

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

February 2018, Volume XX Issue 2

"Making, Maturing, Mobilizing Disciples for Christ"

WORSHIP EACH SUNDAY AT 8:30, 9:45 and 11:00 AM WEDNESDAY Nights @ 6:40 pm

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
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- http://www.ustream.tv/recorded/84673593

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Dear Church Family at Mt. Zion,

These days are tender times for me – and everyone on staff at Mt. Zion: a roller coaster of joy and sadness, transitions and adjustments, new possibilities, and leaving comfortable ways. It is only with a lot of love and grace, understanding and tenderness, patience and kindness, that we (as a staff and a congregation) get through this much leadership transition—on top of new lay leadership which began with the new calendar year.

For years, you have heard me say that we have had a dream team at Mt. Zion on our staff. I mean that with all my heart! What remarkable people – people who I have admired in their Christian faith as well as their effective leadership. So when staff members leave, it is a personal loss as well as a loss to the church. We lose a loved one as well as a leader. What affects one of us, affects all of us. There is no way to separate that. I encourage us to respect what we are going through, learn from this time, and be especially kind to each other, to show our appreciation to those who are leaving, and give our full support to the wonderful new people who are coming to serve us.

Ashley Sherman (asherman@mtzionumc.net) and Stacey Mercuri (smercuri@mtzionumc.net) are going to be wonderful leaders of our children's program. I hope you will come to get to know them on Sunday afternoon, February 11th. You have already been seeing some of the work of our new communications staff, Kelly Fellows (kfellows@mtzionumc.net). This newsletter, the weekly bulletins, facebook posts--- Kelly has already taken care of a million details in her first couple of weeks. She brings us a burst of energy and efficiency and will be an ongoing blessing. Please give them your best love and information and hopes and dreams through the learning curve!!

Our love and prayers go with Matt and Julie Sherrill as they move to Carmel, Indiana, just outside of Indianapolis, where he will be the youth director for Carmel United Methodist Church. Mt. Zion is the church that cradled his life and family growing up. For 15 years he served us as an extraordinary leader of our youth program. There are so many young people – and adults—who have been impacted for Christ. So it is to his credit that we have such a deep love for him – and the deep sadness that inevitably goes with a transition.

We also give our love and deep thanks to Donnelly Sherrill for his faithful work for Mt. Zion for the last 18 years. We are so grateful to him and our love and prayers undergird every day ahead.

Our hearts are also full of gratitude and joy as the previously-announced resignation of Margaret Langston becomes a reality. Across the 19 years she has served at Mt. Zion, she has been so much more than an exceptional financial officer. She has immaculately kept the records of the church, given wise advice to countless officers, and groups and staff members, and ordered the life of the church. She has been the staff anchor of the church. "Ask Margaret" has been the most frequent and wisest advice I could give, as it was for Mike Bailey before me. She has graciously offered to work until a good transition is settled for the multiple finance, communication and office management positions she has so capably filled. When the definite date comes for that, we will be honoring Margaret.

Our new financial officer/church treasurer, Patti Loner, will begin Monday, February 5th. She is highly qualified and eager to serve at Mt. Zion. For the next several weeks, there will be an overlap as Margaret orients Patti to this very important job in the life of the church.

Every member of the congregation owes a huge debt of thanks to Staff Parish for the careful, devoted way they have worked through each and every transition.

I have a lot of books in my life and library. The title of one of the most impactful of those books describes our life together right now: <u>Life is Hello, Life is Goodbye.</u> Lent is the ideal time for us to grow deeper in love.

Gratefully, Mary John

Letter from Hilary Broadway, your 2018 Chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee

The Staff Parish Relations Committee would like to extend our Thanks on behalf of Mount Zion for the many years of service provided by Donnelly Sherrill. After many years of opening and closing our doors and setting up the Family Life Center for our 9:45 service, Donnelly is retiring. We wish him all the best!



Letter from Hilary Broadway, your 2018 Chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee

Mount Zion has a mission statement which reads, "Making, Maturing, Mobilizing Disciples for Christ. I can think of no greater example of both as recipient of this mission and a dedicated servant to it than Matt Sherrill. For 36 years Matt has been dedicated to this mission. He provides for our youth support, love, education, a safe harbor, and a walking example of what it means to follow Christ. He is a true servant, living as he teaches, through FUEL: Faith Used in Everyday Life. This church helped make and mature a disciple for Christ in Matt Sherrill. We now support him in the mobilizing of his mission to serve. Matt and Julie are answering God's call on them and will be relocating to Indiana. As Matt told me, it took a great deal of prayer and reflection just to discern that call, questioning it often, as Matt and Julie have so much love for Mount Zion and this community. Ultimately it was God's hands at work.

Matt will continue with his youth ministry, sharing his gifts with a new community, and they will be blessed to have him. Matt had the opportunity to share the news with his youth group during an overnight gathering. Parents were notified in a meeting beforehand and also received an email. Matt's final day was February 4th. SPRC will be posting for the position. This is an important ministry, one we do not want to fill in haste. We are exploring interim leadership and are in the process of creating a subcommittee to lead the interview process. The committee will be comprised of SPRC members, youth leaders, and parents.

Please wrap your loving arms around Matt and Julie. This is a big and difficult move for them, as it is for us. How blessed we have been for so many years. We should be so proud to share Matt and Julie with others.

Dear Mount Zion Family of Christ,

On behalf of the Thompson family and Heaven's Reign Quartet we are extremely thankful and humbled by your outpouring of love and support for the two benefit concerts this past weekend for Warrior Jace Thompson. We would like to thank Ginger Andersen for the poster, cards, and banners she created to help us advertise this worthy cause. We are very thankful and appreciative for our church for opening its doors and hosting this event. The word event really does not do justice for what happened in those two days. It felt like a community worship service and not an event. There were people from the community, folks that worked with Jennifer, folks from South Carolina, a bus filled with older adults from Midway, North Carolina, and families from Mt. Zion. We sincerely thank each person who attended and contributed to Warrior Jace. With everyone's generosity we are overwhelmed at the total amount raised, which was \$9,120.

Again, Thank you very much and may God continue to Bless Us All!

Heaven's Reign Quartet

Jon Sarver, Michael Jackson, Buddy Phillips, and Larry Horton



THE SYMPATHY OF THE CONGREGATION IS EXTENDED TO Maya Duncan and family on the death of her father on January 15th, Gayle Casavecchia and family on the death of her father on January 16th, John Wiese and family on the death of his mother, Karen Wiese, on January 21st, the family of Julie James, on her death, January 28th, and to Kay Cooke and family on the death of her daughter, Carol Ann Cooke, on January 29th.



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!



Ash Wednesday—February 14th

Ash Wednesday marks the start of the tian holy season of Lent, a time for reflection and repentance in preparation for the celebration of Easter.

We will have two different opportunities to come and be marked by the Ashes.

Drive thru the circle– from 7 to 9:15 am in the circle in front of the sanctuary. Pastor Tony will be out front. The sanctuary will be open if you wish to come inside and pray.

Ash Wednesday Worship Service - 6:40 pm Ash Wednesday worship service. This service begins our season of Lent. We will be marked with ashes and reminded of the sacredness of life.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

On Tuesday, February 13th from 6-7:30 pm, Mt. Zion's Nurture Team will be hosting a Pre-Lent Celebration. Come join us for Shrove Tuesday Pancake supper in the Family Life Center.

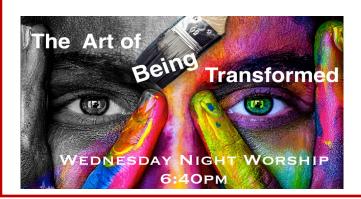






Wednesday Night Worship

Our new series during Lent is called "The Art of Being Transformed." Each of the four Gospels tells the story of Jesus in a unique way and, in the process, they teach us about how transformation happens and what to expect. There is an art to being transformed. There is an art to growing in love. There is an art to becoming more like Christ. Christianity has always known this...and deep inside we all know it too. It is a particular way of living life. It is a particular way of seeing life. It is a particular way of understanding and trusting the patterns. Join us each Wednesday beginning February 21st as we learn and practice the art of being transformed.



Dear Mt. Zion UMC Family,

From an early age growing up at Mt. Zion I felt a call to the ministry. When I left Cornelius to attend Appalachian State University, I told God that I never wanted to come back to Cornelius. Be careful what you tell God would be the lesson from that conversation. I was on track to do full time camp ministry and my senior year I was working at Camp Tekoa. I remember having a dream one night that I was doing youth ministry again and I woke up with this re-ignited call on my life. That next day, I received a phone call from Mike Bailey asking if I would come back and serve at Mt. Zion. After a lot of prayer and discernment, I responded to that call in 2003 by filling in as the interim youth director, only to later discover that they never started looking for anyone else, so I accepted the offer to come on board full time.

The early years were extremely difficult because I really did not know what I was doing and was just trying to figure it out as I went. Luckily I had some amazing mentors like Sherry Washam, Barb Mayo, Gaylon White, other youth pastors in the area (Tim McCoy and Chris Thompson), great adult leader volunteers, a supportive church family, and the ever loving presence of my own family. I even had the privilege to be the youth director for my two younger brothers for a short period.

I remember many nights praying and crying on my knees asking God to help me and questioning why He chose me to do this. It was a beautifully humbling time and I often wish I could regain some of that dependency on God above my own abilities.

After taking Disciple I with Barb Mayo, my passion to learn more about the Bible led me to pursue my Masters in Christian Education with a concentration in Youth Ministry from Pfeiffer University. It was here that I felt more equipped to take the ministry to a deeper level. It was also during these early years when we could do about any event/program at about any time and have great turnouts because there was less competing for people's time. It is easy to say "I miss those days", but the reality is that God is always present and the "old days" were not any better than the present, they were just different. I recognized that if I was getting caught in the past I would be missing out on all the great things of the present and the future. And if you've ever worked with youth, there are always great things happening and on the horizon. I think that is one of the things I love most about this calling to youth ministry is that the youth help keep me focused on the present and they see things through a beautiful lens that gives me great hope for our future. We all can learn so much from the youth! Do not forget that and give them the chance to lead.

Big Life Changing Moment: Little did many people know at the time, but in 2006 I met the most beautiful person in the world in Guyan Valley, WV as we were serving a week with Appalachia Service Project. Julie was on staff that summer and I felt like we made a strong connection, which led me to pursue her afterwards. So after five years of late night talks, long emails, hand written letters and packages, and visiting each other, I convinced Julie to move to NC in 2011. At the time our family had an extra house that she was able to rent. The following year we got engaged and had a beautiful year long time of preparation for the second biggest (behind accepting Christ) decision in our lives. We got married in August of 2013! Being married to such a wonderful woman of God has made my life so much better. I have learned a ton, and continue to learn daily, and it has also made me better at my job.

One of the hardest and most humbling years of my tenure here came in 2014. It took me a while to figure out why it was so hard until, with the help of Julie, we finally discovered that I no longer "needed" God to do youth ministry anymore. Unlike when I first started when I had no clue what I was doing, I had now "figured it all out." Luckily we serve a God of grace, patience, and constant pursuit of us, even when we are trying to do things without Him. Once the realization set in and I was completely humbled, I started to do youth ministry differently. It was not about the glitz and glamour, flash and lights, latest and greatest programming ideas. It was just getting back to simply worship, depending on God, and trusting Him with the whole process. It doesn't mean I have mastered this by any means, but I have learned that we can do things our way and get by, or surrender to God and thrive! I prefer the latter and hope you do as well.

From the day Julie and I got married, nearly every night we prayed for God's guidance in our lives. Our prayer went something like this: "God, we are

Yours and at your service. Guide us to where You want us to be and let us be okay with where You lead us. If that is to stay here then we are good with that. If that is to go somewhere else, then we will follow your leading." We have viewed our lives like missionaries and are always trying to be open to God's leading in what we do.

So early this past summer, we felt God speak to our hearts and start to whisper that He had plans for us to take a leap of faith and trust Him. As we started discerning this more, we felt God leading us to Indiana. We have spent a lot of time in Indiana because that is where Julie is from and has family there. Other than Julie's family we just didn't envision living there. We love living here, love Mt. Zion, and love the relationships that we have here. We decided to take the next year just to see if this was truly from God or not. A week later opportunities for employment just started appearing in unlikely ways. In an effort to respond to God's guiding, we took advantage of those opportunities not knowing where they might lead. And then more opportunities started presenting themselves. Julie and I both felt God was opening some very clear doors for us and we were getting excited about the possibilities, but at the same time the reality of leaving this community and family weighed heavily on our hearts.

Then in November things started happening really quickly. I had several prospects to choose from and Julie had been offered a position as well. She accepted her position, but in the back of our minds we still weren't completely sure God would provide both of us positions at a similar time, although that was our prayer in order to confirm the decision. At this time we had still not told anyone other than our family that we were thinking of moving. Then a couple days after Christmas I accepted a position at a wonderful church that reminds me so much of Mt. Zion. I felt like this was a little God "wink" for us in the discernment process.

I will begin working for Carmel UMC starting on February 12th and Julie will begin her job a month later with Community Hospital as she continues working in outpatient Psychotherapy.

Words cannot express my love, gratitude, thankfulness, and joy that has been showered on me these past 14 1/2 years! I know that change is hard, and it will be for us, but I also know that we serve a God who is bigger than all of this, will never leave us or forsake us, and has great plans in store for all of us. If we do it without God, it will fail, but if we trust in Him above ourselves and our selfish desires, it will be an unstoppable force for the Kingdom.

May you not get distracted with dumb earthly things that tear others apart and tear the church apart. May you all come together as one, picking each other up when you fall, and walking hand in hand going on towards perfection, trusting in God's grace and peace to guide all that you do.

"Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God...in confirming the truth of the Good News. God knows how much I love you and long for you with tender compassion of Christ Jesus. I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation- the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ- for this will bring much glory and praise to God." (Philippians 1:3-11)

Grace, Peace, and Love!

Matt Sherrill

Our new address: 5855 N. Rural St, Indianapolis, IN 46220



God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them. Genesis 1:2

Thank you to everyone who attended, participated in, volunteered for, and supported our first annual Winter Ball on January 14, 2018. The Family Life Center was magically transformed into a Winter Wonderland just for this night. This formal event allowed all of us to work together to create a wonderful evening for our guests and provided an evening of fellowship, laughter and fun to the more than 160 people in attendance. Our guests were escorted to the Special Event Service Areas upon arrival - the ladies were treated to Glitz and Glamour (hair, make up, nail, bling, and floral station) and the men were treated to Shine and Swag (shoe shine, accessory, and floral station) before being formally presented to the fans and family waiting in the ballroom. An extravagant buffet of heavy hors d'oeuvres, professional portraits, and incredible dancing music provided an enjoyable evening to everyone. Thank you!!!

















It will be a very exciting February as we offer the following \mathcal{H} programs:

· Tuesday Feb. 6 - Sustain

Sunday Feb. 11 - Just As I Am

Sunday Feb. 18 – The Feast

· Sunday Feb. 25 - JEDI Night

Every Sunday - Agape Sunday School

· Every Sunday - A Place For Us

-support group for caregivers, families, etc.

-fellowship, devotions, music, fun - It's All About Love!

-an alternative worship service for families

-fellowship with Youth

-a quiet, dedicated worship space with livestreaming



Come play, learn and grow with us!

Sonshine Preschool 2018-2019 Enrollment

Sonshine Preschool will be accepting enrollment applications for the 2018-2019 preschool year beginning January 24 through February 7 at 1:00 pm. If you or someone you know are looking for a weekday program for preschoolers, ages 2-4, please consider Sonshine Preschool. Enrollment applications can be found on the table outside the preschool office on the lower level of the Education Building beginning January 24. Forms and additional information can also be found on Mt. Zion's website at www.mtzionumc.net. Family Information Sessions & Tours will be held February 1, 5, and 7 at 10:00 am in the church sanctuary. For any questions, please contact the preschool office (704) 892-0654 or pgoforth@mtzionumc.net

Fundraiser

Sonshine Preschool will be hosting a Family Night Fundraiser at Tenders on Statesville Road, Cornelius, Wednesday, February 28, 5:00 - 8:00 pm. You can dine in or take-out. Please be sure to tell the cashier you are supporting Sonshine Preschool and we will receive 10% of all sales during this time period. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go to supplies and scholarships.



Our sweet preschoolers and their families collected a whole wagon full of chap stick, toothbrushes and toothpaste for our Room in the Inn guests! We are so blessed by the love of sharing through these families.

Sonshine Preschool's February mission will be collecting toiletries and socks for the women recovering from substance abuse at the Daymark Center in Concord. We hope to share God's love with those trying to make a difference for themselves.

Sonshine Preschool Preciouness:

During Chapel, Pastor Tony asked the children what kind of gifts can you give people to show love. A sweet four year old, very eager to answer said, "I know, I know, a hug and a fist bump!" We hope you get a hug and fist bump today!

"Jesus loves you." John 15:12 February Favorite Bible Words



















sociate Director, on February 11th between 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. (during FUEL) in room

feedback, ask questions about the Children's Ministries program and have a treat!

















and meet Ashley Sherman, Director of Children's Ministries, and Stacey Mercuri, As-

107. This will be an open session to get to know Ashley and Stacey as well as to give







































Patti Loner, Financial Officer/ Church Treasurer



Children's Directors (L) Stacey Mercuri

(R) Ashley Sherman



Kelly Fellows **Communications Coordinator**



Welcome 101 Class

I wanted to let you know that Mt. Zion will be starting its Welcome 101 class next week. This class is for people visiting Mt. Zion and new members. The purpose of the class is to help you meet others, learn about Mt. Zion and Methodism, and grow in your faith journey.

The class will meet Thursday nights from February 15th to March 22nd (6 weeks). We will meet from 6:45-8:00 pm on the second floor of education building in room 205 (the building behind the sanctuary).

If you are interested in participating in the class please contact Rev. Joel Simpson at 704-892-8566 or Jsimpson@mtzionumc.net.

MT. ZION UMC UNAUDITED FINANCIAL INFORMATION 1/1/18- 1/31/18

2018 General Fund Budget: \$1,262,630

Budget Gifts: \$ \$71,871

THANK YOU!

Budget Expenses: \$83,368

General Fund Cash On Hand: \$171,459

Capital Fund Gifts Received: \$415

Capital Fund Expenses: \$0

Capital Fund Cash On Hand: \$16,068

Funds Received for Helping Hands (Pastor's Discretionary Fund) \$460

Please contact Margaret Langston if you have questions.

Please note: These figures are based on funds received at time of publication. The monthly Treasurer's Report may be different due to funds postmarked by the end of the month but not received until after publication.

SPECIAL GIFTS WERE GIVEN...IN HONOR OF Shelley Little, a gift was given to the Music Fund; IN HONOR OF Matt Sherrill, a gift was given to the Budget; IN MEMORY OF Dianne York, a gift was given to the Budget.

JANUARY 2018 ATTENDANCE:

January 7: 8:30: 68; 9:45; 116, 11: 209=393

January 10: 30

January 14: 8:30: 71; 9:45: 125; 11: 190=386

January 21: 8:30: 92; 9:45: 134; 11:

185=411

January 24: 39

January 28: 8:30: 83: 9:45: 95: 11:

213=391

January 31: 33

A LOOK BACK AT 2017

While Mt. Zion ended 2017 with \$182,957 in the General Fund (an increase of \$32,708 over the 2016 year-end figure) and had 66.9 days of General Fund cash on hand (compared to 48.2 days at year end 2016 when 100% of the apportionments and outstanding bills were paid) that is certainly not the full story.

The Finance Committee voted to pay \$50,000 of the \$111,702 apportioned for 2017 (the remaining amount does not roll over to 2018 so it is no longer outstanding) and the church still owes \$40,732 to the consultant for work completed for the Main Campus. Last year's Finance Committee voted to pay \$3,000 per month to the consultant for the last 5 months of the year and the first two months of 2018 and that will be revisited to determine the amount to be paid monthly for the remainder of 2018 when the Finance Committee meets in February. There is a new amount for 2018 apportionments and 1/12th of that figure will be paid monthly in 2018 per the Finance Committee. They will be carefully monitoring the General Fund balance throughout the year to be sure the church does not fall below the minimum 30 days of General Fund cash that is to be kept on hand.

The church membership increased by 10 to 1808 in 2017. We were blessed with 38 new members including 14 who joined after completing confirmation classes, 3 who joined by profession of faith and 21 who transferred in from other churches. There were 16 who transferred to other churches and 12 who were removed by death.

The 2017 Statistical Report was submitted on January 31st and also offers valuable information about participation in Christian Formation groups including Sunday School, small groups, support groups and classes, as well as church assets and expenses. This information is gathered from staff, clergy and other church members and is then compiled and entered in the database for the United Methodist Church resulting in the completed Statistical Report. Among that information there are some interesting "Did you knows"...839 people participated in Christian Formation Groups through Mt. Zion. The average attendance in Sunday School was 200. The average worship attendance was 436 (includes all 3 Sunday services and the Wednesday night service). There were 22 short term support groups or small groups. There were 23 community ministries for outreach, justice and mercy offered by Mt. Zion with 766 congregational servants reaching over 4,000 people. That is an incredible outreach to those in need covering everything from food and shelter to bookbags and supplies to a place to talk, laugh, cry, worship and grieve. Your support makes a difference in our church, our local community and globally.

There were 567 identifiable giving units who contributed to the Budget with \$451,147 of the contributions received through pledges. \$1,031,480 was the total received for the Budget in 2017 which includes \$19,963 given by unnamed cash donors, \$553,142 received non-pledging but identified givers, \$283 from interest and \$6,945 through building use fees, contributions and rentals.

Copies of the full Statistical Report will be available in the office and other areas of the church if you would like to see it in it's entirety.

Staff

Senior Pastor: Dr. Mary John Dye

mdye@mtzionumc.net

Associate Pastors:

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jsimpson@mtzionumc.net

Rev. Tony Moreau

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"MAKING, MATURING, MOBILIZING DISCIPLES FOR CHRIST"

MEN OF ALL AGES ARE WEL-COME to attend a weekly MEN'S COMMUNITY PRAYER BREAKFAST now meeting on Wednesdays, 7 am at Bethel Presbyterian Church: 19920 Bethel Church Road, Cornelius, NC 28031. Breakfast will be provided.

All women of the church and community are invited to join the WOMEN OF ZION on the first Tuesday of each month (location to be determined). 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.

NEW BEGINNINGS... 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! TO RECEIVE OUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Barbara Broadway: email: bbroadway47@gmail.com 704-996-7000 or

Shirley Ranson:

email: Shirley@ransonteam.com 704-

904-0973

YOU ARE INVITED...SEWIN' LOVE
(FORMERLY 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. You may contact Robin Lambert for information. rllambert96@gmail.com.

Reminder:

Please send any articles you would like to have included in the newsletter to the church by March 1st. They may be emailed to kfellows@mtzionumc.net

