

April 1, 2026

Volume 22, Issue 4



2026 THEME:

# GENERATION TO GENERATION

ONE LORD, ONE CHURCH, ONE FUTURE

Psalm 145:4

## Message from the Pastor



### WHAT ARE YOU WEARING TODAY?

Not long ago, during this Lenten season, we boarded a bus—Mass Choir and members together—heading to Mount Olive Baptist Church in Arlington. It was only a short ride up Interstate 95, but it felt like a true journey—because God was taking us somewhere spiritually.

In that service, the Lord pressed a simple question on our hearts: What shall I wear today?

As we approach Easter, that question still matters.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:12–14 to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience—and above all, love. That phrase put on means we have a choice. Resurrection power does not remove responsibility—it gives us a new way to live.

Too often, we still reach for old garments—anger, pride, impatience, resentment. But in Christ, those clothes no longer fit. They are out of season. We have outgrown them.

Lent has been a time of reflection, but it was never just about what we give up. It is about what we put on. So here is a simple rhythm to carry with you beyond Lent and into Resurrection:

- **In the morning**, put on Christ. Choose love before the day begins.
- **At midday**, check your garment. Life will test your patience—refasten yourself with grace.
- **In the evening**, reflect. Where did you choose love? Where did you need grace? Thank God for both.

Let's be honest—there are days we don't feel like putting on patience. Days when humility doesn't fit our mood. Days when kindness feels undeserved. But we do not dress based on how others act—we dress based on who we are in Christ.

And the world is watching.

As we move toward and beyond Easter Sunday, remember: the cross changed more than our eternity—it should change our daily attire.

So when you stand before your closet each morning, I pray this question meets you again:

What are you wearing today?

As for me, I want to put on Christ—so that a dying world might see Him... and live.

**Pastor, Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James**

## INSIDE this Issue

Message from the Pastor	1
Youth Ministry on Blast	2
Youth Announcements	2-3
Holy Week Schedule	3
Message from the Trustee Ministry	4
Message from the Deaconess Ministry	4
Message from the Deacon Ministry	5
Encouragement for the Soul	5
Noonday Prayer	6
Seniors' Ministry Fellowship	7-9
Women's Fellowship	10
Fitness-in-Place	11
Bridging the Gap	11
Upcoming Events	12-13
Black History Facts	14-15
Announcements	16
Share	17



**CHURCH MEETING**  
**SATURDAY**  
**APRIL 11, 2026**  
**AT 10:30AM**

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.



**Youth Clothing Give-Away Closet:**

The Youth Clothing Give-Away Closet has new and gently used free clothing for youth. It is in Room 156. Confidential shopping is by appointment only.



**Community Service Opportunity:**

Community Service hours can be earned by working in the "Clothing Give-Away" Store in Room 156 beside the Barber Shop.

**POC: Deaconess Ledora Akanni**  
**LAkanni@firstmountzionbc.org**



**Rev. Dr. Beverly Jiggetts**

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. John 3:16-17*

John 3:16 is an often-displayed scripture. I have seen it on posters in football stadiums, billboards, and on signs outside of businesses. I appreciate why this scripture is displayed. I will be eternally grateful that God was willing to

sacrifice His only Son for me. I cannot imagine what it would be like to sacrifice either of my sons for someone else. For me, this would be particularly difficult to do knowing that among the people I was sacrificing my sons for included people I see as despicable or who will never appreciate or accept the sacrifice.

God the Father's plan of salvation, which Jesus willingly accepted, was to make Jesus the sacrifice for the whole world. This includes those who individuals may deem unworthy of the sacrifice and those who never accept Jesus as their sacrifice and Savior. Despite our ideas about who Jesus' sacrifice should be for, throughout scripture we are reminded that we are all sinners.

While John 3:16 serves as a succinct reminder of what was done for us, I do often ponder why John 3:17 is not displayed as often. Jesus could have been sent to cast final judgement on the world. Instead, in addition to His final act of love for us, dying on the cross, He showed us how to live. He changed ideas about who is "worthy." He changed ideas about who can be used by God. He not only told us, but He also demonstrated that true leaders are people who know how to serve. He let us know that after His death, we would not be left on our own but have the Holy Spirit to help guide us. All these things and more He did when He was "sent" into the world.

Gracious God, thank you for loving us enough to offer us a right relationship with You through the sacrifice of Your Son our Savior, Jesus. Thank You for not sending Him to condemn us but to give us abundant and eternal life. Amen!

*Submitted by*  
**Reverend Dr. Beverly Jiggetts**  
**Youth Minister**

**Bible Study will be held on**  
**Wednesdays,**  
**VIRTUALLY ONLY**  
**7:30-8:30 pm.**

To attend: Go to the FMZ website and click on the "Ministries" tab. On the dropdown, click on



**"Youth Ministry."**  
**This brings up the Youth Ministry page. Click on Bible Study and the Registration link appears. Complete the registration information and you will then receive the Zoom link and passcode. You only need to register once.**

**Please have a Bible with you!**

**The Middle School Lock-In for**  
**FMZ middle school members**

**is**

**Friday, May 1, 2026 -**  
**Saturday, May 2, 2026**

**Details to follow!!**



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

**Mission: To connect people who have a desire to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.**



Youth converse with Minister Kay during the "It's About Time to Let Go and Let God" Session at the high school retreat



Rev. Agnew uses nature as a backdrop to discuss "Growing with God" at the high school retreat



Youth enjoy a spirited game of volleyball at the high school retreat



Raegan and Mara enjoy the Timber Rush Slide at the high school retreat



Youth and Seniors Ministry members complete final touches to the hygiene packs for the Manassas Hypothermia Shelter



Youth and Senior Ministry members diligently work to complete assembly of the female hygiene packs for the Manassas Hypothermia Shelter



Thank to the Youth and Seniors' Ministries for their hard work in assembling 48 hygiene packs for the Manassas Hypothermia Shelter

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Wednesday, 7:00pm - Journey to Easter Program

Thursday, 11:00am - Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, 7:00pm - Good Friday Service

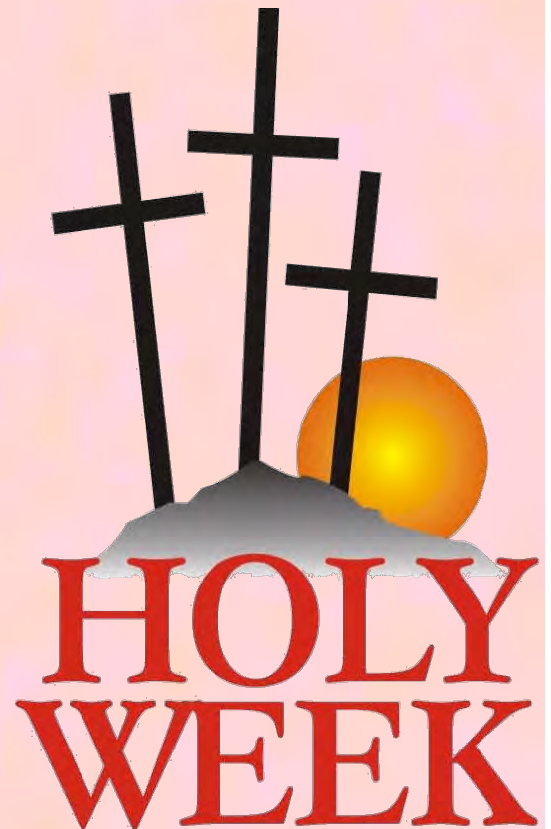
Easter Sunday, 6:00am - Sunrise Service

7:30am - Easter Breakfast

(limited tickets available via Pushpay and after Church in the Narthex)

9:45am Sunday School

11:00am Worship Service





**FMZBC**  
TRUSTEE MINISTRY  
*Stewardship • Integrity • Service*

## STEWARDSHIP WITH INTEGRITY: WHY FMZ USES INDEPENDENT AUDITS

*"Moreover, it is required in stewards,  
that a man be found faithful."  
— 1 Corinthians 4:2*

Faithful stewardship is a sacred responsibility. The First Mount Zion (FMZ) Trustee Ministry is entrusted with managing the Church's finances in a way that honors God and protects the trust of the congregation. One important way to do this is by using certified independent auditors rather than relying solely on internal audit committees.

While audit committees provide valuable internal assistance, independent auditors offer an objective and professional review of the Church's financial records. Their independence ensures transparency, accuracy, and accountability. *"Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men."* 2 Corinthians 8:21

Independent audits are not about punishment or suspicion. They exist to protect the Church, its leaders, staff, and members by strengthening financial controls, identifying errors early, and affirming integrity in the handling of God's resources.

The audit process is most effective when the entire congregation participates in a spirit of unity and trust. Members can support this effort by:

- Continuing faithful and consistent giving, understanding that audits help safeguard every gift
- Praying for Church leadership, trustees, and financial officers
- Respecting established financial processes
- Asking questions with grace and understanding

Therefore FMZ, by supporting independent audits, the congregation partners with Church leadership and FMZ Trustees in showing integrity, accountability, and faithfulness, and ensuring the Church can continue its mission to "connect people who desire to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ," with confidence and peace. *"Let all things be done decently and in order."* 1 Corinthians 14:40.

*Humbly submitted in Integrity by  
FMZ Trustee Ministry*



## THE SEASON OF RESURRECTION

Spring arrives as a gentle reminder that God is still in the business of bringing life out of death. The world around us awakens, the flowers push through the soil, birds return to the sky with songs of gladness, and bees hum again among the blossoms. Every element of creation proclaims one truth...resurrection is real!

As we step into this season of renewal, our hearts turn toward the greatest resurrection of all, the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. On Easter morning, He broke the silence of the tomb, conquered death, and opened the way for us to experience new and everlasting life. His victory is not only a moment in history but a promise and reminder for every believer that whatever is broken, God can restore and whatever has died, He can make new.

Easter is more than a holiday; it's a holy celebration of God's love and power. It invites us to worship with gratitude, to serve others in the spirit of Christ, and to live as people of hope, love, and joy. When we gather for Holy Week services, lift our voices in Resurrection Songs, and share in Easter Fellowship, we join creation in declaring that Christ is indeed RISEN!

As we reflect on this Season of Resurrection, we are reminded that Spring is the season of regeneration, marking the transition from winter's dormancy to new life, growth, and vibrant energy. May this Easter season fill your life with the peace of the risen Lord, the joy of renewed faith, and the assurance that His resurrection is our resurrection, too.

*Submitted by  
Deaconess Chrissetta Hughes*

## WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

Christopher Kennedy of Kennedy Consulting Associates, LLC joins FMZ as the PushPay/ Church Management Software Optimization and Operational Support Consultant. He will be working with staff, leadership and ministries to optimize use of the software.

We are pleased to announce the hire of Reverend Cynthia Ball as the Executive Assistant to the Pastor.

Please welcome them to the FMZ staff team!





## EASTER AT A TIME LIKE THIS

Easter has always meant more to me than a sunrise service, breakfast ticket or a new outfit. As a Young Adult Deacon (s/o to the CORE), I've come to see it as a hard, honest reminder of what faith actually costs and what it gives back.

The cross wasn't symbolic in the moment. It was public, painful, and unfair. Jesus didn't die in a quiet, peaceful setting surrounded by people who understood Him. He died misunderstood, misrepresented, and rejected by many. That part hits different today, because if we're honest, a lot of people feel the same way right now: misjudged, unheard, pushed into corners.

What stands out to me isn't just that Jesus died. It's how He handled it.

He didn't match hate with hate. He didn't call down power to prove a point. Even in pain, He spoke forgiveness: "Father, forgive them." That wasn't weakness. That was control. That was strength most of us struggle to show on a regular Tuesday, let alone in a moment like that.

So what does that look like for us, living in today's America?

It means we don't let anger run the show, even when we feel justified. Whether it's politics, race, church disagreements, or just everyday conflict everything around us pushes us to react fast and loud. Jesus shows us another way. He responded with purpose, not impulse.

It also means standing firm in truth without becoming cruel. Jesus never backed down from who He was or what He came to do. But He didn't weaponize truth to tear people down. You can hold your beliefs and still treat people with dignity.

And maybe the hardest part is the sacrifice. Not always big, dramatic sacrifice, but the daily kind. Choosing patience when you're tired. Showing up for people who can't do anything for you. Letting go of grudges when you'd rather hold onto them. The cross wasn't convenient and following that example won't be either.

But Easter doesn't end at the cross. That's the whole point. The resurrection reminds us that pain, injustice, and even death don't get the final word. There's hope on the other side of what feels broken. That matters in a time where a lot of people are losing hope in systems, in leadership, even in each other.

So for me, when life be lifin', Easter is a call to live differently. Not louder. Not more performative. Just more like Him.

*Submitted by*  
**Deacon Ernest Hughes**



## THIS TOO SHALL PASS

Life can often feel overwhelming, with challenges seemingly coming one after another, or even all at once. Many of us have experienced times when it feels like we simply cannot handle one more thing. In moments like these, it is important to remember that we do not need to carry every burden on our own. Instead, we can choose to turn everything over to God, who is fully able to handle all our concerns.



We must tap into the source of our strength, wisdom, knowledge, and resources. Our source is God! God wants us to recognize that we were not created to handle everything by ourselves. God is loving, kind, and wants us to realize that we need Him. Matthew 6:8 NIV states, "Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him." In other words, before we ask God for help, help is on the way. "Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." Hebrews 4:16 NIV

How do I tap in, you may ask. By spending quality, quiet time with God, reading and studying God's word, and in prayer. Although we should strive to spend quality time with God throughout the year, Lent, is a great time to spend quality time with the Lord. Even though Lent is over, we should still reflect on His goodness, sacrifice, suffering, and love for us, and our relationship with the Lord. Now that Resurrection Sunday is here, we can celebrate the resurrection of Jesus in good conscience that we are in right relationship with Him. While the adage, "this too shall pass", is not a Bible verse, when our focus is on God more than it is on life's challenges, we find that those challenges pass, life goes on, and God gets the glory! Psalm 30:5b, NIV, "weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning." Whatever your "THIS" is, give it to the Lord and let it pass.

*Submitted by*  
**Reverend Kathy Russell**



## GREATER IS THE ONE WHO LIVES IN 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:

*We pray for your continued blessings, anointing, wisdom, strength, direction, and protection in the lives of families. "Lord, we lift our children, youth, and young adults up as well. We ask that you continue to watch over and protect them, especially our students who are away at school. Help them to make good decisions and do the right things. We ask that you allow their faith and foundation to hold strong.*

*We pray for healing for those who are dealing with health issues and deliverance for those who struggle with addictions and other strongholds. Help us to listen to You and to wise counsel. Heal and comfort the bereaved and broken hearted.*

*Help us to teach your Word and to obey your commandments. Thank you that we are overcomers and more than conquerors through Christ and we pray that we will have a strong finish because of our strong faith. In the precious name of Jesus, we pray and give thanks, Amen.*

### Scripture:

#### **1 John 4:4 NKJV**

*You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*

#### **1 John 4:4 AMPC**

*Little children, you are of God [you belong to Him] and have [already] defeated and overcome them [the agents of the anti-christ], because He Who lives in you is greater (mightier) than he who is in the world.*

#### **1 John 4:4 MSG**

*My dear children, you come from God and belong to God. You have already won a big victory over those false teachers, for the Spirit in you is far stronger than anything in the world.*

**Praise and Worship Song:** "Strong Finish" - <https://youtu.be/KfjsD0dHz1Y>

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



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!

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)



## FROM THE ACADEMIC EDUCATION MINISTRY (AEM)

All 2026 graduating high school seniors who plan to attend an institution of higher learning, can now apply for the First Mount Zion Baptist Church (FMZBC) and Hinkitch Bell Memorial Scholarships. 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 2026 FMZBC and Bell Scholarship Program. **The deadline for submitting both Scholarship applications, with attachments, is 4:30 PM, April 01, 2026.**

Point of Contact: Brother Gerry Griffin, AEM Chair, or Sister Sandra Grimes, Scholarship Committee Chair at: [AEM@FirstMountZionBC.org](mailto:AEM@FirstMountZionBC.org).



## “FAITHFUL WOMEN: FEARLESS LEGACY”

Throughout history, the pages of both Biblical and human experiences have been illuminated by the courage, faith, and unwavering determination of women. Their stories are not merely accounts of the

past—they are living testimonies of strength, perseverance, and divine purpose. From the courageous women of the Bible who trusted God in uncertain times, to the trailblazing women of Black History who stood boldly for justice, dignity, and progress, their lives reminded us that faith and courage often walk hand in hand.

This spirit of resilience and devotion form the heart of our theme, “**Faithful Women: Fearless Legacy.**” These remarkable women — though separated by centuries — shared a common thread: they answered the call to stand firm in faith, even when the path before them was difficult. Their actions shaped families, strengthened communities, and helped move history forward in powerful ways.

Our subtitle, “**Her Story, His Glory: Courageous Women of the Bible and Black History,**” beautifully captured this connection. Each woman’s story reflected not only her personal bravery but also the greater glory of God working through her life. Whether through quiet faithfulness or bold leadership, their lives revealed how God used ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary purposes.

The Seniors’ Ministry outdid itself, delivering a powerful portrayal of seven Courageous Women....then and now! To get things started, Bro. Ron and Sis. Margie Norman opened the Fellowship with prayer and Scripture reading, followed by Bro. Kenneth Spencer who welcomed everyone with the love of Jesus. Our resident comedian, Bro. Neal Patterson, made those individuals celebrating birthdays and anniversaries feel extremely special, encouraging everyone to sing birthday/anniversary jingles to the delight of the celebrants. Dr. Boykin then followed with the Announcements, after which he gave out surprise gifts to two of our nonagenarians. The Seniors’ Ministry feels blessed to have amongst its most stalwart attendees, members who are between 90 years young through 100 years of age. The wisdom they impart is priceless and we are all the better for it.

As always, a delicious lunch was served by the Grain of Heaven and our own resident DJ — Bro. Dijae North, played soft music in the background, setting the atmosphere for what was to come.

Sis. Oonagh Bell, Director of the Ministry, then laid the groundwork for the upcoming presentations and everyone waited in anticipation for the various portrayals. Women of the Bible were portrayed in Part I of the program: Sis. Loretta Archie portrayed Noah’s wife; Sister Maria Fitzgerald, Naomi, Sis. Mary Melton, Abigail, and Sis. Joyce Peterson, Queen Esther. Each presentation was phenomenal, each woman presenting their subjects with precision and clarity, helping us all to see our lives, to some extent, through their eyes. It was an invitation...an invitation to remember Noah’s wife, supporting and nurturing, Queen Esther’s bravery, Naomi’s complete trust in God, and Abigail’s courage, and all the other unnamed women whose faith moved mountains. That was only the beginning.

We then segued into a surprise tribute to Reverend Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley, delivered by Sis. Oonagh Bell. Dr. Holley was

love and tireless commitment to the 'golden' members of our Church family is unique. We presented Dr. Holley with a small token of our appreciation and surprised her by having her daughter attend on behalf of her family. We are grateful to God for her leadership. Thank you, Dr. Holley!!! True to character, and much to my surprise, Dr. Holley presented me with a bouquet of beautiful roses in appreciation of my “faithful and tireless work” with the Seniors’ Ministry.

We shifted gears in Part II and prepared to receive three women in Black History who represented the countless Black women whose names may never appear in textbooks, but whose impact shaped families, churches, and communities. As we reflected on these inspiring figures, we celebrated more than their achievements — we honored the legacy they left for us to follow. Their stories encouraged us to walk in faith, stand in courage, and remember that when women rise with conviction and purpose, their story ultimately becomes part of His glory.

This segment opened with Sis. Gwen Hopson educating us about Gladys West, who was the brains behind the GPS that is used all over the world to point us in the right direction. We then shifted to Sis. Pauline Hunter who gave a very convincing portrayal of Septima Poinsette Clark, who challenged segregation and discrimination in education. This was followed by Sister Hope Singleton, who delivered a rather moving depiction of Beulah Mae Clark who sued the Klu Klux Klan . . . **AND WON!!!** Unheard of! What an educational and informative afternoon we experienced and what a blessing it was to learn about all these women...Biblical and Black Historical! To GOD be the glory!

In a show of appreciation, certificates were then presented by Dr. Keith Boykin to all the powerful women who took the time to prepare and deliver such moving and informative portrayals. And, as we always acknowledge, we could not do these Fellowships without the committed and dedicated hands of those who serve faithfully....Facilities, GOH, Audio Visual, Servers. May our God who sees in secret, reward you openly! Deaconess Norma Fields then closed us out in prayer.

From the pages of Scripture to the chapters of Black History, we have seen a tapestry woven with courage, conviction, and unwavering faith. These women did not wait for perfect conditions or applause. They simply answered God’s call in the midst of ordinary days, extraordinary challenges, and seasons that demanded both resilience and grace.

Their lives reminded us that God’s glory is revealed through the faithfulness of His daughters. And as we look back, we also look forward—recognizing that the same God who empowered them is still empowering us. Their courage becomes our encouragement. Their endurance becomes our example. Their legacy becomes our charge to keep.

We sincerely pray that those who were in attendance were blessed by the Fellowship and we look forward to seeing you again on April 15, 2026, for another humdinger! **Bring a friend or two!**

*Loving Submitted,  
Sis. Oonagh M. Bell  
Director*

Mission: To connect people who have a desire to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.



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

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



In honor of **Women's History Month**, our March fellowship celebrated and gave thanks for our ancestors and the strong women who have shaped our lives. Our theme, "**Because She Prayed: Women of Faith Shaping History**," reminded us of the power and impact of prayer on our lives. The atmosphere in the Chapel was filled with the power and presence of God

from the very beginning to the close of the fellowship. God's Word resonated deeply within us through His Son, Jesus Christ, opening our hearts, minds, and souls to receive the abundant blessings He had prepared for each of us as we gathered together as sisters and daughters of our loving Father, the Highest King.

The morning began with a delightful continental breakfast prepared by Grain of Heaven. This special time allowed us to break bread together, engage in meaningful conversation, and prepare our hearts, minds, and souls for the blessings God had in store. After breakfast, we transitioned to the Chapel for a time of praise and preaching!

As the Women's Ministry Director, it was my privilege to warmly welcome everyone, offering encouraging words and a synopsis on the meaning of our theme. I invited the ladies to join me in freely worshipping our Lord and Savior. The tone for the morning was beautifully established through a dynamic, heartfelt, and spirit-filled Praise & Worship experience led by our own **Worship Praise Ensemble (WPE)**. Their uplifting voices and songs poured out, ministering to our hearts and souls while creating an atmosphere filled with praise, encouragement, joy, and the presence of God.

We were then blessed by three anointed and powerful messages:

**Rev. Dr. Toni Sankofa** referenced **Ephesians 6:18–20** and spoke about recognizing the God within us, reminding us that it is not about what we look like on the outside, but what God has placed on the inside. She reflected on the prayers of our ancestors and shared how prayer is a sacred conversation with God that can break generational curses and how we should moan when we do not want the devil to know what we are saying (like her grandmother and maybe yours use to do). She reminded us that although we may stray at times, the prayers of those who came before us help guide us back to God. She encouraged us to never leave home without our spiritual breastplate, to pray in all situations, and to remember that while God may give us ideas, He remains in control. We are only a chapter in God's greater plan, and He has already worked things out on the other side. Truly, it was a powerful, inspiring and anointed Word.

**Deaconess Beverly Bolden** brought wisdom and insight by reminding us of several women in the Bible whose contributions are often overlooked, yet whose faith and courage shaped history. She highlighted women such as **Abigail, Priscilla, Jael, Phoebe, Dorcas (Tabitha), and Mary with the Alabaster Jar**, each of whom played a significant role in God's divine plan.

**Rev. Maxine Thompson** delivered a powerful message titled "**Crossing Boundaries**," based on **Luke 11:9–10**. She reminded us that prayer is one of the greatest things we can do for ourselves, for others, and for the world. She encouraged us

to pray before situations arise, to remain persistent in prayer, and to understand that it is okay to continually go to God until we receive clarity or an answer. She urged us to encourage ourselves and never give up on prayer, even during times of adversity. Rev. Thompson also encouraged us to reflect on **Numbers 27, Luke 18, and the Book of Esther**. Indeed, it was a powerful and inspiring Word.

**Glory, Hallelujah!** What a wonderful time of fellowship we experienced together. It is my sincere prayer that everyone was richly blessed beyond measure. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all who contributed to this special gathering—those who shared the Word, offered prayers, read scripture, lifted their voices in songs of praise, and blessed us through music. I also express my sincere thanks to our **Technical Support Team, Grain of Heaven, and the Facilities Team**. Your dedication and servant hearts played an important role in making this fellowship such a meaningful and successful occasion.

I extend an expression of gratitude to our Pastor, **Rev. Dr. Sandra K. James**, for her unwavering leadership and continual support. I am also extending my deep appreciation to **Dr. Tracey Dawkins Holley**, Minister of Christian Education, for her continued encouragement, inspiring words, and love.

Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who joined us, whether in person at **FMZ** or virtually. Your presence, your worship, your prayers, and your spirit of unity helped make this fellowship a truly memorable and blessed experience. I thank God for each and every one of you!

On behalf of the **Women's Ministry**, thank you for the "March Memories" of blessings, and love. And remember, women prayed for us, so continue to pray for others.

*Humbly submitted,  
Gwen L. Holland  
Women's Ministry Director*

## VOLUNTEER SCREENING

### DATES:

May 16th

September 19th

November 21st

Sessions begin at 9am

[Screening Forms](#)

Contact Sister Brenda Byrd  
at 571-237-0111,  
[byrdbj@comcast.net](mailto:byrdbj@comcast.net)

# FITNESS-IN-PLACE

## “GYMTIMIDATION”?

Going to a gym can be intimidating and can create anxiety. This is known as “gymtimidation”.

Overcome “Gymtimidation”:

Explore the FMZBC Fit by God fitness center. The fitness center here at the Church is a great option for Church members and is free!

Bring a friend. Using a buddy system can offer social support and accountability. Church members are allowed to bring two guests per visit to the Fit by God fitness center for free.

Dress comfortably. In many gym environments, the clothing is tight or revealing. At the Fit by God fitness center the dress is comfortable and appropriate.

Equipment orientation available. The Fit by God Fitness Complex offers free “intro to equipment” sessions and free assistance creating your own custom workout program.

Celebrate your wins. Just making it to the gym is a win. Celebrate that!

Challenge: Overcoming “gymtimidation” is a process that takes time. Embrace how you are feeling and focus on taking the initial first step forward. Come visit the Fit by God Fitness Complex and experience an uplifting and supportive gym environment. Questions call 703-670-0225 or click on the Fitness Calendar for event and hours.

*Sister Lori Valkenburg,  
Fitness Director*



## LINE DANCING

Meet teacher **GWEN MATHEWS**, in the gymnasium from **10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 25**. 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.

## BRIDGING THE GAP

The Seniors have been pretty busy lately! Hot off the heels of their successful drive for the Birmingham Green Nursing Center, the Seniors were at it again! FMZ witnessed firsthand as our Seniors and Youth joined forces to assemble care packages for the less fortunate in our area.



Reverend Dr. Beverly Jiggetts, our Youth Minister, offered the Seniors the opportunity to work in concert with the Youth Ministry (from Generation to Generation). The initiative was simple: gather essential supplies, such as warm socks, toiletries, batteries and other needed items for hygiene kits. The kits were assembled for distribution to the Hypothermia Shelter in Manassas.

The Seniors jumped at the chance to be a blessing ... yet again! Not only did they contribute, but they also showed up to help the Youth pack the items to be transported to the Center. Dr. Jiggetts arranged for the GOH to provide a quick bite after service on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, and the Seniors went to work, putting together the items to be delivered to the Center. Dr. Keith Boykin, our co-Director, spearheaded the effort from the Seniors' end and, according to all reports, he and the Seniors did a remarkable job.

When the recipients get these packages, hopefully they will know that they were packed by the youngest and oldest members of a church with ministries that care about them. By working together, we aren't just filling bags; we are building a tapestry of faith that is much stronger than any one generation could weave alone.

Kudos to the Seniors!! And, thanks to the Youth for allowing us to share in this effort. Here are a couple of photos from that event.

*Submitted by  
Sister Oonagh M. Bell  
Director*





**FMZ FAMILY—**

Please join in celebrating one of our own, Brother Rod Hall, who is also a Dillard University alumnus, class of '98, and Board Member, on his recent appointment by the Governor to the Metropolitan Washington Airports' Authority—the body that oversees Washington Dulles International Airport and Reagan Washington National Airport.

Rod was officially sworn in last week by the Secretary of State, marking an incredible milestone in his continued leadership and service. We are proud to see another Dillard graduate making a meaningful impact on a national stage.

Congratulations, Rod!



*Bro. Kenneth Spencer and  
Sister Pauline Hunter  
speaking at the  
Usher Ministry  
69th Anniversary  
recognition on  
March 15, 2026*

*Save the Date*

FMZBC WOMEN'S MINISTRY  
**CONFERENCE**

*"Women of Worth"*

**Saturday, September 12, 2026**

## FMZBC Women's Ministry Presents

**"WE ARE **GOD'S** MASTERPIECE:  
WHAT YOU ARE IS **GOD'S** GIFT TO YOU,  
WHAT YOU BECOME IS YOUR GIFT TO **GOD**"!**

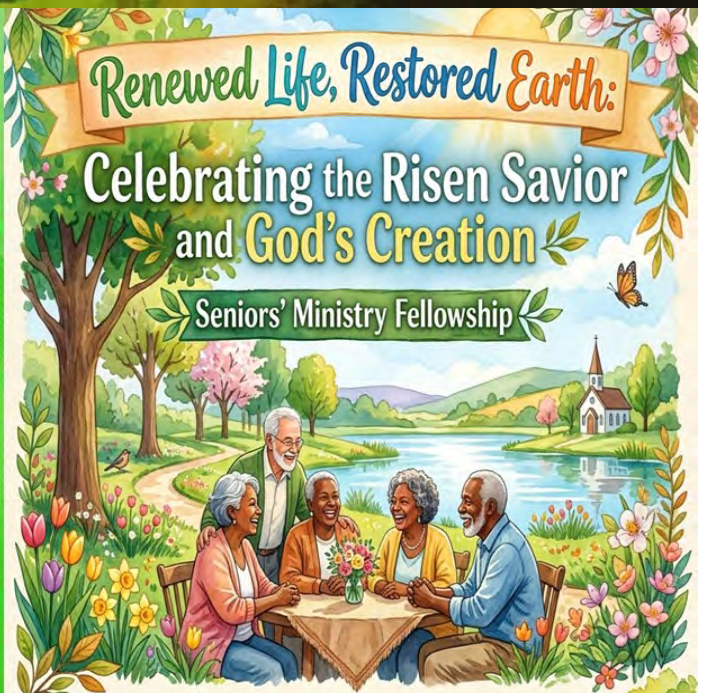
**Saturday, April 11, 2026**  
8:00 am - 11:00 am @ In person at FMZ

Let's come together for a beautiful Easter program filled with inspiration, connection, and joy. We'll enjoy meaningful reflections, creative activities, and a time of sweet fellowship as we honor the message of Easter and celebrate the hope, joy, and new life that we have in Christ.

Bring your smile, your spirit, and a friend and come be refreshed, encouraged, and reminded of the power of the Resurrection — there's a seat waiting for you.

DATE: APRIL 15, 2026  
TIME: NOON - 2:00PM  
LOCATION: GYM

REGISTER AT [SENIORSMINISTRY@FIRSTMOUNTZIONBC.ORG](mailto:SENIORSMINISTRY@FIRSTMOUNTZIONBC.ORG) BY NOON, APRIL 7, 2026, OR CALL SIS. MARIA FITZGERALD AT 540-538-0702.



PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY ALUMNAE CHAPTER  
**DELTA SIGMA THETA SORORITY, INC.**  
*"Preserving Our Legacy Through Sustained Excellence"*

## SENIOR CITIZENS *Luncheon*

Saturday | April 25 | 11am

Mount Olive Baptist Church  
1311 Minnieville Rd.  
Woodbridge, VA 22192  
RSVP by April 4, 2026

*30 Years of Honoring PWC Seniors  
Through Service, Education, & Celebration*

REGISTER NOW: <https://pwcacdst.org/event>



## GLADYS WEST

Gladys Mae Brown, an American mathematician known for her work contributing to the development of the Global Positioning System (GPS), was born in rural Sutherland, Dinwiddie County, Virginia, on October 27, 1930. Her parents owned a small farm in an area populated mostly by sharecroppers. Besides working on their farm, her mother

worked in a tobacco processing plant, and her father worked for the railroad.

Growing up, when not in school, Brown spent much of her time helping to harvest crops on the family farm, an occupation she knew many of her peers would continue into adulthood. In her community the only clear options for a young Black girl's future were continuing to farm or working at a tobacco-processing plant.

At school her talent for learning offered another path. As valedictorian of her high-school graduating class, Brown received a full scholarship to Virginia State College (now Virginia State University), a historically Black college. She earned a bachelor of science in mathematics in 1952 and later a master's degree in the subject, graduating in 1955—after spending time teaching math in racially segregated Virginia schools and after applying for a series of jobs in Virginia's segregated state government that were instead awarded to white men.

In 1956 Brown was hired as a mathematician by the U.S. Naval Proving Ground (later the Naval Surface Warfare Center), a weapons laboratory in Dahlgren, Virginia, as only their fourth Black employee. There she met Ira V. West, another Black mathematician on the base; the couple married in 1957 and had three children. At Dahlgren, Gladys West was admired for her ability to solve complex mathematical equations by hand. She eventually transitioned from solving those equations herself to programming computers to do it for her.

One of her first major projects was work on the Naval Ordnance Research Calculator (NORC), an award-winning program designed (via 100 hours of computer calculations, which often had to be double-checked for errors by hand) to determine the movements of Pluto in relation to Neptune.

In 1978, West was named project manager of Seasat, an experimental U.S. ocean surveillance satellite designed to provide data on a wide array of oceanographic conditions and features, including wave height, water temperature, currents, winds, icebergs, and coastal characteristics. It was the first project to demonstrate that satellites could be used to observe useful oceanographic data.

Out of West's work on Seasat came GEOSAT, a satellite programmed to create computer models of Earth's surface. By teaching a computer to account for gravity, tides, and other forces that act on Earth's surface, West and her team created a program that could precisely calculate the orbits of satellites. These calculations made it possible to determine a model for the exact shape of Earth, called a geoid. It is this model, and later updates, that allows the GPS system to make accurate calculations of any place on Earth.

During her career on the naval base, West earned another master's degree in 1973, this time in public administration from the University of Oklahoma. Though she retired from the base in 1998 at age 68, she continued her education: after recovering from a stroke, she received a Ph.D. in public administration and policy affairs from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 2000 at age 70.

Like NASA mathematicians Katherine Johnson, Dorothy Vaughan and Mary Jackson, West is often called one of history's "hidden figures" — individuals, often Black women, whose insightful contributions to science went unrecognized in their time because of their race or gender.

Working behind the scenes for decades, West's complex mathematical models allowed satellites to accurately map the planet. Those calculations became foundational to the GPS technology now embedded in smartphones, vehicles, aircraft, and global infrastructure.

Her contributions were not widely recognized for many years, but they eventually earned national acknowledgment and praise from the scientific community. Today, billions of people rely daily on systems influenced by her research.

Dr. West's legacy stands as a reminder that transformative innovation often begins with quiet dedication, precision, and vision that can change the world in lasting ways.

## DEAF MINISTRY

American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters are on-site each Sunday during the 11:00 a.m. Worship Service. You may observe in-person and online at [www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com). The monthly Zoom meetings are also held with an interpreter.

**Next meeting, April 13th at 7pm.**

Have questions? Please email: [fmzdeafministry@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:fmzdeafministry@firstmountzionbc.org)



In 1936, in a New York City courtroom, a Black woman sat quietly, alone, unnoticed. To many in the room, she was invisible. But that mistake would cost America's most powerful mobster his freedom.

At the time, Lucky Luciano ruled the streets. He controlled the money, the cops, and the Five Families—the very heart of organized crime. His empire was massive, untouchable. Prosecutors, investigators, and witnesses were all stymied. Luciano was a ghost who couldn't be caught.

### Then came **Eunice Hunton Carter!**

Born in Atlanta in 1899, Eunice grew up in a country that made it clear Black lives were expendable. At the age of seven, she witnessed the horrific 1906 Race Riot, when white mobs rampaged through the city, burning Black businesses and hunting Black families. The memory of the violence and fear stuck with her, not as trauma but as fuel for a fire she carried her whole life.

Her family fled the South during the Great Migration, looking for safety in the North, and Eunice vowed not just to survive—but to fight for justice.

By 1921, she was already making history. She earned both a bachelor's and a master's degree from Smith College in just four years, an achievement rare for any woman at the time. But she wasn't done. Eunice set her sights on a career in law, despite the enormous hurdles of sexism and racism. In 1932, she became the first Black woman to graduate from Fordham Law School. But her law degree didn't open doors—it slammed them shut. No law firm would interview her, and her achievements were ignored.

So Eunice created her own space.

In 1935, New York City's Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia appointed her as a prosecutor in "women's court," a division meant to deal with minor offenses like prostitution. It was supposed to keep her occupied, contained, out of the way. But the system underestimated Eunice.

As she sat day after day in that courtroom, Eunice began to see something that no one else noticed. The same names kept cropping up. The same lawyers, the same bail bondsmen, the same women cycling in and out of the system. Everyone else saw chaos. Eunice saw a pattern—a design.

When Special Prosecutor Thomas E. Dewey launched his "Twenty Against the Underworld" task force, Eunice was the only Black person and the only woman on the team. They assigned her the "meaningless" work—prostitution cases, interviews, paperwork. They thought it was small. Eunice saw the door.

She started building an index of every brothel in New York City, read through records that others dismissed, and spoke to the women whom society had cast aside. One name stood out: Abe Karp, a lawyer who represented prostitutes across the city. He was not the power himself—he was the entry point.

Behind him stood the untouchable Luciano.

Eunice connected the dots. Luciano had built his criminal empire on prostitution, using it as his financial backbone. He forced women to surrender half their earnings, using violence to ensure compliance. This wasn't just prostitution—it was modern slavery.

On February 1, 1936, under Eunice's direction, police raided dozens of brothels simultaneously. Over 100 arrests were made. And something extraordinary happened: the women began to speak. They testified about the violence, the coercion, the forced labor. Eunice's case had broken open the facade of Luciano's empire.

The trial in May was dubbed the "Trial of the Century." Hundreds packed the courthouse. Cameras flashed. Thomas Dewey, the star of the show, took center stage. But the architect of this case, the woman who had made it possible, was left in the shadows. Eunice was not allowed to speak in court. She sat in the gallery, arranging witness protection, preparing testimonies, keeping the case from falling apart.

On June 6, 1936, Lucky Luciano was convicted on 62 charges and sentenced to 30 to 50 years in prison. The most powerful mobster in America fell—not because of the police or the press—but because a quiet Black woman paid attention when no one else did.

But Eunice didn't stop there. She continued to rise through the ranks, eventually leading the largest bureau in the prosecutor's office. She advised the United Nations and worked internationally to advance women's rights. She never sought applause, never demanded recognition. She simply kept opening doors that were never meant to be opened.

Eunice Hunton Carter died in 1970, but for decades, her story was erased from history. When HBO's *Boardwalk Empire* introduced a character inspired by her, critics dismissed it as unrealistic—an impossible feat for a Black woman in the 1930s to dismantle the mob.

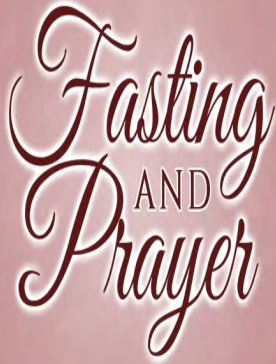
They were wrong.

In 2018, her grandson, Yale Law professor Stephen L. Carter, restored her legacy with the book *Invisible*. Today, the world is finally beginning to acknowledge her.

Eunice Carter taught us a powerful truth:

*Power doesn't always announce itself.  
Revolutions aren't always loud.  
And the most dangerous person in the room  
isn't always the one at the podium.*

<https://history.nycourts.gov/eunice-hunton-carter/>



*Fasting*  
AND  
*Prayer*

Fasting as a congregation will be every Wednesday  
through April 1, 2026

6:00am – 6:00pm

**2026 Fasting Guide can be accessed on our website**

Dial in to join us for morning prayer  
every Wednesday at 6:30am:

Call: 1-305-224-1968

Meeting ID: 88104299549

Password: 752600

**DOWNLOAD THE “MY CHURCH” APP AND HAVE  
FMZ AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!**



Stay connected to everything happening at First Mount Zion Baptist Church—right from your phone.

**How to Download:**

1. Go to your phone’s App Store (Apple or Google Play).
2. Search for “My Church App.”
3. Download the app.
4. Search for First Mount Zion Baptist Church.

**NEW MEMBERS ORIENTATION CLASS**

New Members' Classes are either on ZOOM or Hybrid (Room 211). Please join us at 9:45am.

**NMOC Class Schedule**

**April 5 - Easter Sunday No NMOC — Attend Joint Sunday School Class**

**April 12 - Baptism — Rev. Josephine Cherry**

Deborah Holley is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting

When: Sunday, April 12, 2026

Contact me if you have questions - Deborah Holley—757-377-5679

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/88503698718?signature=3NKwCSrjwiDRFTtKfooE2FWVmdjuAstwN5E5>

[signature=3NKwCSrjwiDRFTtKfooE2FWVmdjuAstwN5E5](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/88503698718?signature=3NKwCSrjwiDRFTtKfooE2FWVmdjuAstwN5E5)

[VLOUOhY](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/88503698718?signature=3NKwCSrjwiDRFTtKfooE2FWVmdjuAstwN5E5)

# FIRST MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH

April 1, 2026

Volume 22, Issue 4



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!

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

## 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/fmzbcumfries>

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



The last day to register for April SHARE packages is Sunday, April 12. SHARE packages are \$23 for food valued between \$35 and \$45. POC: Thomas Bates, 703-772-8837. Distribution will be on April 18, 2026.

## SUBMISSIONS FOR NEWSLETTER:

All members and/or ministries are encouraged to submit articles, photos, and events for inclusion in the Newsletter. Please be sure to clear all submissions with your Ministry Leader before sending to the Communications and Publicity Ministry. Submissions should not exceed 300-350 words and must be received no later than 12 noon on the 15th of each month to be considered for the upcoming newsletter. Please note that we reserve the right to edit as necessary.

We look forward to your participation!! Thank you!

Email for our group is:

[CPM1@firstmountzionbc.org](mailto:CPM1@firstmountzionbc.org)

## Communications and Publicity Ministry

Deacon Joseph Boutte, Chair  
Sister Oonagh Bell, Messenger  
Brother Benson Blake, Photography  
Trustee Alfranda Durr, Trustee Oversight  
Dr. Sandra Flowers  
Brother Jonathan James, Social Media  
Sister Olivia James, Social Media  
Brother Chris Kennedy, Social Media  
Deaconess Mary Lively  
Brother Lavell Lucas  
Sister Sylvia Moore  
Reverend Kathy Russell  
Deaconess Claudia Woolfolk

## PASTOR, STAFF, AND LEADERSHIP

Reverend Dr. Sandra K. James, Pastor  
Renee Woolfolk, Church Business Administrator  
Renaee Allen, Chair, Trustee Ministry  
Kavin D. Johnson, Chair, Deacon Ministry  
Vieta Williams, Chair, Deaconess Ministry

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Website: [www.fmzbc.com](http://www.fmzbc.com)

## CONNECT WITH US ON:

Lifestream:

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

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

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

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

X (formerly 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)

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



LifeStream<sup>tv</sup>

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