

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 186
310 Church Street
Central, South Carolina 29630
Address Correction Requested



The Grapevine
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church

*"I am the vine, you are the branches
Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit."
John 15:5*

Kurt's Corner

Recently I began a sermon series on four letter words. These are not the type you might hear if someone hits their finger with a hammer or gets tied up in bad traffic following a football game at Death Valley. These are four letter words that you might hear at church: love, hate, hope, fear, evil, and Hell.

On Father's Day I preached about the love of our earthly fathers and our Heavenly Father. Last Sunday I focused upon hate and how it can overtake us at times, and I looked at hate's antidote, forgiveness.

This coming Sunday I will preach about the one thing we all need to live our lives – hope. I will share with you how hope as a Christian is different from any other source of encouragement. The following week I will address the topic of fear. I will discuss how to handle anxiety and worry and look at what the Bible says about our being afraid.

The following Sunday I will consider a four letter word that has baffled mankind for centuries, evil. Where does evil come from? Are people bad or good? Why are some people's actions so evil?

The last sermon in the series will focus upon the concept of Hell. What is the description of Hell that is found in scripture? Do people still believe in Hell? If it truly does exist, why would a loving God send people there?

In August I will begin a new sermon series, but I want and need your input. What are some of the topics or subjects that you would like to hear about in sermons? Is there some issue or question you have wanted the church or a pastor to address that has never or rarely been addressed before? Please feel free to share your thoughts with me as we continue to live out our faith together.

In Christ,

Kurt

American Independence Day

A Fourth of July Prayer



Dear Lord,

On this Independence Day I am reminded of all those who have sacrificed for my freedom, following the example of your Son, Jesus Christ. Let me not take my freedom, both physical and spiritual, for granted. May I always remember that my freedom was purchased with a very high price. My freedom cost others their very lives.

Amen

By [Mary Fairchild](#), About.com Guide

Trustee Report

The church has been in the process of doing several renovations over the past few months. The Nursery is finished with a new coat of paint, new flooring, and new furnishings. The three Sunday school classrooms downstairs have also been repainted and we are in the process of ordering new furnishings for these rooms. All of the furniture for the classrooms will meet the required codes/standards and will be uniform in appearance. The Adult Sunday school room, next to the Pastor's study, has new paint, new carpet, and new blinds on the windows. The Youth Sunday school room, next to the choir room, also has a new coat of paint. Please check out these rooms and see how they have changed in appearance.

Thank you to everyone that contributed to the Sunday school renovation fund. Your generosity was overwhelming and with the funds received, we will be able to furnish all three classrooms downstairs with new furniture.

At the last Administrative Council meeting it was voted on and passed that we would resurface the parking lot and then extend the parking to add seven more spaces. This area would be straight down from the current parking area. Four more spaces would be added by the back door of the church when the handicap area is removed. The area straight out from the back of the church will also be asphalted.

There are other projects that we will be working on in the next few months.

We are so blessed to be able to keep up with updates and maintenance at the church and parsonage. God has indeed been good to us.

Submitted by Chery Amidon

Men's Club Report

Mt. Zion's Men's Club will resume meeting at 8:30 A.M. on Sunday, September 9, 2012. So far this year we have been involved in the following activities: purchasing two new banner frames for the church, which were first used on Easter Sunday and also for Communion; and performing our annual landscaping improvements at the parsonage, which included spreading mulch and pruning trees and shrubs. We also helped with the church's open house during the Central Railroad Festival.

Submitted by Lane Miller

people are thriving. Mt. Zion can and will continue to prosper and strengthen as we have in the past, but hopefully, within the midst of a new "age" of member.

The average age today in the world is thirty nine years old. The average age in the United Methodist Church is fifty nine. As the church attendee population ages, the world of Methodism and Christianity as a whole ages, and the future becomes very bleak. Where is Christ in the life of these thirty nine year olds? It is safe to say that most of them were raised in a Christian home with church as a part of that lifestyle. Sixty five percent of young people say they believe religion provides a common faith and ethical foundations that diverse societies need. But with the division of families due to schooling opportunities, employment opportunities, or just preference, it has become difficult for the young adult to find a church home away from their home communities. There seems to be no one characteristic that draws them together as a unit. Therefore, churches and church families need to offer opportunities for worship, personal growth and fulfillment, and discipleship that provide for these unique needs.

This is a challenge that brings many unanswered questions to Mt. Zion. You, I am sure, know how it is to have a question whose ambiguous responses keep you unsettled and unsure. Each answer is unique to each church's population and communal need. So I left questioning where Mt. Zion was in the dilemma, if we indeed had a dilemma, and what you as a group of wonderful, giving people, felt we should be preparing for as a collection of disciples wanting greatly to share the love of Jesus Christ with one and all. We have tackled challenges before, and I have no doubt that should we decide that in order to continue to grow and develop as an emblem of God, Christianity, and the Methodist ideals, we will determine what we need to do to prepare?

Dr. Rendle also reminded us that our minister cannot make changes or modifications alone. Dr. McPherson is definitely a means to the end

result, but we as his marshals need to be actively involved in whatever decisions or actions we deem necessary to continue to flourish as a band of Christ. What does God call us to do now? In 3-5 years? Who is our neighbor now? Our congregation is not only about the geographical location from which we travel, but the ethical, social, and enlightened society from which we hope to pull. We have to demonstrate Biblical hospitality. We have to be willing to sacrifice ourselves and commit ourselves to the better good of the people around us. God already knows of our being and of our personal sacrifices. We now must continue to practice basic Christian ideals but through a system that is changing dramatically, trusting God to show us the way, but being willing to respond when he advises and demonstrates alternatives to us. We must practice discipleship regardless of how the new world keeps changing, but being willing to walk into the change with utter faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as the Israelites and Moses wandered through the desert for 40 years waiting on God to show them the way, disobeying, refusing, and continuing to deny, regardless of circumstance or miracle, we at Mt. Zion United Methodist Church can take on the challenge of the "unknown desert" and hope to have an end of such pure exhilaration, just as the Israelites. Joshua led the new generation across the Jordan into the land of Jericho. Hopefully, we can be a part of the new generation here in the metropolis of Central, South Carolina; the new generation of United Methodist and Christians within an ever changing desert.

Remember, God's word is true and has stood the test of time. If only we would listen.

With much love,

Miriam Coffman



The prayer breakfast originally scheduled for July 5 will be **re-scheduled** for July 12 at 9:00 a.m. at Dyar's Diner, Highway 88, in Pendleton.

I would like to begin this report by saying what a difference the UMC Annual Conference for 2012 was from my previous visits. The agenda definitely dictated much calmer seas as we once again tested the waters of religion during the tumultuous time in which we live. Previous years have involved elections of delegates to General Conference, which took place over ten days in April and May of this year, as well as numerous financial modifications that involved pensions, retirement, years of service adjustments, as well as insurance options for pastors that if you recall, were very difficult to implement. I enjoyed spending time with Rev. Bob Stillwell (our former DS), Rev. Luther Rickenbaker, and Rev. Larry Hays, all very close friends and colleagues of Dr. McPherson. They have each been instrumental in support for Kurt as he has attempted to meet the Methodist ordination regulations, and we should all be grateful. I know they will continue to have his best interests at heart and provide a type of leadership only found in ministerial camaraderie.

As for the meat of the conference, there were actually no disputes regarding policy or Board changes this year that affect Mt. Zion specifically. The budgets, mission expenditures, and ministerial programs remain relatively the same, with actual decreases in disbursements in some areas. Detailed information regarding these budgetary items are available should anyone like to peruse my notebook on a Friday or Saturday evening.

The most important message from this year's conference was the question of how the Methodist religion and the family of Christians are going to change in order to meet the shifting demographics of today's family and Christian lifestyle. The Keynote Speaker, Rev. Gil Rendle, warned us that this was very difficult to process, but one that is required of us as aging worshippers if we want our churches and the theology of Methodism to survive. It is obviously much

more exhaustive and more complex than simply resorting to the offering of a traditional and/or a contemporary service on Sunday mornings.

Over the course of three days, Dr. Rendle walked the conference attendees through what was detrimental with current methods and what was rewarding with current methods. He continued with what might be considered as possibilities for the current discord, what could be potential alterations or likely conversations that might alleviate these differences, and concluded with the fact that "there is no definitive supposition" as the end result. Dr. Rendle kept reminding the group that there were no predetermined sets of questions with no ultimate answers simply because of the uniqueness of each church and its congregation. However, discussions and shared information resulted in the same culmination regarding the overall areas of church attendance, numbers of children and youth in participation, and family or individual membership growth seen in today's churches. These conclusions were needless to say, not encouraging.

Families today bring a challenge to Christianity based on cultural needs as well as evangelical needs that must be met in order for them to establish that God is indeed, all supreme. The youth and young adults of today are not accepting simply in a God that provides without question or challenge. It is not that they want to know, "what is in it for me?", but rather, how will it change my life and affect me personally? The value system has not necessarily changed, but rather, how the church supports and provides within that value system. Being a part of Christianity use to be the congregate of people with the same values, as well as the same lifestyle and familial culture. That is no longer true. Family dynamics have changed, cultural diversities have changed, and the entire door to the world has changed. We as a church must be willing to open our arms, our ears, and our eyes to all these transformations, not with judgments, but with a willingness to learn and be a part of the new world from which the young

Our Condolences and Deepest Sympathy to:

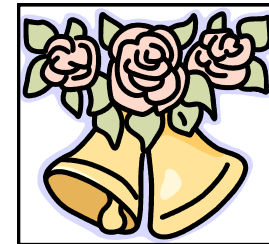
The Family of Sara Lee Parsons—Sara will be greatly missed. Her quiet presence, dedication, and loyalty to Mount Zion will be remembered by all of us. Sara loved the old, lively, hymns and the choir's performance of "I'll Fly Away", on the Sunday following her funeral, was more than appropriate and an unplanned confirmation of the joy of arriving at her eternal home.



Congratulations to Drew and Ashley Gelder on the birth of their daughter, Holly Jane Gelder, on June 14, 2012.

Congratulations to Neil Smith on the birth of his grandson, Jaxon Moore. Jaxon is the son of Jason and Laura (Smith) Moore.

Congratulations to Natasha Jade Revis and James Lee Armitage who were joined in marriage by Rev. McPherson here at Mount Zion at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 3, 2012. Natasha is the grand-daughter of Bert Wallace Chastain.



Our Active Military Service Prayer List



Amanda Chivers—Oklahoma

Josh Trumbower

Derek McDonald

Jordan Cox—Kuwait

Travis Wilbanks—Georgia

John Youngblood, Jr.—Alaska

Chris Schwartz

Chris Trumbower

Wayne Smith

Chris Smith

Van Mullinax—Washington, D.C.

"Dive" Into Vacation Bible School!

We will be participating in a joint Vacation Bible School (VBS) with Lawrence Chapel United Methodist Church again this year. The joint Vacation Bible School will be held from July 15-19 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Lawrence Chapel.

Food, crafts, science fun, Bible study, and recreation will be centered around the theme, "Dare to Go Deep with God". Children, ages 4 through 5th grade, will be attending. The Cokesbury unit, "Operation Overboard Dare to Go Deep with God", Copyright © 2011, Abington Press, will be the themed materials used this summer.

We are in need of kitchen help as we are in charge of serving dinner two of the nights. We also need help with two small skits that will be presented on two of the nights. The skits are already written and are not long; but, we do need some volunteers to assist with these. The skit is presented at the beginning of the evening and will be very short. If you can help in any way, please contact Libba Carson, Elizabeth Bowman, or Kurt.

Mission Opportunities During the Summer of 2012

An opportunity for our local women to help the five SC UMW Missions is to make a few extra jars of jelly, jam or pickles to be donated to the School of Christian Missions Craft Room. Proceeds from the sales in the Craft Room go to the five Missions. Please contact Sharon Miller at 654-1151 by July 8 if you have items you wish to send.

Another opportunity is to save cancelled postage stamps for the Marion Mission Storehouse in Marion, Indiana, which sends much needed items to the United Methodist Church in Africa. The stamps are sold to collectors to earn money for shipping costs. Please trim them to 1/4 inch around the perforation. Place your stamps in the box on the pew nearest the elevator door. The Marion Mission has been in operation for 44 years and In 2000 alone sent 1 million pair of shoes!



CLEAN WATER MISSION



In conjunction with VBS, both Mt. Zion and Lawrence Chapel churches have chosen to donate monies to a Clean Water Mission that provides safe water sources to vulnerable communities around the world. This project is sponsored through [UMCOR](#) (United Methodist Committee on Relief). By providing safe water, we help reduce the risk of water-related diseases. It costs \$150 to supply one water pump.

Children will be bringing an offering nightly to VBS, but both churches will be collecting monies during the month of June and July. Following our Sunday worship services, our children will be standing at the doors with buckets for your contributions. We hope you are able to help with this mission.

Birthdays

Birthdays in July:

Tyler Ferguson (1), Vicki Miesbauer (2), Les Jones (8), Wes Witcher (9), Libba Carson (11), Braelin Cumbie (14), Paige Evatt (19), Henry Bodie & Nelson Rice (27), Ann Wilbanks (28), Sonny Sims (29), Al Cumbie (30), Sharon Chandler (31)

Birthdays in August:

Sherrie Youngblood (6), Kyle Owens (7), Amy Evans (9), Larry Wingard (11), Elizabeth Bowman (12), Stephen Lee (13), Helen Singleton (16), Sheila Malmgren (17), Ginger Allen (21), Christine McAlister (23), Chandler Coffman (31)

Anniversaries

Anniversaries in July:

Dick & Helen Singleton (2)
Kris & Elizabeth Bowman (13)
Charles & Pam Baker (22)

Anniversaries in August:

Bill & Libba Carson (2)
Wayne & Miriam Coffman (3)
Mike & Catherine Ferguson (5)
Dean & Elizabeth Finely (5)
Chris & Kathy O'Dell (28)