



IN TOUCH. . . The Newsletter of the Mt. Zion Family

December 2016 Volume XVIII Issue 12

WORSHIP EACH SUNDAY AT 8:30, 9:45 and
11:00 AM & WEDNESDAYS AT 6:40 PM

**“Making, Maturing, Mobilizing
Disciples for Christ”**

Dr. Mary John Dye; Senior Pastor, Rev. Joel Simpson and
Rev. Tony Moreau; Associate Pastors

- Church Office 704-892-8566
 - Fax 704-892-3143
- Youth House 704-892-7825
- Sonshine Preschool 704-892-0654
 - www.mtzionumc.net
- <http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/84673593>

*Mark
your
Calendar*

Special Services

Sunday, December 18

- 3 pm - Christmas Service
of Hope and Healing – Sanctuary

Christmas Eve, Eve: Friday, December 23rd

- 7 pm - Traditional Candlelight
Service*

Christmas Eve: Saturday, December 24th

- 3 & 5 pm - Family Candlelight
Services* with Children Par-
ticipation (Scratch Nativity)
- 7 & 11 pm - Traditional Candle-
light Services*

**Glow sticks will be available for younger
children. Communion will be served at all
Christmas Eve services.*

Christmas Day: Sunday, December 25th

- 10 am – one combined worship
service in the Sanctuary.
There will not be Sunday
School that morning.

New Year's Day: Sunday, January 1st

- 10 am – one combined worship service in
the Sanctuary. There will not be Sunday
School that morning.

Please see page 2 for a more complete
listing of Advent Services.

Dear ones at Mt. Zion,

It is right to start the new Christian year with a season of giving.

Our Advent/Christmas time shows the differences in our personalities. Some people have been shopping for just the right gifts for months. Some will wait until the last minute and rush around to find gifts. Some people love shopping and making gifts. For others, shopping is agony. Some people love the rush of the crowds. Others want to hide when the crowds come out. Some people spend way too much money on gifts and some people have more limited resources available to spend on gifts.

No matter what your style of gift giving, your resources or your traditions, we celebrate that Advent/Christmas is a time of giving gifts. And how important it is for all of us to remember that our traditions come from deep roots in our faith – God FIRST gave the supreme gift of Christ. So all of our gift-giving springs from that first lavish gift from God.

So it is always a little curious to me when God is not at the top of the list for giving in this season. I hope you are reading this year's Advent devotional, Giving in Response to God's Greatest Gift. Daily devotions are sent every day through the Constant Contact email list and paper copies are available all around the church. But with or without the biblical study of giving, the question that is most important is "Where is God on your giving list?"

When we think about Christmas gifts, we usually want our best gifts for the people we love the most. For the relative that we aren't close to or only see once a year, we are not quite so particular about what we will give. But when someone means the world to us, we want our love and appreciation to show in our giving. May it be so with God. What we give to the church shows our hearts. And I assure you that God is present for every gift-giving exchange.

May we take joy in our giving to those we love...with the Greatest Giver of all at the top of our list. *Mary John*

No 3rd Sunday Food & Fellowship gathering in the month of December. On December 18th we will be celebrating Dr. Marcy's music leadership here at Mt. Zion. We will resume Food & Fellowship in January. See you in the FLC on the 18th of December as we honor Marcy Mittelstadt.



APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT 3

In this
issue

A WORD ON WITNESSING 5

ROOM IN THE INN 6

MT. ZION FAMILY CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS!



November Births

Sebastian Dean Harrell was born November 4.
He is the son of Russell & Jessica Harrell and the
brother of Eleanor. CONGRATULATIONS!

WELCOME TO THE MT. ZION FAMILY! Robert (Bob) & Nancy
Mattes joined on November 20th 13322 Edenmore Lane
Cornelius 28031 980-231-5501

Advent Worship at Mt. Zion

- Sunday, December 4:** 8:30: Communion and preaching, Sanctuary
9:45: MT. ZION TESTIFY Youth Choir, Family Life Center
11:00: CHILDREN'S CHOIR CHRISTMAS MUSICAL, Sanctuary
7:00: MT. ZION TESTIFY Youth Choir, Family Life Center
- Sunday, December 11:** 8:30: Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata, Sanctuary
9:45: Praise and Worship Service, Family Life Center
11:00: Chancel Choir Christmas Cantata, Sanctuary
- Sunday, December 18:** 8:30: Communion and preaching, Sanctuary
9:45: Praise Team Christmas Musical, Family Life Center
11:00: Traditional worship, Sanctuary
12:00: Farewell party for Dr. Marcy Mittelstadt
Family Life Center
3:00: Service of Hope and Healing: Sanctuary
- Friday, December 23:** 7:00: CHRISTMAS Eve, Eve Traditional Candlelight and
Communion – Sanctuary
- Saturday, December 24:** 3:00 and 5:00: "Scratch Nativity" family friendly service
7:00 and 11:00: Traditional Candlelight and Communion
All Christmas Eve Services are in the Sanctuary
- CHRISTMAS DAY, December 25:** One service "A Christmas Blessing to All"
10:00 am in the Sanctuary
- NEW YEARS DAY, January 1:** One service: "Let Us Make a Right Beginning"
10:00 am in the Sanctuary.

**THE SYMPATHY OF THE
CONGREGATION IS EX-
TENDED TO** ...Richard
Little and family on the
death of his wife, Pat
Little, on November 22.

SPECIAL GIFTS WERE GIVEN... IN HONOR OF the marriage of Barbara Broadway and Joe Ta-
borek, a gift was given to the Senior Housing, LLC, the Music Fund and the Capital Fund... **IN**
HONOR AND IN MEMORY OF Mt. Zion Veterans, a gift was given to the Budget...**IN MEMORY OF**
Karen Sims, a gift was given to the Budget; **IN MEMORY OF** Shorty Little, gifts were given to the
Cemetery Fund; **IN MEMORY OF** David Sims, gifts were given to the Budget, gifts were given to
Helping Hands and gifts were given to the Cemetery Fund; **IN MEMORY OF** Karen Weaver, gifts
were given to the Budget and a gift was given to Stephen Ministry; **IN MEMORY OF** Inez Sherrill,
a gift was given to Stephen Ministry, a gift was given to the Cemetery Fund, a gift was given to
the Capital Fund and gifts were given to the Budget; **IN MEMORY OF** Eric Little, a gift was given
to Magical Mountain Christmas; **IN MEMORY OF** Don Sims, a gift was given to the Budget; **IN**
MEMORY OF Robert Sims, a gift was given to the Budget; **IN MEMORY OF** Bobby Goforth, a gift
was given to Stephen Ministry; **IN MEMORY OF** Claudia Bost, a gift was given to the Music Fund;
IN MEMORY OF Pat Little, gifts were given to Appalachia Service Project and **IN MEMORY OF** Bill
Lackey, a gift was given to the Senior Housing, LLC.

Appalachia Service Project (Summer Youth Mission Trip) June 18-24th

Mt. Zion has been participating in Appalachia Service Project (aka "ASP") for over 25 years. This mission organization was started in 1969 by Rev. Glenn "Tex" Evans, a United Methodist minister, to use the energy of youth to help the poor through home repair in Appalachia. ASP has a summer youth program that we attend, as well as a year round program for adults and college students to work on weekends. We realize that not everyone can take a week off from work in the summer, so these year round centers are another great way to experience ASP. If you cannot physically go with us, or may not want to spend a week working and sleeping on air mattresses, there are other ways you can help. First and foremost, we would love for you to simply pray. Pray for the families we will serve, for the staff that will be leading us, for safety throughout, and for God to prepare our missionaries to serve in any capacity needed. You can also support this ministry financially, pre-trip logistics, loaning a vehicle, etc.

June 18-24 is the week we have been assigned to work.

We will begin accepting registrations for this trip on Sunday, January 8th to high school youth (*at least 13 years old and completed the 8th grade*), college students, and adults. We have 28 spots to fill and it does fill up very quickly. Since it is a youth trip, we will have very limited adult spots in order to allow as many youth to go as possible.

The cost is **\$325 per person** and here are how the payments break down:

\$50 due to register and get your name on the list. \$175 Payment #2 due by February 26th.

\$100 final payment due by May 28th. (*\$20 fee for payments received late)

We do have 2 special offers:

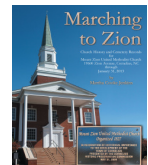
EARLY BIRD RATE is a total of **\$265** (includes the \$50 registration) and must be paid by February 26th.

MULTIPLE FAMILY MEMBERS is a special **\$30 off** the total (including early bird) **per person** we offer for multiple people in the same family going.

Payments are non-refundable unless the spot can be replaced before the next payment is due.

Cancellation Policy: If you pull out after February 26th, you will owe the remaining balance. If your spot can be filled by someone else, you will receive a refund UNLESS you cancel 1 week prior to our training. So any cancellations 1 week before our training or after our training will not receive any money back. If you would like to help, go with us, or have questions please contact Matt Sherrill at 704-892-7825 or email msherrill@mtzionumc.net. You can also visit our website www.mtzfuel.net

Now available! **MARCHING TO ZION** by Martha Cooke Jenkins. 300 page soft bound book with the church history and cemetery records. 100% profit will be donated to Mount Zion UMC. Price per book: \$15.00. Contact Martha Jenkins @ 704-439-7332.



Children's Ministry

- A huge thank you to **Marcy Mittelstadt** for the amazing work she has done with our children's choirs and the great performance given December 4th at the 11 am service.
- Thank you to everyone who donated prizes, laundry baskets and cleaning supplies for our **Christmas Missions!**
- **Sonshine Preschool Christmas Programs** are Monday 12/19 and Tuesday 12/20 at 11:30 am in the main Sanctuary.
- **Scratch Nativity for Children** during the **Christmas Eve December 24th 3 pm and 5 pm** services. Come to the basement of the Sanctuary near the choir rooms 30 minutes prior to the event and let your child select a costume. Children will be asked to come forward at various times during the service.
- **Christmas Day** falls on a Sunday this year! **Mt. Zion** will have **"one service only"** at **10:00 am** in the main Sanctuary. Children are invited to come in their Christmas pajamas :-)!



A Word on Witnessing

In the church we call the Christmas season Advent. Advent comes from the Latin word Adventus which means “coming.”

Whose coming do we mean though? We tend to claim that we must *come* to God or that we must *find* God.

The Christmas story is not a story about us *coming* to God or our *finding* God though. It has never been about that. The story in all of history has been about God finding us...then our response. The shepherds went to baby Jesus because God came to them in the field with angels. The Wise men came because the heavens told them to in the form of a star.

God coming to earth in the form of a human is the ultimate “coming” of God. That is why we celebrate it every year. It is the reminder that God relentlessly pursues us. God is always coming to us and trying to find us...and not just us, but the entire world.

Christmas Eve is one of those special times when you can feel God coming. You can feel God searching and finding. This is a special time to invite people to come to church with you. It is another opportunity for God’s “coming” in their lives, as well as our own. I hope you will invite someone to a Christmas Eve service this year.

There are cards located in the Sanctuary, Family Life Center, offices and classrooms with the dates and times. Grab some cards and invite someone to come with you to one of the Christmas Eve services on the 24th or the Christmas Eve, Eve service on the 23rd. Then, be ready for what comes.

Giving Thanks for the Leadership in the Church:

Mt. Zion has extraordinarily dedicated lay leadership. Every United Methodist Church is set up for the decisions of the church and the program of the church to be led by the lay people in the church. That involves a great deal of time and thought and dedication. United Methodism operates by a system of rotation for all the decision-making administrative groups. People serve 3 year terms and then rotate off. That means that every year, there are two classes of leaders who have already been serving and one new class of fresh eyes coming on.

In next month’s newsletter, we will print the names of the officers for 2017 who were elected at the Charge Conference Monday, November 28. They were nominated by the Nominations and Lay Leadership Committee.

Here is a list of those who are rotating off in the class of 2016. When you see them, I hope you will thank them for the time and service they have given to Mt. Zion. Some of them will serve the church in other leadership capacities. Some of these people were asked to serve and said no to starting anything else in 2017. Every single person in the church has benefitted from their service. Please join me in thanking them:

Lay Delegates to Annual Conference (*represents Mt. Zion at the Annual Conference*): Linda Lott, Patti Richardson, Alan Sipe

Administrative Board (*makes the final decisions for all church groups*):

At large member: Wendell Fox

Staff Parish (*advisory/supervisory responsibilities in regard to pastors and all personnel decisions for lay staff*): Noreen O'Reilly Morris, Kay Archer, Bo Johnson

Trustees (*responsible for all property*): Larry Horton, Bill Rice, Gigi Williams

Finance Committee (*recommends and oversees budget and financial concerns of the church*): Debbie Tillis, Kevin Caldwell, Tim Harris, Julie Niswonger

Nominations and Lay Leadership (*makes annual recommendations for church officers to Charge Conference, fills vacancies as needed through the year*): Silvia Earp, Debbie Iannucci, Pat Caldwell

Ministry Team leaders who rotate off:

Nurture (*responsible for all faith-building, Christian growth experiences*): Jackie Grant

Witness (*responsible to welcome visitors, non-church people and engage new people in the life of the church*): Damien Carper, Mark Lambert

These people have given outstanding service to Mt. Zion over the last 3 years. Please thank them.

Music Notes

We have many upcoming opportunities for you to share the joy of the holidays through the music ministry at Mt. Zion UMC. Please mark these dates on your calendar and join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus through music.

Sunday, December 11 8:30 & 11:00 am: Sanctuary Chancel Choir, Hand Bells & Orchestra "Go Sing it on the Mountain" by Pepper Choplin & favorite Christmas Carols

Sunday, December 18 8:30 & 11:00 am: Sanctuary Youth Hand Bells Ringing Christmas Carols for Worship
9:45 am: Family Life Center Praise Team Christmas Program

RETIREMENT CELEBRATION

Staff Parish would like to extend an invitation to the congregation to say thank you and congratulations on her retirement to Dr. Marcy Mittelstadt on December 18th after the 11:00 service. If you are interested in helping with the celebration, please contact Mary Goodson at mlhall@hotmail.com.



I want to thank the congregation and staff of Mt. Zion for almost 9 years of support for the music ministry. I appreciate all of you who participated, helped in times when needed and gave your gifts, both monetary and through your service to help grow a thriving and active graded music program. My prayer is for Mt. Zion to continue moving forward, looking to the future while honoring the past and remain open to listen for what God wants you to do as a congregation to continue making more Disciples for Christ. Marcy Mittelstadt

Dear Mt. Zion Friends,

I want to express my sincere thanks for the recent Sunday designated to recognize my 50+ years of service as your church organist. Woody Washam Sunday was truly an emotional time for me to reflect on the many years which have gone by so quickly. My family and I are so grateful to the Chancel Choir, Staff-Parish and many wonderful friends who made this happen. Special thanks for the thoughtful recognition provided by so many people. Our Mt. Zion Music Ministry has always been superb and I am honored to be a part of this experience. We have a bright and exciting future! Sincerely, Woody Washam

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD:

Mt. Zion's Operation Christmas Child will have a huge impact on over 100 children this year. Due to your loving generosity, they will experience the joy of opening their shoeboxes and finding their new treasures. They will get some idea of what the Kingdom of God is like on earth. These youngsters will, also, have the opportunity to attend classes to learn about God's love and how to become a Christian through a specially designed program for children who receive the boxes. What a wonderful way for us to share God's great love through this simple act of kindness! Thank you for your gifts of time, energy, resources, and love. May you and your family enjoy a blessed and Merry Christmas! Brenda Scott & Ann Dutton

THE ROOM IN THE INN is a ministry that Mt. Zion participates in during the winter months. New this year, we will run this mission on only the 1st, 3rd and 5th Tuesday nights from December – March. On these nights, we open the doors of our Youth House to provide overnight housing and hot meals for 10 homeless neighbors who are screened and approved through the Urban Ministries Center.

Please prayerfully consider volunteering your time, providing a meal or donating items off the RITI wish list. **Currently, we are in need of volunteers for:**

Dec. 20th: Mini- Bus Driver: drop off

Jan. 17th: Mini-Bus Driver: pick up, Dinner Preparers and Servers, 2 innkeepers

Visit the RITI page on the Mt. Zion website (<http://mtzionumc.net/room-in-the-inn>) for more info including our wish list and online volunteer sign up. Donations can be dropped off at the Youth House. If you have a group that is interested in serving together on a specific Tuesday, please contact Lisa directly (note that you will need to be able to fill all volunteer slots.) For more info, contact Lisa Strom at mtzriti@gmail.com or 704-277-3687. Thanks!

REMINDER: Please send any articles you would like to have included in the next issue of the newsletter to the church by January 1.

MT. ZION UMC UNAUDITED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

1/1/16 - 11/30/16

2016 General Fund Budget: \$1,280,548

Budget Gifts: \$ 892,417

THANK YOU!

Budget Expenses: \$ 1,009,939

General Fund Cash On Hand: \$104,421

Capital Fund Gifts Received: \$15,115

Capital Fund Expenses: \$22,317

Capital Fund Cash On Hand: \$10,357

Funds Received for Helping Hands
(Pastor's Discretionary Fund) \$10,252

Information reflects contributions post-
marked prior to December 1 and re-
ceived as of date of printing.

Please contact Margaret Langston if you
have questions.

Mount Zion UMC Annual BBQ - The Son-seeker Class would like to thank the congregation of Mount Zion UMC for all of your prayers, hard work, donations, and support. The food, entertainment, decorations, and fellowship at this year's event were awesome! Thanks to all of you, \$11,362.15 will be distributed to the following missions: Mt. Zion UMC (Young Adult Sports Ministry, FUEL, South Africa Mission Trip, Backpack Food Ministry, Appalachia Service Project, Repairers of the Breach, and Room In the Inn) and to YMCA Summer Campers for tuition. We also donated a total of \$295.00 of food/t-shirts to the Fire and Police Departments of Cornelius and to our neighbors.

We are already planning for next year - please mark your calendar now - it's always the first Saturday in November (November 4th, 2017). Thanks again!

Cub Scouts...

When- Tuesday nights

Time- 6:30

Where- Mount Zion UMC Gym

For more information contact

Mauricio Restrepo at restrepom1@gmail.com

Jeanine Eisley 703-395-0926 or
Jeanine.eisley@gmail.com

NOVEMBER 2016 ATTENDANCE:

November 2: 20

November 6: 8:30: 135; 9:45: 118 11: 202 =
455

November 9: 28

November 13: 8:30: 93; 9:45: 95; 11: 232
=420

November 16: 30

November 20: 8:30: 134 9:45: 98; 11: 222 =
454

Community Thanksgiving November 21: 208

November 27: 8:30: 89; 9:45: 81 ; 11: 174 =
344

The mission of MT. ZION UMC STEPHEN MINISTRY is to provide confidential and compassionate lay ministry to our congregation and community who face difficult life transitions; enhancing and bridging the Christian care provided by our clergy. Please pray for those serving in this ministry and those being served. Please call the church office or talk with any of our Stephen Ministers or Pastors if you or someone you know is in need of a Stephen Minister.



Staff

Senior Pastor: Dr. Mary John Dye

mdye@mtzionumc.net

Associate Pastors:

Rev. Joel Simpson

jsimpson@mtzionumc.net

Rev. Tony Moreau

tmoreau@mtzionumc.net

Director of Music Ministries:

Dr. Marcy Mittelstadt

mmittelstadt@mtzionumc.net

Assistant Director

Melanie Kalkan

mkalkan@mtzionumc.net

Director of Christian Education:

Crystal Parrish

cparrish@mtzionumc.net

Associate Director Christian Ed

Kim Webb

kwebb@mtzionumc.net

Director of Youth: Matt Sherrill

msherrill@mtzionumc.net

Office Manager/Treasurer:

Margaret Langston

mlangston@mtzionumc.net

Administrative Assistant:

Mary Ellen Westmoreland

mwestmoreland@mtzionumc.net

Part Time Assistant: Ginny Wilkins

Custodian:

Donnelly Sherrill (pt security)

Preschool Director: Becky Metzger

sonshinepre@bellsouth.net

Church Phone: 704-892-8566

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Youth House: 704-892-7825

Sonshine Preschool: 704-892-0654

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



We're On The Web!
www.mtzionumc.net

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 Youth House: 704-892-7825
 Sonshine Preschool: 704-892-0654
 Fax: 704-892-3143
 E-mail: mlangston@mtzionumc.net

"MAKING, MATURING, MOBILIZING DISCIPLES FOR CHRIST"

MEN OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME to attend a **MEN'S COMMUNITY PRAYER BREAKFAST** held each Wednesday from 7-8 am at the IHOP in Huntersville. It is led on alternate weeks by the ministerial staffs of Mt. Zion UMC and Bethel Presbyterian.

All women of the church and community are invited to join the **WOMEN OF ZION** on the first Tuesday of each month at Acropolis. We meet at 7:00 pm for fellowship and a devotional program. Please contact us at mzwoz1@gmail.com if you have questions or need more information. We look forward to seeing you the first Tuesday of each month! To receive meeting reminders, text the message @womenofz to 81010.

MOMS – Mothers Offering Mutual Support meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month in the church Parlor at 7:00 pm. Young moms from pregnancy through preschool age children are welcome.

COAP = Children Of Aging Parents will meet the 3rd Wednesday night in December (21st) at 7:30 pm in the Parlor. All our circumstances are different with parents at different stages of care and need. The shared goal of giving them the best support possible for this stage of their lives is the common bond of those who gather to share and pray. All are welcome.

NEW BEGINNINGS meets the **3rd Monday of each month** at Duckworth's in Cornelius at 11:45 am. We currently have 92 members of widows and widowers. We bowl, go to movies, take tours and just have friendship with others that have lost a spouse.

We have something going on all the time!

Contacts: Barbara Broadway Lackey:
 email: bbroadway47@gmail.com 704-996-7000 or Shirley Ranson:
 email: Shirley@ransonteam.com 704-904-0973

YOU ARE INVITED...DRESS A GIRL MEETS THE SECOND AND FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH in the youth room at 6:30.

Everyone is welcome!! We will teach. **No experience necessary.** Bringing your own sewing machine is welcome, but not necessary. Also, we are seeking missionaries to take our dresses around the world. You may contact Robin Lambert for information. rlambert96@gmail.com.



The ladies of the **PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY** invite you to join them on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 to knit/crochet prayer shawls and baby blankets. No matter what your skill level may be, there is a place for you. If you are interested in learning how to knit, they can help with that, as well. (Yarn is provided.) They meet in the church Parlor (located on the upper level of the Family Life Center) and hope to see you soon!