT

Beloved Family of First Mount Zion,

With deep gratitude and joy, I write to you as your newly elected Pastor-Elect. After twenty months of prayer, listening, and faithful waiting, the Lord has brought us to this moment together. I am humbled by your confidence and your call, and I am convinced that God has been preparing not only me, but all of us, for this new season in the life of our church.

On September 21st, I preached from Isaiah 65:17–19 on the theme “*A Beautiful Creation*.” In that passage, God promises new heavens and a new earth—where sorrow will be forgotten and joy will overflow. This vision reminds us that God’s work is not to hide our cracks or erase our scars, but to transform them into testimonies of His grace.

I shared the image of *kintsugi*, the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery with gold, silver, or platinum. The brokenness does not disappear, but it becomes the most beautiful part of the vessel. In the same way, our lives—our struggles, our scars, and even our setbacks—become radiant when touched by the power of Christ. The King of Kings is able to restore what no one else can.

As we begin this next chapter at FMZBC, I believe God is calling us to live as a people of new creation: to let go of the former things, to embrace the transformation that comes through Christ, and to walk forward with faith, hope, and love. Like Humpty Dumpty, we may have moments where life feels shattered beyond repair, but we serve the One who can put all things back together and make them new.

I see in you—this congregation I love—a people ready to shine as God’s beautiful creation. Together, we will lean into His promises, build upon the foundation of those who came before us, and step forward into the future God is shaping for us.

I ask for your prayers, your encouragement, and your partnership in this journey. Let us rejoice, for the Lord is doing a new thing in us.

With love and anticipation,

Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James
Pastor-Elect

KINTSUGI

The Japanese art of repairing shattered ceramics with lacquer mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum.

“A Beautiful Creation”
Is 65:17-19



CHILDREN'S CHURCH (CED)

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:

[FMZ CHILDREN'S CHURCH SERVANT REGISTRATION](#)

PLEASE NOTE THAT VOLUNTEER SCREENING IS REQUIRED OF ALL SERVANTS WHO WORK WITH CHILDREN. CONTACT INFORMATION FOR THE SCREENING IS ON THE FORM. THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR REGISTERING!

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT DR. TRACEY DAWKINS HOLLEY AT:

THOLLEY@FIRSTMOUNTZIONBC.ORG

OR

SISTER STEPHANY STEWART AT
STEPHANYSTEWART@YAHOO.COM



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 at:

journeytojoy@firstmountzionbc.org

CLICK HERE TO REGISTER:

<https://www.griefshare.org/groups/264734>

VISION: Sharing the Light: From the Promise, to Pentecost, to Points Around the World



A NEW BEGINNING

The Deacon, Deaconess and Trustee Ministries congratulate Reverend Dr. Sandra K. James on being selected as the Pastor-Elect of First Mount Zion Baptist Church! After 20+ months of prayer, patience, and faithfulness in the pulpit selection process, God has granted us a new beginning in this next historic chapter of our Church. With joy and gratitude, we welcome Dr. James as our Pastor-Elect - an under shepherd chosen by God's hand at work among us. The psalmist reminds us: *"Take delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart."* (Psalm 37:4, NLT)

At times, waiting can test us. For nearly two years, our Church walked through uncertainty, discernment, and faithful seeking. Yet through it all, we trusted in the Lord. Psalm 37:4 is not a promise of instant answers or material gain. Instead, it is a reminder that when our deepest delight is in God, our desires begin to align with His purposes.

As a congregation, our desire was simple but profound: a shepherd who would love God, preach His Word with power, and lead us into the next chapter of ministry. And God has answered. Rev. Dr. Sandra James is not only the fulfillment of that desire but also a sign of God's faithfulness to provide exactly what we need in His perfect time. This new beginning is not the end of a process — it is the start of a journey. Together, we are called to:

- Delight in the Lord — putting Him first in our worship, our service, and our relationships.
- Align our desires with God's will — seeking His vision for our Church, not just our own preferences.
- Trust His provision — knowing that the same God who brought us Rev. Dr. James will continue to equip us for every good work ahead.

As we welcome our Pastor-Elect, let us rejoice in this moment of answered prayer. Let us also commit ourselves anew — to follow God with joy, to support Rev. Dr. James with love, and to embrace this season of growth and renewal.

Psalm 118:24 states: *"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."* We celebrate Our Lord's will on Dr. James' call to pastoral leadership. It is indeed marvelous in our eyes. Truly, our new beginning has come. So, let's get started!

*Submitted by
FMZBC Leadership Ministries*

Deaconess Ministry



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE 2025 FMZBC HARVEST FESTIVAL

FMZBC Family – we are excited to announce our annual FMZBC Harvest Festival that will take place on Saturday, November 1st from 10:00am-2:00pm on the Church campus. All FMZBC family and friends are invited to be a part of this festival of great food, fellowship and fun. There will be many activities to include games and giveaways, a Chili-Cook-Off and a dessert walk! The festival will be held outside, weather permitting. As always, we are stronger together so volunteers will be needed to make this event a resounding success! Please be prayerful about signing up to help within one of the following areas:

- ◆ Overseeing Games and/or Activities – 25 volunteers requested
- ◆ Serving Food – 25 volunteers requested
- ◆ Set Up/Decorating and Breakdown – 25 volunteers requested

Volunteer Sign-Ups will start on Sunday, October 12th in the Narthex. Also, please look out for more information within the weekly Connection Points and during the Sunday Worship Service Announcements. If you have questions, please contact Sister Karen Curtis, FMZBC Social Committee Lead at 703-298-4780.

We look forward to seeing you on November 1st and having a great time!

*Submitted by:
Deaconess Kishema Tapp*

JOB VACANCIES

Full Time Custodial Technician Food Service Assistant

Contact Renee Woolfolk, CBA,
to learn more at

rwoolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org

VISION: Sharing the Light: From the Promise, to Pentecost, to Points Around the World

Encouragement and Assurance for the Soul



"STRETCH OUT YOUR ROD, STRETCH OUT YOUR FAITH"

But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.
Exod. 14:16 (NKJV)

As we come back from our *Selah, a time of pause, reflection, and a moment to breathe*, there's much work to be done, and I'm sure getting back into rhythm might take a minute. As we see in scripture, the Israelites had become so comfortable and complacent in Egypt that they were ready to go back rather than move forward. They had seen many plagues performed on their behalf to let the Pharaoh of Egypt know who was really in charge. Yet, when it came to their Red Sea moment, they did not recognize the strength that God was sending their way to move every obstacle and clear a path to freedom in the promised land. Land that God had already set aside to give them. They could not see the future of their promise past a Red Sea in front of them that seemed impassable. They became fearful of the Pharaoh's army of chariots and soldiers that were drawing near to capture them and take them back.

What do you do in a crisis at your Red Sea moment? How has a diagnosis unnerved your spirit, a job loss shut you down, an incurable disease put you on pause, a death counted you out? We live and move in rhythm with our being in Him, present on this side of Heaven; thus, when a Red Sea moment occurs, hold steady, trust God, **"Stretch Out Your Rod; Stretch Out Your Faith."** God is right there with you to help. He is a very present help, not an absent gift. So, although going back to school, back to work, back to the doctor, back home alone may be a little fearful and intimidating, Do Not Fear; GOD IS WITH YOU. **Stretch out your rod** in obedience to what God has done in your past, which allowed your future to become present. **Stretch out your faith**, God is seen in your victories and success in all your new, uncharted lands. The new uncharted territories hold space for healing, space for deliverance, space for wellness in a new normal, and a plot of space to share your grief. "Stretch Out Your Rod, Stretch Out Your Faith," and watch God see you through to the new you.

Submitted by
Reverend Josephine Cherry



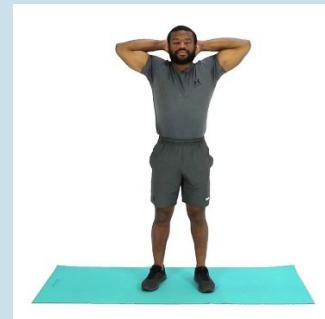
VISION: Sharing the Light: From the Promise, to Pentecost, to Points Around the World

FITNESS-IN-PLACE

STAND UP STRAIGHT!

Some evidence suggests that adopting an upright posture can improve your mood, build confidence, reduce stress and increase energy levels. Exercise can improve your posture.

Consider this Chest Stretch:



- While standing, raise your arms, clasp hands behind your head and keep your spine in a neutral position.
- Gently squeeze your shoulder blades and open your chest by moving your elbows and arms backward.
- Hold each stretch for 15 to 30 seconds and perform two to four sets regularly.

Challenge: Squeeze this exercise into your day!

For Assistance: Visit The Fit by God Fitness Complex. Click for the [Fit by God Event Calendar](#)

Sister Lori Valkenburg
Fitness Director



COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITY:

THE DEACONESS MINISTRY HAS ESTABLISHED A "CLOTHING GIVE AWAY" STORE (ALL ITEMS ARE FREE) FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS IN ROOM 156 NEXT TO THE BARBER SHOP. COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS CAN BE EARNED FOR WORKING IN THE STORE.

POC: DEACONESS LEDORA AKANNI
AKANNI_LEDORA@YAHOO.COM



RENEW YOUR STRENGTH

I pray that this finds everyone doing well and staying safe. Continue to pray wherever you are during the noon hour.

Prayer:

"Lord, as we are nearing the end of the summer, we pray for a time of refreshing and renewal for spirit, soul and body before we shift back into high gear as school, work and ministry resume. We pray for traveling mercies for those with travel plans for the end of summer.

May we make spending time with you a priority and guard our time with you so that you can pour into us as we prepare to give more of ourselves in service to your people.

Jesus set an example for us as He would often steal away to spend time alone with his Father and be refreshed after intense times of ministry and pouring out. We pray for a fresh anointing and clear vision and clear direction going forward. Thank you for your grace and the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us and enable us to do the work that you have called us to do. May we do what we can do and what the Holy Spirit leads us to do. Then trust you to do what we CANNOT do!

All of the glory, honor, and praise belong to you alone! In Jesus' name we pray and give thanks. Amen!"

Scripture:

Isaiah 40:31 NKJV

[31] But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:31 AMP

[31] But those who wait for the Lord [who expect, look for, and hope in Him] shall change and renew their strength and power; they shall lift their wings and mount up [close to God] as eagles [mount up to the sun]; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint or become tired.

Praise and Worship Song: "Times of Refreshing" - <https://youtu.be/LKgEDYLd30E>



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

Line Dancing
Thursday Nights 7:00-8:00pm
in the gymnasium.
Oct. 2nd, 9th, & 23rd

Come Learn, Dance, and Fellowship!

It is free for members of FMZ and their guests, members are allowed two (2) guests per visit.

Gym and Fitness Center are open!
Tuesday and Thursday evenings as well as Saturdays (except on SHARE distribution and holidays)!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Each Sunday at 9:45 a.m. Check the monitors in the Narthex for classroom locations or via Zoom (registration required).

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

For those attending the class via Zoom, please [Register Here](#). We look forward to seeing you there.

[Sunday School Extended Lesson Handouts](#) class via ZOOM, please [use this link](#) to access materials!

VOLUNTEER SCREENING PROCESS

2025 VOLUNTEER SCREENING SESSION DATES

NOVEMBER 16

TRAINING BEGINS AT 9:00 AM
VISIT FMZBC WEBSITE,
RESOURCE TAB FOR APPLICATION AND
AUTHORIZATION FORMS.

BRING COMPLETED FORMS

TO THE TRAINING!

TO SIGN UP, PLEASE CONTACT:

BRENDA BYRD

BYRDBJ@COMCAST.NET

571-237-0111



SENIORS' MINISTRY FELLOWSHIP

The Seniors' Ministry 2025-26 season started with a BANG! Seniors came out of the gates praising God and thanking Him for His mercies; not only down through the years, but even during our Selah time apart from one another. The Fellowship, held on September 17, 2025, boasted 124 members and guests who were filled with excitement about our return to Ministry activities. We had five new members sign up. To God be the glory!

The program opened with a prayer by Bro. Eric Brown. Sis. Cricket Miller-Roy read the Scripture, and a warm welcome was delivered by Dr. Keith Boykin, in which he acknowledged the importance of grandparents and how they have shaped our lives. This month's theme was "Rooted In Grace: Lives That Still Bear Fruit!", using Psalm 92:14 as our guide, as we honored Grandparents and shared testimonies.

This year, the new kid on the block, recognizing the Birthday and Anniversary recipients, was none other than our beloved Bro. Neal Patterson. He did an amazing job getting everyone into the spirit of celebration and keeping us in suspense as to what he would do from one minute to the next. His quick-witted quips kept everyone laughing and we all enjoyed his presentation! This was followed by two short videos in recognition of Grandparents; one for grandmothers (Grandma's Hands by Gladys Knight) and one for grandfathers (Grandpa, Tell Me 'Bout the Good Old Days by The Judds). Lunch was then served! We filled ourselves to the brim with delicious baked chicken, green beans, rice and a dinner roll. The banquet was sealed with Chocolate/Red Velvet cake and iced tea. Delicious!

After lunch, we then saw a portion of the video "I Testify" by Ada Ehi & Nathaniel Bassey in preparation for what was to come: TESTIMONY TIME with Sis. Hope Singleton. Those of you who know Sis. Hope know that she loves to praise the Lord and that testifying to His goodness is paramount to her! AND, testify, we did, albeit with some loving prodding. Sis. Loretta and Sis. Cricket manned the mics and racked up a good quota of steps between the tables, ensuring everyone had a mic to share their testimony and that everyone could hear it and be blessed. As usual, and I know you already know, Bro. Ken Spencer was our timekeeper, whose hands trembled as he was always hesitant to ring the bell if anyone exceeded the time limit. He is such a good guy!

With hearts full of praise for all the things God has done, we ended our time of testifying by listening to a short segment of "Thank You" by Walter Hawkins and the Love Center Choir. Taking the time to just pause and say thanks to Almighty God for all the things that HE has done was a blessing. We recognize that it is only through HIM that we live, move and have our being.

Sis. Oonagh Bell gave brief closing remarks, thanking everyone for being a part of the Fellowship and encouraging them to prepare for next month's Fellowship. Rev. Kathy Russell gave the Invitation to Salvation and closed us out in prayer.

Lest I forget, A BIG thanks to the Grain of Heaven and the servers for their tireless work in preparing and serving us a delicious lunch. Kudos to Bro. Bassie McCain and his team who did a remarkable job in setting the room up and making sure everything was in place. As always, Bro. Dijae North and the AV Department covered all our needs and went beyond their time limit to accommodate our request at the end of our program.

All in all, it was an inspiring fellowship, and we all look forward to what God is going to do in this Ministry during the coming year.

The Seniors are looking forward to celebrating our next fellowship on October 15, 2025. Hope to see you there! Our October Fellowship will focus on "Flourishing in Faith and Wellness" and there will be two doctors in the house who will share important and vital information. Attendees will also have an opportunity to ask questions and get immediate answers (if possible).

Last but certainly not least: Sunday, October 26, 2025 is the FMZBC Seniors' Recognition Service, held during the 11:00 am Worship Service. We are asking all Seniors to wear something pink in recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We expect to see all of our Seniors as we celebrate God's goodness to us!

*Submitted by
Leadership Team*



Youth Ministry

on
BLAST - In A Good Way!

15 So I commend the enjoyment of life, because there is nothing better for a person under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany them in their toil all the days of the life God has given them under the sun. (Ecc 8:15)

Saturday, September 6, 2025, the Children's, Youth and C.O.R.E. Ministries held a "Back to School Block Party" for FMZBC children, youth, and the community. Although the forecast called for rain and thunderstorms, God blessed us with a beautiful day.

Outdoor activities at the block party included the "Cotton Candy Castle Combo" (Moon Bounce and Slide), "Connect 4-giant style", "football toss" and bowling with large "inflatable" bowling pins." Those who wanted a "new look" had their faces painted. Selfies could be taken at the "Back to School" back drop. All outdoor activities were enjoyed while listening to upbeat gospel music provided by DJ LilJohn.

Indoors, the first FMZBC Coed Intergenerational and Youth League 3 v 3 Basketball Tournament was held. Intergenerational teams were comprised of one person under age 18, one aged 18-40 and one person over 40. The youth league teams consisted of youths under age 17. Kudos to the "Covered Allstars" team of Matteo, Amare' and Rictavious Thomas who won the Intergenerational Title and the "Super Novas" team of Jamir Anderson, Langston Holmon and Jordan West who took the Youth League Title.

Lunch was provided as well as candy, fruit snacks, popcorn, cotton candy, icees, and other ice cream treats.

In addition to the party festivities, the "Back to School Block Party" school supply drive provided needed school supplies to students at Potomac View and John Jenkins Elementary Schools. Guests could also have a free haircut and "shop" at the Youth Give Away Closet that has new and gently used clothing that can be obtained at no cost.

Hopefully this day of fun gave our children and youth a "joyful" memory they can reflect on as they "toil" during the school year.

Thank you to FMZBC staff and all the volunteers who helped make this day a success. Thank you also to the congregation and all the ministries that supported the "Back to School Block Party" school supply drive.

We also hope our children, youth and young adults will participate in the Children's, Youth and C.O.R.E. ministries. We all have great plans for the ministry year!

Submitted by
Reverend Beverly Jiggetts
Youth Minister



"Back to School" Block Party "selfie" station.



Attendees enjoy the
"Cotton Candy Combo" Moon Bounce



2 attendees prepare for their "new" look.



Participants in the "Intergenerational" Basketball Tournament hold court



YOUTH MINISTRY BIBLE STUDY

Youth Ministry Bible Study is **every Wednesday** in person and via ZOOM in the Executive Conference Room from **7:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.**

Join us for our "Life Choices" series.

Below is the new registration link. You only need to register once.

[Click Here to Register for Youth Bible Study](#)

FIRST FRIDAY

Friday, October 3, 2025,
for youth and their guests in grades 6 through 12

Join us in the gym and Grain of Heaven for **GAME ON!!**
Enter and exit through Door P (Gym Door)

Parent/guardian needs to sign youth in/out.
Email Rev. Jiggetts in advance if your youth will be
driving themselves.

ACADEMIC EDUCATION MINISTRY

The FMZBC AEM Tutorial Program is back!! If you are a FMZ Student in grades K – 12 and are in need of Tutorial Services, this message is for you!! Program begins **Monday, October 20, 2025**, at First Mount Zion. We are also in need of tutors for various subjects. Tutoring is conducted at FMZBC every Monday evening starting October 20th (7pm-8:30pm).

POC: Bro. Gerry Griffin
AEM@firstmountzionbc.org

YOUTH MINISTRY BIBLE STUDY

Every Wednesday from 7:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m. in person and virtual. Registration link

<https://firstmountzionbc.org.zoom.us/meeting/register/t55r90rLJR0qSmwHXk1TM1w>

YOUTH GROUP MEETING

Sunday, October 19, 2025
12:30-2:00 p.m.
Grain of Heaven

Middle Schoolers, we need you on the 2025-26 Youth Council! Please consider applying for the Council. Applications are now available! For more information Please contact Reverend Beverly Jiggetts, Youth Minister, at (703) 670-0184 or email bjiggetts@firstmountzionbc.org

YOUTH MINISTRY ON BLAST!

Highlight the amazing youth at First Mount Zion and their notable accomplishments. To have a youth profiled in this section, 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.

FMZ'S 6TH ANNUAL 5K RUN/WALK

First Mount Zion 6th Annual



October 18, 2025
Race begins at 9:00 a.m.
Occoquan Regional Park
Lorton, VA
Detailed brochure
at leadership desk



We welcome and encourage our First Mount Zion members, ministries, friends, family, and community to come out to the beautiful **Occoquan Regional Park (Pavillion) in Lorton, Virginia** on Saturday, October 18th at 9 a.m. and enjoy our **FMZ 6th Annual 5K Run/Walk** to **JUMP START** the **Fall Season** off to a **Healthy Start**. This paved course winds its way along the delightful Occoquan River, extending you splendid, scenic views throughout the park's natural terrain.

If you are unable to Run or Walk, please consider registering to volunteer and/or cheer for our runners and walkers as you enjoy everything we have planned for this special event.

We thank you in advance for your support of our **First Mount Zion 6th Annual Healthy Start 5K Run/Walk**. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact either committee member below:

Sis. Stephanie Craddock at
Scraddock@firstmountzionbc.org
703) 670-0184 OR

Bro. Gerry Griffin at Ggriffin@firstmountzionbc.org

SENIORS' MINISTRY PRESENTS . . .

“FLOURISHING IN FAITH AND WELLNESS”

3 John 1:2

“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”

THERE WILL BE DOCTORS IN
THE HOUSE . . . AND YOU
WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY
TO ASK QUESTIONS AND GET
IMMEDIATE ANSWERS!!

WON'T YOU JOIN US??

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2025
NOON TO 2:00 P.M.
GYMNASIUM



VISION: Sharing the Light: From the Promise, to Pentecost, to Points Around the World

BLACK HISTORY

LIVE IT

LEARN IT

MAKE IT

365 DAYS A YEAR

Did you
KNOW?

FREEDOM HOUSE AMBULANCE SERVICE was the first emergency medical service in the United States to be staffed by paramedics with medical training beyond basic first aid. Founded in 1967 to serve the predominantly Black Hill District of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, it was staffed entirely by African Americans. Freedom House Ambulance Service broke medical ground by training its personnel to previously unheard-of standards of emergency medical care for patients en route to hospitals. The paramedic training and ambulance design standards pioneered in the Freedom House Ambulance Service would set the standard for emergency care nationally, and even internationally. Despite its successes, the ambulance service was closed eight years after it began operating.

Prior to the mid-1960s, ambulance service in the US was typically provided by either the police or a local funeral home. Such services provided, at most, basic first aid and rapid transportation to a hospital. In police-operated ambulances, the ambulance crew would typically load the patient into the back of a police van, and rush to the hospital. The U.S. medical system had yet to incorporate advances in emergency care made in battlefield medicine. Suburbanization in the U.S. following World War II led to more car accidents and more injuries far from hospitals, exacerbating this lack of medical care provided en route to hospitals.

In Pittsburgh, the city police handled ambulance service within the city, transporting patients via paddy wagon while funeral homes provided ambulance service in the suburbs. Wait times were often longer for service in predominantly black neighborhoods, especially in the economically depressed Hill District. Additionally, tension between police and the community made many reluctant to call the police.

The program received its initial funding from Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty and the Maurice Falk Fund. The Falk Fund was headed by Phil Hallen, a former ambulance driver, who was seeking to improve responses to medical emergencies as well as create employment opportunities for African-American men in Pittsburgh.

Hallen contacted Freedom House Enterprises to help recruit paramedics for the new ambulance service. At that time, Freedom House Enterprises worked on civil rights projects including voter registration and organizing NAACP meetings as well as offering job training and assistance with job searches to black Pittsburghers. Freedom House agreed to partner on the ambulance program.

The first cohort of Freedom House Ambulance Service recruits consisted of 25 black men recruited from The Hill District, a low income, predominantly black neighborhood. At the time, local media referred to residents of the neighborhood as the "unemployables," and the recruits included men who had suffered long-term unemployment. Half of the recruits had not graduated high school. Some had criminal records, including felonies. The recruits also included veterans of the Vietnam War.

Read more about this incredible organization at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Freedom-House-Ambulance-Service> YouTube has a short video at <https://youtu.be/SvOHFMQRgAY>?

THOMAS DORSEY
FOUNDER OF GOSPEL
MUSIC |
MUSICIAN | COMPOSER
(1899–1993)



"I sat down at the piano and my hands began to browse over the keys. Then something happened. I felt as though I could reach out and touch God. I found myself playing a melody, one I'd never heard or played before, and words came into my head - they just seemed to fall into place." Thomas A. Dorsey

Not only was Thomas A. Dorsey known as the "Father of Gospel Music," but he was also considered to be one of the most influential figures ever to impact the gospel music genre. Reverend Dorsey was a versatile musician and composer who had written more than 1,000 songs in his lifetime, half of which were published. From 1932 into the 1970s, Reverend Dorsey organized and directed the choir at Pilgrim Baptist Church in Chicago, IL. Legendary gospel icons, including Mahalia Jackson, Sallie Martin, and Rosetta Tharpe achieved their first success with Dorsey's soul-stirring, heart-wrenching songs of praise and adoration to God. Considered one of the most revered figures in spiritual music, Rev. Thomas A. Dorsey "was born in Villa Rica, Georgia, to Etta Plant Spencer, a respected church organist, and Thomas Madison Dorsey, an itinerant preacher and sharecropper. A child prodigy, Dorsey taught himself how to play a wide range of instruments. His musical talents were so widely recognized, a gospel tune was called "a Dorsey" until **Dorsey himself** "coined the name "gospel." Then his music was known as "gospel" or "gospel blues."

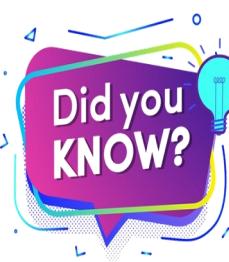
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-- cont'd from page 12

He moved to Chicago in 1916; Dorsey continued his musical training at the Chicago School of Composition and Arranging. He published his first composition in 1920, and to earn money, he worked as a composer and arranger for the Chicago Music Publishing Company under J. Mayo Williams. He also worked as a music coach for both Paramount and Vocalion Records. In 1921, after he heard W. M. Nix's inspirational singing at the National Baptist Convention, Dorsey decided to begin composing "sacred" music.

He registered his first composition in 1922. After becoming the director of music at New Hope Baptist Church, he combined his sacred music with his blues technique. This collective effort made him one of the progenitors of gospel blues. In 1932, Dorsey's wife, Nettie Harper, died in childbirth and his newborn son died soon after. One day as he consoled himself, at his piano, he composed a song that has blessed and comforted countless hurting hearts down through the ages: "Take My Hand, Precious Lord." Elvis Presley's recording of Dorsey's second-most popular God-inspired song, "Peace in the Valley," sold millions of copies. It is considered Dorsey's most widely recognized work and was a nationwide hit with both Black and White audiences.

Today, Thomas A. Dorsey is revered in Black church history. Because of his walk with the Lord, Black Americans laud him as a Christian, an accomplished pianist, choir director, and a prolific composer. His God-given gift still comforts us through the music that flowed through this wonderful man of God.



FMZ HISTORY FACTS. . . FROM THE Archives Committee

First Mt. Zion Dumfries and Mt. Zion Triangle were once the same church.

True. When the original Mt. Zion Church split, the courts intervened and we were named First Mount Zion. Mt. Zion – Triangle retained the original name.

Since 1867 when the Church was founded, there have been 6 church edifices.

False. There have been a total of five edifices: the original Mt. Zion (mysteriously burned); the second, First Mt. Zion that was built along Joplin Road (not to be confused with Mt. Zion Baptist Church on Joplin Road) and was purchased in 1944 by Marine Corps Base Quantico; the 1947 Little White Church on the Side of the Road; the 1981 Church that was connected to the 1947 Church; and the current 2001 First Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Q. Name the four pastors to serve First Mt. Zion in the 79 years between 1945 and 2024.

A: Reverends Oscar Jackson; James Wynne Augustus T. Gaskins and Luke E. Torian

Q. Which two serving pastors are buried in the Church cemetery?

A: Oscar Jackson and Augustus Gaskins

Sue Clark with 20+ years as Church Clerk was FMZ's longest serving Clerk.

False. Sarah E. Butler served as church clerk for 65 years, 6 months (July 1909 – January 4, (1975). In her resignation letter she wrote that she wasn't tired – just old.

Q. Which is correct: The current Church archives room was initially intended as a: library; computer resource room; Credit Union; book store

A: Credit Union

Rev. Dorothy A. White was the first female assistant pastor of FMZ.

True. She served as Assistant Pastor to both Pastors Gaskins and Torian.

Q. Who of the following was not a previous pastor of First Mount Zion?

Reverends Jacob Byrd; Horace Crutcher; Richard Jackson, Charles Gibson, Henry Vines, Napoleon Spencer, William Henry Miller; William A. Gibson

A: Rev. Napoleon Spencer was assistant pastor to Rev. Augustus Gaskins

Along with other churches, First Mt. Zion was forced to close its doors and held no church services during the global Covid-19 pandemic.

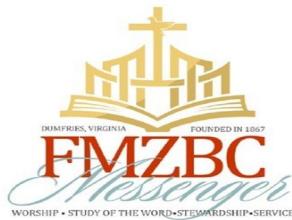
False. Undaunted, FMZ held Church services during the pandemic via on-line platforms such as the Church website, Zoom, YouTube and Facebook.

First Mt. Zion Church includes a book store, computer resource room, gym and fitness center, beauty salon, barber shop and breakfast bar.

False. No breakfast bar, but the best is yet to come!!!

archives@firstmountzionbc.org





The last day to register for the October SHARE package is October 12th. Share packages are \$31 for food valued at approximately \$50, which includes 4-6 lbs of frozen meat; 8-12 lbs of fresh fruits & vegetables.

POC: Thomas Bates, 703-772-8837. Distribution will be on October 26, 2025.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY PRAYER LINE

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

For more information, please contact Director, Gwen L. Holland at

womensministry@firstmountzionbc.org



October 5, 2025
Volume 21, Issue 10

PASTOR, STAFF, AND LEADERSHIP

Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James, Pastor-Elect
Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator
James Simpson, Chair, Trustee Ministry
Kavin D. Johnson, Chair, Deacon Ministry
Vietta Williams, Chair, Deaconess Ministry

FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

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Dumfries, Virginia 22025-1920
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Email: fmzbc@firstmountzionbc.org
Website: www.fmzbc.com

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

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
Brother Lavell Lucas
Sister Sylvia Moore
Reverend Kathy Russell
Deaconess Claudia Woolfolk



SUNDAY SERVICE SCHEDULE

Sunday School
9:45 AM
In-Person and via ZOOM
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/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_fmzbc](https://www.instagram.com/thecore_fmzbc)

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

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

Vimeo: vimeo.com/25203195

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

YouVersion Bible, Devotions, and Prayers: https://bit.ly/FMZBC-YouVersion_Bible



LifeStream.tv®

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

BlueSky - <https://bsky.app/profile/fmzbc.bsky.social>

Threads - [@fmzbc](https://www.threads.com/@fmzbc)