



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

Normally in this spot I take some time to write to you about what has happened, what is happening, or what is coming up in the near future at Mt. Zion. I want to do something a little different this time. Not because we don't have some great ministry going on, because we do. You can read through The Grapevine and see all the great stuff that we are doing. I want to take this space and share with you my favorite Bible story. The reason I am doing this is because I want you to share with me your favorite Bible story because I want to preach about some of them this summer.

My favorite story in the Bible can be found in Daniel 3. I would encourage you to go and read the whole chapter. It is the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. I will tell you I first fell in love with this story as a young child sitting in Sunday School and watching this story acted out on felt boards. On a side note, sometimes I think we need to bring felt boards back, they were amazing. I really thought the story was great because the names were cool. That was my first impression of the story. Obviously as I have grown, my understanding of the story has changed from it just being a story about some guys with cool names.

Just to set the stage for you, it is a story about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego not being willing to worship the statue of King Nebuchadnezzar. They were being set up by some of the advisers of the king who were jealous of the three men. The rule was, you had to bow and worship the statue or be thrown into the fire. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego decided they would not worship and were willing to die. When their time came to be thrown into the fire they made the fire so hot that one of the people heating up the fire died from exposure to the fire. When their fate was sealed, this is what they said:

Continued on page 11

Rebuild Upstate Mission Project a Huge Success:

On the first Sunday of May, the day after our project, Pastor Gene talked about talents and how each of us have unique skills and talents that, when combined and shared with others, can do life changing things. On May 6th a small group of us combined our talents to build a wheelchair ramp for Richard and Sandra. Richard has several health issues and the ramp



will provide him the ability to be more mobile. I think Lynn Martin put is best when, after she saw the plans for the ramp, she said that we would be there till dark. I thought we would be going back the next Saturday to finish the job as this ramp had 2 turns and 3 platforms followed by a long stretch of ramp that led to the carport. We were both wrong. Everyone pitched in doing what we knew we could or learning something new and we finished the ramp for the Fuller family in less than 8 hours.

Missions are a funny thing..... you have a pride in your heart when you set out to help someone but when it's all said and done who really helped who? The Fullers were both grateful and kind. To see Richard come down the ramp, oxygen in tow, with his wife Sandra confirmed that we were the ones blessed. Remember it only takes a moment or a talent or a skill to make a difference in someone's life.

Special thanks:

- Ashley Gelder for organizing the project for us and ensuring we had all we needed to begin our work.
- John Wisham for bringing his trailer full of tools for us and for leading the group to a successful project.

The Team: Gene Aiken, Drew Gilder, Steve Lee, John Malmgren, Ed Martin, Lynn Martin, Connie Norwood , Kathy O'Brien, John Wisham.



Let's Celebrate!

Save the date! We are having our **Quarterly luncheon** on **June 4, 2017**, following the morning worship service. Please plan to attend as we are celebrating the upcoming ordination of our Pastor ! We plan to have potluck.

All are invited to the **Ordination Service of Pastor Gene** on Monday night **June 5th at 7:30 pm** at the TD Convention Center in Greenville. We encourage you to come and celebrate this significant event. There will be a reception following the service.

Children's News

The children are going to be visiting **Sweet Retreat Family Fun Center** on Sunday, June 11. We will be leaving after church to go there. Some of the games include mini golf, go -carts, laser tag, an arcade, and ice cream.





June

Ashley Gelder 2nd, Dot Wilbanks 2nd, Bill Clayton 8th, Elizabeth McWilliams 8th, Holly Gelder 14th, Ansel Miller 14th, Miriam Griffin 15th, Jerry Chandler 16th, John Malmgren 16th, Edith Wisham 17th, Isaiah Mullinax 17th, Ann Michelle Aiken 20th, Anna Ray 21st, Karen Smith 21st, Fred Cone 21st, Randy Martin 26th, David Rice 27th, Douglas Walker 12th.

July

Tyler Ferguson 1st, Vickie Miesbauer 2nd, Les Jones 8th, Sam Blackman 9th, Wes Witcher 9th, Libba Carson 11th, Braelin Cumbie 14th, Paige Evatt 19th, Sonny Sims 20th, Loretta Lee-Todd 23rd, Tommy Still 24th, Nelson Rice 27th, Ann Wilbanks 28th, Al Cumbie 30th, Sharon Chandler 31st.

June

Benji ♥ Heather Cumbie 5th

Stan ♥ Cindy Owens 8th

Mac ♥ Beth McWilliams 24th

July

Dick ♥ Helen Singleton 2nd

Kris ♥ Elizabeth Bowman 13th

Tommy ♥ Kathy Still 21st

Charles ♥ Pam Baker 22nd

Gene ♥ Katie Aiken 28th



The Church Calendar

The following take place at the Church unless otherwise indicated. In some cases more details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter and/or will be forthcoming in a church bulletin. Events take place at the church unless otherwise indicated. Note that information for each Sunday's bulletin is due by 5:00p.m. on the Wednesday before. Email the church at: mtzion@nctv.com with "bulletin" on the subject line.



June - No Men's Club or UMW

June 4-7 - S.C. Annual Conference UMC, TD Center, 1 Exposition Dr.
Greenville, SC

June 4th - Men's Breakfast Club at 8:30 a.m.

June 5th - Pastor Gene Ordination

June 18th - Father's Day

June 26th - Alzheimer's Support Group



July 4th - Independence Day

July 17th - Alzheimer's Support Group

July - No Men's Club or UMW

Together we Serve

Nursery

June



4th Elizabeth Bowman and Catherine Ferguson

11th Jane Jones and Janet Crenshaw

18th Ginger and Isaiah Mullinax

25th Libba Carson and Randy Martin

July

2nd Heather and Benji Cumbie

9th Jan Miller and Vicki Miesbauer

16th Ashley and Drew Gelder

23rd Sharon Chandler and Terri Lee

30th Karen Smith and Cindy Owens

Children's Sunday School Teachers

During the summer months of June and July we will only have one children's Sunday School class. It will be taught on a weekly rotating basis over the summer. We will resume our normal schedule of children's Sunday School in August with both classes being offered.

Welcome New Members – Fred and Judy Cone

Originally from Pine Apple, Alabama , Fred and Judy met in her hometown of Green Bay, Wisconsin. He was playing for the Green Bay Packers at the time and she was a nursing student. A graduate of Clemson University, he worked in the Athletic Department for thirty years before retiring in 1988. They had three children who grew up in Clemson and graduated from Daniel. Add to that, four grandchildren and now, one great grandchild.



They were members of Mt. Zion in the 1980s until moving to the mountains of north Georgia, where they lived for twenty-four years. Almost four years ago, they moved back to South Carolina (Pickens). They have been members of Alive Wesleyan in Central for three years, but Mt. Zion "feels like home", so they made the change. Fred and Judy just celebrated their 63rd wedding anniversary May 1st. Congratulations Fred and Judy...and welcome home!



Men's BBQ at the Railroad Festival

Thanks to everyone who supported the **BBQ at the Railroad Festival!** Please remember that the new Mt. Zion tent that was used at the BBQ is available for other church events.



Bible Study

No Tuesday night Bible Study this summer we will start back with the new school year. When we start back we will be reading a book by Adam Hamilton about the Gospel according to John. We encourage you to join us on **Tuesdays** at **6:30** at the parsonage starting in the fall.



Alzheimer's Support Group

The **Alzheimer's Support Group** will continue meeting during the summer. We will meet Monday June 26 and July 17. We encourage you to come and join us if you or someone you know is affected by Alzheimer's or any form of dementia.



Dear Mt. Zion Family:

The Administrative Council would like to update you on where we are in respect to the McAlister Memorial Fund. As you know the majority of the fund was spent on the improvements to the front of the sanctuary.

In January, a proposal was brought by the Trustees to the Administrative Council to use the remaining money in the McAlister Memorial Fund, about thirteen thousand dollars, to build a handicapped bathroom. The proposal was met with a shortfall of seven thousand dollars in funding. In addition to the shortfall in funding, the new bathroom would take up part of the vital space in the main office area. The Council discussed this proposal and found it wise to pause and look at the overall needs of the church before moving ahead with the project.

The council voted to create a Long Range Planning Committee to look at the facility needs of the church for the ministries and goals that we have. The Long Range Planning Committee consisted of church members Drew Gelder, John Malmgren, Ginger Mullinax, Cathy O'Dell, John Wisham and nonvoting member Pastor Gene Aiken. This committee asked Cathy Joens, Anderson District Congregational Specialist, to help complete the task of setting goals for the church.

In their four meetings, the committee looked at the goals set by Administrative Council in 2016: to increase Children's Ministry participation, to increase missions participation, and to increase ministry participation. The church's progress was discussed on these goals. The next question the Long Range Planning Committee discussed is how we see ourselves as a church. The overwhelming answer was that we see ourselves as a large family. They discussed how our family is welcoming, always willing to help out, cares for one another, and cares for the community. The Committee also discussed some of the facility needs the church has.

With these discussions in mind the Long Range Planning Committee presented their findings and made a proposal to Administrative Council on May 7, 2017. The Administrative Council voted unanimously not to pursue a handicapped bathroom at this time, but to focus on some other needs of the church. The needs in order of priority are 1) a covered walkway for the back door of the church, 2) directional signage for inside and outside the church, and 3) a picnic pavilion for the field behind the church. Also, along with this proposal is the understanding there is a need for a cleanup day at the church to clear out some storage space. The Administrative Council has asked the Trustees to seek bids on the three priorities and come back to the Administrative Council with proposals for each project.

We hope that you will continue to pray along with us as we seek to continue to be good stewards of the gifts that God has provided for our church.

Ed Martin

Chair of the Administrative Council

"If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty's hand. But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up."

Wow! These rank as some of the best verses for me in Scripture. The three men were willing to give up all just to not conform and bow down to an idol. They were willing to sacrifice everything. They knew that God had the power to save them, but even if God did not save them they would still worship God. There are times in my life where I really was hoping God would save me out of a situation or that God would work a miracle of healing for a loved one, but God didn't. It is OK that God didn't, because I still worship God. The love of God is faithful and everlasting, even when we can't really see it that way. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were saved by God (really read the story to remind yourself how good it is). But the saving is not the point the faithfulness to their faith is.

I want to encourage you to share with me through email or note what is your favorite story in Scripture is and you just might hear it in a sermon this summer.

**In Christ,
Gene**



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

Address Correction Requested



Amanda Chivers - Nebraska
Jordon Cox - Kuwaits
John Holme - Ft. Bliss
Alex Martin - Virginia
Derek Mc Donald
Wayne Smith
Chris Trumbower
Josh Trumbower - Ft. Hood
Travis Wilbanks - England
John Youngblood, Jr. - Alaska