

FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH



THE MESSENGER

November 2, 2025
Volume 21, Issue 11

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Pastoral INSTALLATION WEEKEND

PASTOR-ELECT
REV. DR. SANDRA K. JAMES



GUEST PREACHER
REV. DR. CYNTHIA L. HALE
PASTOR, RAY OF HOPE CHRISTIAN
CHURCH
DECATUR, GA



INSTALLATION SERVICE
2 PM
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2025
DOORS OPEN AT 12:30PM

THE GIFT OF A SHEPHERD AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

"AND I WILL GIVE YOU SHEPHERDS ACCORDING TO MY HEART, WHO WILL FEED YOU WITH KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING."

-JEREMIAH 3:15

THE GIFT OF A SHEPHERD AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART

Jeremiah 3:15 reminds us of God's promise: "And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding."

On Saturday, November 22, 2025, at 2 PM, we will witness the fulfillment of that promise as Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James is installed as the 11th Pastor of First Mount Zion Baptist Church. This sacred moment celebrates not only a new chapter in ministry, but also the divine connection between God's heart and God's people. We rejoice in the blessing of leadership rooted in love, wisdom, and service.

Join us as Rev. Dr. Cynthia L. Hale, Pastor of Ray of Hope Christian Church (Decatur, GA), delivers a powerful Word for this historic occasion. Come expecting joy, worship, and a Word from the Lord as we honor the gift of a shepherd after God's own heart.



Message from the Pastor-Elect

TRUSTING GOD IN TRYING TIMES



Beloved,

As I concluded our Divine Questions & Answers sermon series, I reflected on Habakkuk's journey—a journey that mirrors our own in these uncertain times. The prophet looked out at injustice, violence, and moral decline and cried, "Lord, how long?" God's answer was not immediate deliverance, but a reminder of His sovereignty. Through this conversation, Habakkuk learned that God's silence is not His absence—it's preparation.

Many of us have stood in that place—waiting, wondering, praying for answers. Like Habakkuk, I've learned that faith grows deepest in the seasons when God seems quiet.

"Sometimes, you have to be still long enough to let God speak louder than your doubts."

Three Anchors of Faith

Wait Patiently — Even When Afraid

Habakkuk trembled as he waited on the Lord (v.16). I've felt that trembling, too. But when we rest in His promises, God's peace guards our hearts and minds (Phil. 4:6–7).

Rejoice — Even When Everything Goes Wrong
Yet I will rejoice in the Lord" (v.17–18). That's even-if faith. I've had to live that verse in seasons of loss and uncertainty. God's faithfulness has never failed me.

Walk Strong — On High Places

God gives us sure-footed grace to navigate hard terrain (v.19). The higher ground isn't about escaping problems; it's about being lifted by God's strength.

The Vision Still Speaks

God told Habakkuk, "Write the vision and make it plain." His promises may seem delayed, but His timing is perfect. I've learned to write down what He reveals—because one day it becomes testimony.

God's justice is sure. His silence is not weakness but worship. Faith is brave, not blind."

A Final Word

Habakkuk ends not with complaint but confidence:

"Though the fig tree does not bud... yet I will rejoice in the Lord... The Sovereign Lord is my strength." (Hab. 3:17–19)

Bring your questions to God. He can handle them. But be ready—His answers may stretch and strengthen you. No matter what season you face, remember: waiting on God is not weakness—it's worship.

As we approach the holidays, I pray God's blessing for each of you.

*Standing with you in faith,
Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James*

Congratulatory Videos to Rev. Dr. James

How to Record and Upload Your Video Greeting

1 Record Your Message

- Keep it **short and heartfelt** (30 seconds – 1 minute).
- Record in a **quiet, well-lit** space.
- Speak **clearly and directly** to the camera.
- Suggested content:
 - A warm greeting (e.g., "Hello from [City/State]!")
 - A brief message of **congratulations** or blessing.
 - Optional: a favorite scripture, quote, or memory.



2 Save Your Video File

- Acceptable formats: MP4, MOV, or AVI.
- Include your **full name and city/state** in the filename.
Example: John_Doe_WoodbridgeVA.mp4



3 Upload Your Video

Go to: <https://we.tl/r-scPANrbe6z>
Click "**Upload Files**" and select your video.
Add your **name and contact email** in the message box.
Click "**Transfer**" to complete the upload.

4 Deadline for Submissions

Please submit your video by **November 15, 2025** so it can be included in the celebration.



✓ Tip: Landscape (horizontal) videos look best.

Thank you for helping make this a memorable celebration!

<https://we.tl/r-scPANrbe6z>

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



Ethan, Alyssa, Langston and McKenzie savor their Marshmallow Tower building challenge

Proverbs 22:9 The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

Ask people what they associate the month of November with, and many will say “Thanksgiving Day.” In the U.S. “Thanksgiving” is the most traveled holiday. It is often celebrated with the four “F’s”-food, family, fellowship and for many “football.”

It might surprise you to learn that November is also “National Homeless Youth Awareness” month and “National Hunger and Homelessness Week” is November 16-20, 2025.

Prince William County does not keep specific statistics on youth homelessness. During the 2022-2023 school year, Fairfax County Public Schools reported 1,936 students who identified as homeless, including students who reported no adult supervision. Youth who are homeless and “unaccompanied” are more likely to experience an increase in mental health issues, trauma and victimization.

With the forced decrease in the Federal workforce that does not only affect Federal workers but businesses like restaurants that support them, we can predict that homelessness, including that among young people, will increase. Certainly, homelessness and hunger usually go hand in hand.

Our youth will have the opportunity to assist those who are hungry by donating canned good and other nonperishable food items at the annual Youth Ministry Prayer Dinner on Friday, November 14, 2025. The congregation can partner with us by giving these items to a youth in our church for them to donate at the prayer dinner. All food collected will be donated to the ACTS Food Pantry.

During conversations with ACTS Food Pantry volunteers this summer, I learned that donations have significantly decreased in the last few years, while the need for donated food continues to increase. I also learned the food pantry tends to get lots of donations during November and December but significantly decrease during the subsequent months. The youth ministry is planning another food donation event in 2026.

Many of us have much to be thankful for. God has blessed us with warm shelter and good food. As we count these blessings, let us remember those who cannot say the same.

Proverbs 22:9: The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor.

Reverend Dr. Beverly Jiggetts
Youth Minister



Youth get competitive in the “Musical Cup” game



Sanaa Toussaint proud winner of the “Musical Cup” game challenge



Youth and Youth Ministry Supporters pose for a group photo after October 2025 “Game On” First Friday

AN OPEN TRIBUTE TO OUR FAITHFUL CLERGY

In this sacred season of Clergy Appreciation, we pause to honor the shepherds among us—those who walk with wisdom, lead with love, and serve with unwavering devotion.

To our Pastor-Elect, Associate Ministers, and Spiritual Leaders:

You have stood in the gap, prayed through storms, and celebrated our joys as if they were your own. You have poured out truth from the pulpit and compassion from the heart. Your words have comforted the grieving, challenged the complacent, and inspired the weary to rise again.

You are more than messengers—you are mentors, counselors, and companions on the journey of faith. You have baptized our children, married our loved ones, and buried our elders with dignity and grace.

You have taught us to hope, to forgive, and to believe in miracles. We thank you for your sleepless nights, your unseen sacrifices, and your steadfast presence.

We see you. . . God sees you. . . We honor you. . . We bless you!

May this be a reminder that your labor is not in vain, and your legacy is eternal. May you be refreshed in spirit, renewed in strength, and surrounded by the love of the community you've so faithfully served.

*With deepest gratitude,
Pastor's Aide Ministry on behalf of
First Mount Zion Family*



YOUTH MINISTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

WE WILL NOT HAVE FIRST FRIDAY OR YOUTH GROUP MEETING IN NOVEMBER.

THE YOUTH MINISTRY PRAYER DINNER AND CANNED AND NONPERISHABLE FOOD DRIVE IS ON NOVEMBER 14, 2025, FROM 6:30 P.M.-9:00 P.M.

THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER IS JUDGE EILEEN OLDS, THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN AND THE FIRST FEMALE JUDGE IN THE FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT IN VIRGINIA.

THE TOPIC FOR THE EVENING IS "PERSEVERANCE."

THIS FREE EVENT IS OPEN TO FMZBC YOUTH IN GRADES 6-12 AND THEIR NON-MEMBER GUESTS IN THE SAME GRADE.



YOUTH MINISTRY BIBLE STUDY IS
EVERY WEDNESDAY
IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM
IN THE
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM
7:30 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.

BELOW IS THE NEW REGISTRATION
LINK. YOU ONLY NEED
TO REGISTER ONCE.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Encouragement and Assurance for the Soul

FITNESS-IN-PLACE

A HEALTHY THANKSGIVING!



ENCOURAGEMENT FROM DAILY DEVOTIONALS

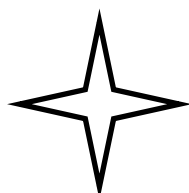
Since May I have participated in the Lilly Foundation funded Preaching in a Post-Christian Age Fellowship at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. We had our first three-day

meeting in May and just completed our second meeting at the end of September.

What I love most about this program is not the reading or discussions concerning the challenges of preaching in a time when belief is deemed stranger than unbelief, which is the actual purpose of the fellowship; what I love most about the program are the daily devotionals; in the morning before we start our sessions, at noon - to recenter us, and just before we break for the day - to release the burdens and reflect on the joy and privilege of our relationships. It is like a mini-spiritual retreat.

After my first meeting with the cohort, I purchased the *Upper Room Worshipbook*, which we used during the meetings, and I followed the morning, noon, and *sometimes* night litanies. I was reminded, not just of the command to practice spiritual disciplines, but the value. Our Baptist Covenant calls us to maintain "family and secret devotions." Prayer is one of the steps in our strategy to being "fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ." Despite the value and joy I got from these practices, I live in this world and somehow, eventually my practice of this rule faded. It creeps up on you, like the gradual fading of a deep black garment to a washout grey rag. I looked forward to the group meeting in September. There I experienced and was reminded of the value of the rule. I started over again. So, I just wanted to encourage you to keep the practice of daily devotional time, and if you have not kept the practice, be encouraged to begin today.

Submitted by
Reverend Dr. Karl Brower



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

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

Thanksgiving is one day. Give away most of your leftovers or take only a small portion of leftovers home.

Park far away. When black Friday shopping, [park far away](#). Reduce your stress levels and burn extra calories.

Invite a friend. Walk, talk and shop the mall with a friend. Burn extra calories and reduce your stress levels together.

Be Thankful. Give thanks to God for His goodness, grace, and provision.

Enjoy the imperfections and laugh. Don't aim for perfection or place unrealistic demands on yourself.

Recite Psalm 139:14. "I am fearfully and wonderfully made".

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

Have a Healthy Happy Thanksgiving!!!

*Sister Lori Valkenburg
Fitness Director*





DO NOT BE ANXIOUS... ABOUT ANYTHING!

November is the time of the year when we are reminded about how much we are truly grateful for the bounty of God's blessings that He has bestowed. In this season of Thanksgiving, we can rest on the Bible's instruction in Psalm 9:1 to *"give thanks to the Lord with [our] whole heart; and to recount all of [His] wonderful deeds."* What are some things that we can be thankful for? We are thankful for life and each day that we are given to open our eyes. We are thankful for our family and friends. We are thankful for our places of residence and for the food that we enjoy every day. The list of things to give thanks to Our Lord for is endless. Even during these uncertain and stressful times, we are encouraged to count our blessings and name them one-by-one. Doing so helps us during trying times to remember that God delivered us from life's challenges before and he will deliver us again. No matter what life may bring; no matter the ebbs and flows of hardships and challenges, with God, we have the victory because He is in control. 1 Chronicles 29:11-12 states: 11 *"Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; For all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all. 12 Both riches and honor come from You, and You reign over all."*

In Your hand is power and might; in Your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all."

In his letter to the Philippians (4:6-7) the Apostle Paul instructs believers to *"not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."* This timeless direction invites us to replace our anxieties, i.e. our worries with prayer and petition to Our Lord. At the time, Paul was under house arrest for proclaiming the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. While awaiting trial, he expressed his appreciation and gratitude toward the Philippians for the generous support shown toward him. As we might imagine, Paul - being human, was probably under some emotional duress while waiting to stand trial. But, while waiting for that outcome, Paul stood on the firmament of his faith and encouraged other believers to do the

same when navigating through life's trials. Following the example of Paul, we need to lean on the Lord for strength to raise our heads high and look to Him for help and support so that we can always give Him thanks. The Apostle Paul reminds us in his letter to the Corinthians "but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57). When we lean on our own human strength, our own human understanding, life's challenges at times are overwhelmingly suffocating and sometimes there seems to be no end in sight. But, when we ask for and lean on the Lord for His wisdom and understanding and put our whole heart and trust in Him, He will see us through to certain victory. We have the victory when we respond to trials by giving thanks to the Lord for all that He has done, is doing and will do. We give thanks to the Lord *"for He is good; for His steadfast love endures forever!"* 1 Chronicles 16:34.

Submitted by
Deaconess Vietta Williams
Chair, Deaconess Ministry

*To all those celebrating
in November!*

Happy Birthday!





GOD HAS NOT FORGOTTEN US

We are living in a time of great stress and uncertainty. The world may tremble, but God's people stand on a firmer foundation: **the Lord's covenant love endures**. As Psalm 100 reminds us, *"Know ye that the Lord he is God... For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."* (Psalm 100:3,5)

Seasons of trial are not evidence of God's absence; they are invitations to deeper trust. Scripture anchors us:

- *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."* (Psalm 46:1)
- *"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."* (1 Peter 5:7)
- *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* (Hebrews 13:5)

We may not fully understand this season, but **we are in it for a reason**—to be refined, to pray, to serve, and to shine. Let us steady our hearts in worship, keep our hands to the work of love, and fix our eyes on Jesus, the One who calms storms and guides steps. *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart... and he shall direct thy paths."* (Proverbs 3:5–6)

A Thanksgiving Word

As we enter this Thanksgiving season, we give thanks to God for His faithfulness through every high and low. We encourage every household to pause, pray, and proclaim: *"The Lord is good."* Let gratitude guard your thoughts, soften your words, and strengthen your witness. Even now, God is providing—often in ways we only recognize in hindsight.

A Joyful Congratulations

With grateful hearts, the Deacon Ministry offers **warm congratulations to Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James** as we prepare to install her as FMZBC's **11th Pastor on**

Saturday, November 22, 2025. We thank God for her call, character, and counsel, and we invite the church family to unite in prayer and joyful participation throughout the installation weekend. May the Lord crown this new chapter with wisdom, unity, and fruitfulness for His glory.

Church, be encouraged: **God has not forgotten us.** He is with us, for us, and working through us—and **He will see us through.**

Deacon Ministry
First Mount Zion Baptist Church



ACADEMIC EDUCATION MINISTRY

The AEM will host a Scholarship Workshop on November 16, 2025, immediately following Worship service. A live demonstration of the online application will be presented. The student must meet the following requirements to qualify for the FMZBC scholarship:

- ♦ 2026 graduating high school seniors attending an institution of higher learning in Fall 2026;
- ♦ Eligibility for FMZBC and Bell Scholarships is Church membership prior to 1 April 2025;
- ♦ Participation in Ministry for at least 6 months;
- ♦ Community Service

Refreshments will be served. You can sign up by emailing AEM@firstmountzionbc.org.

POC: Gerry Griffin, AEM Chair or Sandra Grimes, Scholarship Committee Chair



APPRECIATING OUR CLERGY



The Pastor's Aide Ministry hosted its annual Clergy Appreciation Breakfast on October 15th in the Grain of Heaven, in acknowledgment and appreciation of our Clergy. The year's theme was ***"A Season of Reflection: Looking Back, Moving Forward"*** (*Philippians 3:13-14 (NIV)*).

The program opened with a warm welcome by Chair, Cynthia Essic-Redmond, which was followed with prayer by Reverend Cozy Bailey. Sis. Loretta Archie read the scripture. We were blessed by Brother Charles McPhatter who sang one of his originals called "Never Gave Up on Me", reminding us that even in our frailties, and even when we aren't obedient to God, that He still forgives us once we ask Him, and His love for us is unceasing.

We then delved into breakfast which was prepared by the best "restaurant" this side of glory, ***Grain of Heaven***. The menu consisted of mouth-watering shrimp and grits, fried chicken, bacon, sausages, Danish, biscuits, potatoes, and fruit, and a very special treat, hot off the press, prepared by our "Omelette Chefs Duo", Deacon Michael Nelson and Brother Byron Cherry. They did an amazing job and everything was "finger-licking" good! Thank you. To Brother Dijae North of the AV Ministry, thank you for assisting with the music sound tracks and the slide show presentation, and for spreading yourself thin between two events. You are to be commended for your untiring service. And, of course, this would not be complete if we did not mention the Facilities Department, specifically Walter Holmes and Gregory Tookes who did the "heavy lifting" without complaint. And, with a spirit of excellence, and getting everything set up so that we could waltz in, put on the finishing touches, sit down and fellowship. You guys are incredible! We are especially grateful to them for their role in supporting this endeavor. Because of everyone's collective efforts, everything was excellent. The atmosphere was uplifting and, most importantly, the Clergy were blessed! Thank You All!

After breakfast, Deacon Henry Walker shared words of encouragement to the Clergy letting them know how much their presence means to us and how much we appreciate the contributions they make to the Ministry.

Brother McPhatter rendered his second selection, "Beautiful Feet" by Donald Lawrence, reminding the Clergy especially that they have an obligation to preach the gospel, in season and out of season, and to go wherever God leads them to spread the gospel. Sister Oonagh Bell then delivered a tribute to the Clergy, encouraging them to continue to serve God's people whenever and wherever it is required, and reminding them how much they are appreciated and loved by the First Mount Zion Family for all that they do for our Ministry and for the Body of Christ. The Pastor's Aide Ministry then gifted a small token to each member of the Clergy as a show of appreciation for their service.

Reverend Dr. Sandra K. James shared a few words of thanks, acknowledging that she was appreciative of the thoughtful gesture from the Pastor's Aide Ministry in hosting the Clergy Breakfast. The PAM will continue to support, pray for, and work in unity with, the Clergy, so that together we will have a greater impact and help fulfill the mission God has entrusted to each of us. Reverend Robert Jones closed us out in prayer.

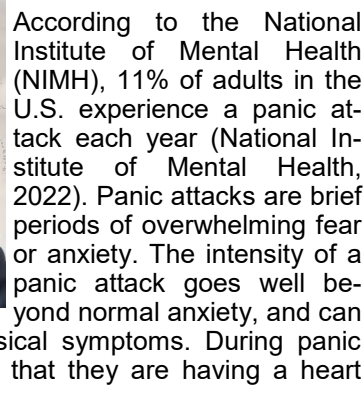


FMZ Clergy, it goes without saying that we love you, and we pray that in this ***"Season of Reflection: Looking Back, Moving Forward"***, that God will continue to show Himself strong in your lives, enlarge your territories, and bless you all so that the world will see it!!

*Love and Blessings,
Sister Oonagh M. Bell
Co-Chair
Pastor's Aide Ministry*



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



Note: A panic attack does not need to include all of the symptoms listed below.

Panic Attack Facts

- Panic attacks may feel scary, but they don't actually cause physical harm. The most common fears associated with panic attacks (having a heart attack or fainting) are not actually a threat.
- Panic attacks are usually brief but intense. The symptoms of panic typically peak within 10 minutes, and end within 30 minutes. However, some lingering symptoms can last over an hour.
- Panic attacks can seem to occur randomly, or they can be closely linked to a specific source of anxiety such as driving, crowded places, or simply leaving home.
- Panic disorder occurs when a person has frequent worry or fear of future panic attacks, or when they change their behavior in order to avoid attacks (such as avoiding a feared situation).

Sources

National Institute of Mental Health. (2022). Panic disorder.
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/panic-disorder>

What are Panic Attacks? Therapist Aid LLC (2015). Provided by TherapistAid.com

Submitted by

Juanita Stokes, MA, LPC, NCC, MARS

Associate Minister

Licensed Professional Counselor

REQUESTING IT ASSISTANCE

A NEW WAY TO REQUEST IT SUPPORT FOR @FIRSTMOUNTZIONBC.ORG USERS

IF YOU HAVE AN EMAIL THAT ENDS WITH @FIRSTMOUNTZIONBC.ORG, THEN THIS IS FOR YOU! AS AN EXTENSION OF IT4U, PRONTO TECH-HELP DESK, MS365 USER SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK-24/7 AND HERE IS HOW YOU CAN ACCESS THEM:

BY PHONE: (571) 657-0105

BY CHAT: CHAT WITH US!

BY EMAIL: HELPDESK@PRONTO-TECH.COM

YOU WILL BE ASKED TO PROVIDE YOUR NAME AND THE BEST NUMBER TO REACH YOU. ADDITIONALLY, YOU WILL PROVIDE THE ORGANIZATION'S NAME (WHICH IS FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH) AND FMZBC EMAIL ADDRESS. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE EMAIL ADDRESS MUST BE A @FIRSTMOUNTZIONBC.ORG EMAIL ADDRESS.



BIND US TOGETHER

I pray that this finds everyone doing well and staying safe. Continue to pray wherever you are during the noon hour, for our families, community, nation, and world.

Prayer:

"Lord, more than ever, we need you and each other. As the Bible indicates, "we are stronger together". As the body of Christ, may we model this by encouraging and building others up rather than judging and tearing down. Praying for a bond of unity and love in the body of Christ. May we love others with the same love that you have shown us through your ultimate sacrifice at calvary.

May we shine the light of your love, peace, and hope in a world where there is so much fear, anger, hatred, oppression, and violence and so many people are hurting and feel that there is no hope. To do that, we need to continue to be more rooted and grounded in your Word and strengthened in our faith, so that no matter what is going on around us, we will stand firm and hold on to our anchor.

Thank you that you are Jehovah Shalom—our peace, Jehovah Rapha—our Healer, Jehovah Jireh—our Provider, and Jehovah Nissi—our banner of love. Great is your faithfulness. We give ALL the glory, honor, and praise! In Jesus Name, Amen!"

Scripture:

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 NKJV

[9] Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor.

[10] For if they fall, one will lift his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up.

[11] Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; But how can one be warm alone?

[12] Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:9,11-12 MSG

[9-10] It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work, share the wealth. And if one falls, the other helps, but if there's no one to help, tough!

[11] Two in a bed warm each other. Alone, you shiver all night.

[12] By yourself you are unprotected. With a friend you can face the worst. Can you round up a third? A three-stranded rope isn't easily snapped.

Praise and Worship Song: "Bind Us Together" - <https://youtu.be/IHJzD46-qU>

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

FMZBC JOB VACANCIES

**FULL-TIME CUSTODIAL TECHNICIAN
FOOD SERVICE ASSISTANT**

**CONTACT RENEE WOOLFOLK FOR MORE
INFORMATION AT
(703) 670-0184 or
rwoolfolk@firstmountzionbc.org**



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!

BIBLE STUDY SERIES

**Join us in person in the Chapel or
stream live on the Church's website**

www.fmzbc.com

**Wednesdays at 11:00am,
except third Wednesday at 10:00am**

**Note: The Chosen series
is readily available on YouTube.
[Click Here for the Lesson Handout](#)**

*"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."
-- Martin Luther King, Jr.*



The First Mount Zion Seniors' Ministry Leadership Team blessed the Seniors with a very informative program focused on health during their monthly fellowship on October 15, 2025. The program featured two guest healthcare providers and our very own Dr. Keith Boykin, Co-Director of the Seniors' Ministry.

With the theme, "Flourishing in Faith and Wellness," based on 3 John 1:2, each physician shared invaluable health and wellness information based on their areas of expertise, and provided handouts to take home.

The fellowship opened with prayer and blessing of the food by Deacon (Dr.) Andrew Walker and scripture by Sister Angela Walker. Sis. Loretta Archie, Seniors' Ministry Chaplain, welcomed our members and visitors and provided a rousing word about the occasion. Sister Sheila Coverson, FMZBC Cancer Ministry, introduced our first guest speaker, Dr. Erin Kline, DC (Doctor of Chiropractic). Dr. Kline gave a very informative presentation about what the practice of chiropractic medicine entails and how people can benefit from chiropractic care. She also shared other health and wellness services provided in her office, such as massage therapy and a newly added Functional medicine physician. Seniors were then offered time to ask questions. Many of the seniors had very good questions, which Dr. Kline answered in turn and with clarity. Dr. Kline was well received by the Seniors. She provided her contact information to those who asked and expressed her appreciation for being able to share in this way.

Lunch was then served while the attendees were being entertained by up tempo Christian music in the style of Caribbean and Afrobeat.

After lunch, Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James, Pastor-Elect, offered greetings. The Seniors' Ministry surprised her with a birthday present and a gift to recognize her as Pastor-elect for Clergy Appreciation Month. The gifts were presented to her by Dr. Keith Boykin. Then, Bro. Neal Patterson recognized October wedding anniversaries and birthdays and the attendees joined Bro. Patterson singing the Happy Anniversary and Happy Birthday songs.

The program continued with the second segment in which Sis. Coverson introduced the second guest speaker, Dr. Jocelyn Ajala. Dr. Ajala presented a PowerPoint presentation with various general health topics for women and men, as well as focused topics

on menopause, hormonal therapy, andropause, breast and prostate cancer awareness, and many other pertinent health areas. She was also well received, answered questions asked by the Seniors, offered her contact information, and thanked the Seniors for the opportunity to share.

The program moved right into the third and final presentation segment with Dr. Keith Boykin providing information on Adult Primary Care topics. He opened the segment with a very informative review of COVID-19. He explained the difference between disease and illness, and provided information on the current 2025-2026 COVID vaccine, its requirements and recommendations for adults aged 19-64, and those 65 years and older. He discussed the current recommended adult vaccines, such as Flu, high dose Flu, Shingrix, Pneumonia, and DTaP (Tetanus Td), explaining that individuals should always consult with their physicians as to which vaccines are specifically recommended for them.

Dr. Boykin briefly touched on the importance of Breast Cancer Awareness and Prostate Cancer Awareness, giving his personal testimony and sharing what Black Men and Women, should know about PSA. He also demonstrated the correct way to measure blood pressure to avoid inaccurate pressure readings. Dr. Boykin, in the interest of time, concluded the segment by encouraging Seniors and others present to be health advocates by partnering with their Health Care provider in their health management and the health management of those in their care. Dr. Boykin was well received by the Seniors, who are more than thankful to have a physician as part of the Leadership Team.

Sis. Oonagh Bell, Director of the Seniors' Ministry, presented all the speakers with a token of appreciation. She also presented Rev. Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley, Minister of Christian Education, with a gift for Clergy Appreciation Month, in recognition of all she does in support of the Seniors and the Christian Education Department as a whole.

The Fellowship ended with Remarks, Invitation to Christian Discipleship, and Closing Prayer rendered by Dr. Holley.

Our next gathering will be our Thanksgiving Fellowship on Wednesday, November 19, 2025. We are looking forward to another great program.



*Submitted by
Dr. Keith B. Boykin
Co-Director*

"A SEASON OF THANKSGIVING"

Join us every Wednesday
November 5, 12, 19
for
Bible Study at 11:00am
and
Worship Service at 7:30pm

Wednesday in Worship Service
November 26th Day only at 11:00am

We will WORSHIP- PRAYER-PRAISE
With THANKSGIVING!

*O give thanks
unto the LORD,
for he is
GOOD.*
Psalms 107:1




THIS FALL, THE
ACADEMIC EDUCATION
MINISTRY IS EXCITED
TO OFFER AN
INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY JUST FOR
OUR FMZBC HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE
ANNUAL HBCU FESTIVAL,
HOSTED BY THE
ALFRED STREET BAPTIST CHURCH
AT THE ST. JAMES SPORTS
COMPLEX— A POWERFUL
CELEBRATION OF BLACK EXCELLENCE,
EDUCATION, AND OPPORTUNITY!
MORE THAN EIGHTY HISTORICALLY
BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
WILL BE REPRESENTED — THAT'S
RIGHT, OVER EIGHTY SCHOOLS! YOU'LL
HAVE THE CHANCE TO MEET COLLEGE
REPRESENTATIVES, LEARN ABOUT
ADMISSIONS, SCHOLARSHIPS,
COLLEGE PLANNING, AND READINESS,
AND GET VALUABLE INSIGHT
INTO WHAT YOUR FUTURE COULD
LOOK LIKE!





MEN'S MINISTRY FELLOWSHIP

THEME: GRACE AND MERCY
VERSE: 2 CORINTHIANS 12:9 NLT

DATE: NOVEMBER 8TH
TIME: 9:00 AM
Guest Speaker: Rev. Kevin Mickie

*"Grateful Hearts, Faithful Service:
Honoring Our Veterans, Thanking Our God"*
"Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends"
John 15:13 - (John)

**A CELEBRATION OF SERVICE,
SACRIFICE & SPIRIT**

JOIN US FOR A JOYFUL AND UPLIFTING GATHERING
AS WE HONOR OUR BELOVED . . .

VETERANS — FOR THEIR COURAGE, COMMITMENT AND SACRIFICE
CAREGIVERS — FOR THEIR COMPASSION AND TIRELESS CARE
GRATEFUL FOLK — FOR THEIR THANKFUL HEARTS
AND JOYFUL SPIRITS

DATE: NOVEMBER 19, 2025
TIME: NOON
LOCATION: GYM

THERE IS A BLESSING IN STORE FOR YOU,
BUT YOU HAVE TO BE THERE TO RECEIVE IT!!!



THE FESTIVAL WILL TAKE PLACE ON
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15TH,
FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 4:30 P.M., AND
FMZ WILL PROVIDE ROUND
TRIP TRANSPORTATION —
SO ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SHOW
UP READY TO DREAM BIG
AND BE INSPIRED.
DON'T MISS THIS LIFE-CHANGING
EXPERIENCE! YOUR FUTURE IS
WAITING — AND IT MIGHT JUST
START AT THE HBCU FESTIVAL!
SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX AFTER
SERVICE EACH SUNDAY.
LAST SUNDAY TO SIGN-UP IS
NOVEMBER 9TH!



November is Diabetes Awareness Month. Diabetes awareness efforts began in 1975 with a partnership between the American Diabetes Association (ADA), the International Diabetes Federation (IDF), and the World Health Organization (WHO) to raise awareness. This led to President Reagan proclaiming National Diabetes Week in 1981, followed by National Diabetes Month in 1982.

Diabetes Awareness Month is important because it raises public awareness about a chronic disease that affects millions, promoting early detection, prevention, and better management. It helps to educate people about the different types of diabetes, the associated risks, and the importance of lifestyle changes, while also reducing stigma and encouraging access to care.

To raise diabetes awareness, we focus on a healthy lifestyle through diet and exercise, regularly monitor blood sugar levels, and adhere to medication schedules. Additionally, managing stress, seeking regular medical checkups, and educating yourself about diabetes are crucial steps for prevention and management.

Lifestyle and diet

Be physically active: Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week. Brisk walking is a great start, and you can gradually increase the duration and intensity.

Eat a healthy diet: Focus on whole grains, lean proteins, and plenty of non-starchy vegetables and fruits. Limit sugary drinks, unhealthy fats, and processed foods.

Watch portion sizes: Use methods like filling half your plate with non-starchy vegetables and using a portion of a deck of cards as a guide for meat to help manage intake.

Stay hydrated: Drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Monitoring and management

Monitor blood sugar: Test your blood sugar as often as your doctor recommends to understand how food, activity, and medication affect your levels.

Take medication as prescribed: Take all medications as directed, even when you feel well. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have trouble with your medication schedule or dosage.

Maintain a healthy weight: Losing even 5-7% of your body weight can significantly lower your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Avoid or quit smoking: Smoking increases the risk of diabetes complications.

Routine care and support

See your doctor regularly: Get regular checkups, including foot and eye exams. Your healthcare team can help you manage your condition and prevent complications.

Manage stress: Find healthy ways to cope with stress, as it can affect your diabetes management. Talking to a mental health counselor or joining a support group can be very helpful.

Seek support: Surround yourself with a support system. This could include your doctor, a registered dietitian, a diabetes educator, or your family and friends.

During the month, it's important to emphasize being aware of symptoms to allow for earlier diagnosis and treatment, which can prevent serious complications.

Warning Signs and Symptoms

Know the warning signs and symptoms of diabetes and diabetes complications so you can take action to improve your health.

The following symptoms of diabetes are typical. However, some people with diabetes have symptoms so mild that they go unnoticed.

Common symptoms of diabetes:

- Urinating often
- Feeling very thirsty
- Feeling very hungry—even though you are eating
- Extreme fatigue
- Blurry vision
- Cuts/bruises that are slow to heal
- Weight loss—even though you are eating more (type 1)
- Tingling, pain, or numbness in the hands/feet (type 2)

Early detection and treatment of diabetes can decrease the risk of developing the complications of diabetes.

Resource: American Diabetes Association <https://diabetes.org/about-diabetes>

*Submitted by
Trustee Willie Davis*





Grace & Peace! The Women's Ministry hosted its October Brunch Fellowship on October 4th, with the theme, **"The Struggle Is Real, And So Is God!"** The powerful presence of the Lord was felt through the anointed words spoken by each speaker, the beautiful songs of praise, and the praise dance.

Praise & Worship songs by Worship & Praise Ensemble (WPE) filled the Chapel with the spirit of the Lord and set the atmosphere for our time together. Dr. Sandra K. James, Pastor-Elect, opened with a passionate greeting and welcome as she thanked everyone who had a hand in bringing the Brunch Fellowship together.

Sister Veronica D. Hackett started the fellowship off with her positive, soul-stirring Bible Affirmations, which required participation. While she acknowledged that the struggle is indeed real, she reminded the ladies (through her affirmations) that "The Lord will turn your test into a testimony," adding, "Won't He Do It? YES, HE WILL!!!"

Rev. Helen Parker brought us a very powerful WORD from Isaiah 43:1-3. She told us that we can be victorious when going through struggles if we step out in faith and keep our eyes on the one and only God!

Rev. Josephine Cherry & Minister Ashley Cherry presented an awesome, "never seen before" Fireside Chat/Talk. During this engaging chat, they referenced various scriptures, which brought to our forefront the importance of grabbing a handful of scriptures to anchor yourself. Some statements that stood out from the chat were: *"Have a life verse; God cannot heal what you hide; Give it a name, then you can own it and overcome it."* Glory To God in The Highest!! What a phenomenal experience it was!

Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley, Minister of Christian Education, rendered closing remarks and led us in a powerful closing prayer, which reminded us that God is more than able to see us through our struggles. Yes, struggles are real, but so is our God! Keep trusting, believing, and calling on the name of Jesus. Dr. Holley blessed the food, and the women proceeded to the lower level, where a delicious lunch was served, music was played, gifts were given, and sisters simply enjoyed one another's company. It was a wonderful time of sisters supporting sisters.

What a blessed fellowship! I would like to extend my sincere thank you to all who were a part of the program, and everyone in attendance both in person and virtually. Truly, the fellowship was a success because of your servant hearts. I would be remised if I did not acknowledge and say thank you to the wonderful Women's Ministry Committee Members for their support in the areas of technical, registration, greeters, servers, setting up, taking down and prayer.

To our September & October birthdays, Happy Birthday again and may God Bless You with many more! It was a pleasure having first-time visitors with us. We pray that you were blessed, and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 8, 2025, for our next fellowship, *"The Positive Power of Godly Wisdom,"* via Zoom. More information to come. Please invite someone to join us, and remember, **"The Struggle Is Real, And So Is God!"**

Humbly,
Gwen L. Holland
Director



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

GOD HONORS HUMILITY

"He has brought down rulers from their thrones and raised up the humble." Luke 1:52 (NCV)

God always gives you a choice, and one of the most important choices you'll make is whether to take his path for your life or to make your own way. And the truth is, following God's plan for your life takes humility.

It takes humility to say, "God, I'm going to go with your plan, not my plan; I'm going your way, not my way."

Pride says, "Forget you, God. I have my plans, dreams, and ambitions. I'm going to do what I want to do."

But the Bible urges us over and over again to choose humility over pride. James 4:6 says, *"God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble"* (GNT). And Proverbs 18:12 says, *"Before honor is humility"* (NKJV). Then James 4:10 promises, *"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor"* (NLT).

I want God to honor you—to honor your family, your business, your life. I want him to lift up your health and your finances. But the Bible says that all of these things start with humility.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, knew this was true. She said, *"He has done mighty deeds by his power. He has scattered the people who are proud and think great things about themselves. He has brought down rulers from their thrones and raised up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away with nothing"* (Luke 1:51-53 NCV).

This is an amazing piece of poetry—and it paints the picture of how God works in ways that are opposite to our natural human instincts.

Mary wasn't educated, but she knew God and knew his Word. And she knew that she wanted his blessings. So she humbled herself and chose to take his path for her life.

What about you? Are you proudly following your own path? Or have you humbled yourself and committed to following God's path for you instead?

Pastor Rick Warren

A leader is best when people barely know he (she) exists, when the work is done, the aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves.

-- Lao Tzu

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, PLEASE CONTACT

DR. TRACEY DAWKINS HOLLEY
THOLLEY@FIRSTMOUNTZIONBC.ORG

OR

SISTER STEPHANY STEWART AT
STEPHANYSTEWART@YAHOO.COM



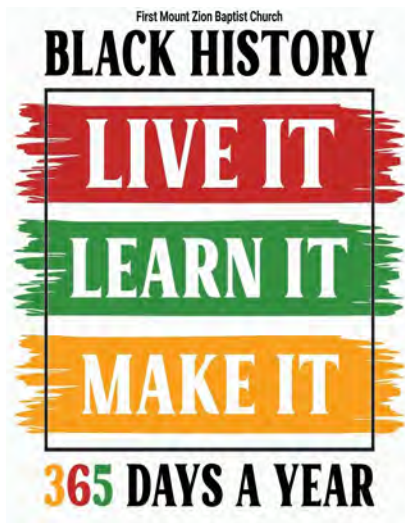
ATTENTION ALL ZOOM MEETING HOSTS:

To protect our ministries from potential "Zoom bombing" by miscreants and hackers, it is no longer recommended to post meeting ID and passcodes to the website or social media. As an alternative, Zoom offers a registration feature for meeting participants to register for a meeting using a registration link.

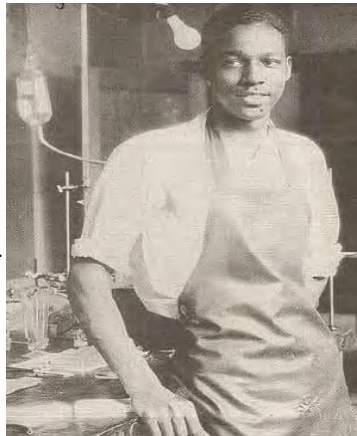
Once the registration link is established by the host, the link can be shared as usual via Connection Points, email, text, etc. The organizer/host will receive a roster of registrants and, if necessary, can use the list to verify people before they are allowed in the meeting.

For those who schedule ZOOM meetings, to follow is a short video on how to enable the registration feature to Zoom meetings.

How to set up a Zoom registration link for better security: <https://youtu.be/VqomCzNnii4>



THE REMARKABLE STORY OF VIVIEN THOMAS, THE BLACK MAN WHO HELPED INVENT HEART SURGERY



Say his name, and the busiest heart surgeons in the world will stop and talk for an hour. *Of course they have time, they say, these men who count time in seconds, who race against the clock. This is about Vivien Thomas. For Vivien they'll make time.*

Thomas never went to medical school, but he had a genius, a stunning dexterity. He might have been a great surgeon. Instead, he became a legend.

In the 1930s, a young Black man with no medical degree and no formal training walked into Vanderbilt University. His name was Vivien Thomas, and he was about to revolutionize heart surgery.

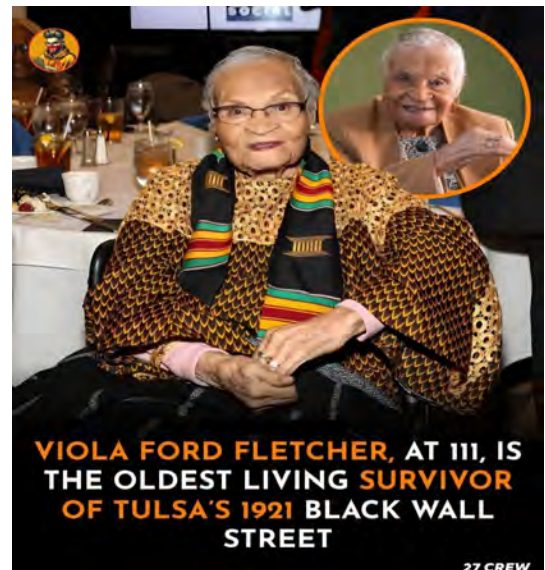
Despite his brilliance, racism confined him to the title of "janitor"—even as he performed groundbreaking surgical research. Working alongside Dr. Alfred Blalock, Thomas quickly proved he had a rare gift for medicine.

In 1941, Blalock insisted that Thomas follow him to Johns Hopkins University, where they delved into life-saving research. But Thomas wasn't just an assistant—he was the mind behind the surgical technique that would save thousands of infants suffering from "Blue Baby Syndrome."

When the first surgery was performed in 1944, Blalock held the scalpel, but Thomas stood behind him—guiding every move. That historic operation laid the foundation for modern open-heart surgery.

For years, his contributions remained in the shadows. But in 1976, Johns Hopkins finally honored him with a doctorate and a faculty position, recognizing the genius they had long overlooked.

Vivien Thomas didn't just assist in heart surgery—he redefined it. His legacy is proof that talent knows no barriers, only opportunities waiting to be seized.



At 111 years old, Viola Ford Fletcher stands as the oldest living survivor of the 1921 Tulsa Black Wall Street tragedy. Her life is a living testament to resilience, courage, and the power of remembrance.

As a young girl, she witnessed one of the most devastating events in American history, yet she chose to rise above hardship and continue telling her story. Through her voice, generations have learned the importance of truth, unity, and justice.

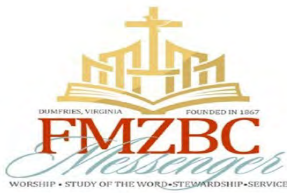
Today, Viola remains a symbol of strength and perseverance. Her journey reminds the world that even in the face of unimaginable adversity, hope and dignity can endure for more than a century.

FMZ ARCHIVES COMMITTEE

Did you know that two of the original founders of the Archives Committee who were both equally involved in getting the Archives up and running, are still alive today and actively participating in our Seniors' Ministry here at FMZ? They are Glorine Gholson and Joyce Thompson. Engage these ladies and you will learn much more about how the Archives was birthed! The other members (deceased) were Andrew Thompson, Fannie Fitzgerald, and Carol Burns.

"The only thing new in the world is the history you do not know."

- - Harry S. Truman



November 2, 2025
Volume 21, Issue 11



HEALTHIER FAMILIES • STRONGER COMMUNITY

**THERE WILL BE NO
SHARE DISTRIBUTION
IN NOVEMBER
DUE TO THE
UPCOMING
INSTALLATION
CEREMONY**

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



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

16622 Dumfries Road
Dumfries, Virginia 22025-1920
Telephone: 703-670-0184
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/fmzbcumfries>

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/fmzbcumfries

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](https://vimeo.com/25203195)

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

YouVersion Bible, Devotions, and

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



LifeStream.tv

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

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