



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

As I write these words, we are on the verge of the season of Advent, a time of preparing not just for Christmas, but ultimately for Christ's return and for the coming of God's kingdom "on earth as it is in heaven." We make ourselves ready by intentionally focusing on our own growth as disciples through prayer, Scripture study, fellowship with other followers of Christ, and service to others.

It is with this same spirit of preparing for God's activity among us that a group of Mt. Zion's leaders have continued getting ready for the upcoming ReShape process that was postponed this past August. Over the past 8 weeks a group of Mt. Zion's ReShape Coordination team members and small group leaders have participated in the small group sessions that will be offered to the entire church family in early 2022. These small group sessions have been meaningful to me in important ways. First, the fellowship has been uplifting! I have enjoyed learning things about other small group participants that I did not already know, and I have benefitted from the unique perspectives and wisdom each group member has shared. Second, this has been a helpful opportunity to reflect and debrief my own experience of the pandemic with the help of Scripture and prayer. Finally, having gone through this time of small group fellowship, I feel our team is better prepared to lead the entire church through the ReShape process in early 2022, so that we might better reconnect in order to discern and follow where God is leading us as we emerge from the pandemic.

I am grateful for this team of leaders who continue to offer their time, energy, and talents out of their love for God and God's church. May this Advent season and upcoming process help each of us be shaped more fully into people who prepare the way for the coming of Christ and his kingdom!

In Christ, Pastor Jonathan

The Church Calendar at a glance

December 1 - “Come, Follow Me: Advent” study, 6:30 p.m.

December 2 - United Methodist Women Christmas Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. at Rails 133 (see p. 6)

December 5 - Men’s breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

December 8 - “Come, Follow Me: Advent” study, 6:30 p.m.

December 12 - Christmas Party for Children and Youth in Fellowship Hall, 9:30 a.m. (see p. 11)

December 12 - Christmas caroling, 4 p.m. Meet in church parking lot. (see p. 10)

December 15 - “Come, Follow Me: Advent” study, 6:30 p.m.

December 18 - Wreaths across America at Mt. Zion Cemetery, noon (see p. 6)

December 19 - Christmas Cantata presented by the Choir, 11 a.m. (see p. 4)

December 22 - “Come, Follow Me: Advent” study, 6:30 p.m.

December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight service, 5:30 p.m. (see p. 5)

December 25-January 1 - Church office closed

January 5 - United Methodist Women meeting, 2:30 p.m.

January 9 - Men’s breakfast, 8:30 a.m.

January 9 - Baptism Remembrance and Commissioning of 2022 Leaders, during 11 a.m. worship (see p. 5)

January 10 - Zoom Church Council meeting, 6:30 p.m.

Vacation Notice

Pastor Jonathan and his family will be out of town the afternoon of **December 26 through January 2**. If you need pastoral care during that time, please contact Kathy O’Brien (Staff-Parish Relations Chairperson) at 678-682-4313 so she can have one of our on-call clergy respond to your need.

December Birthdays

2 Ansley Green	26 Kris Bowman
2 Susan Drexler	27 Andrew Boggs
7 Isaac Harris	30 Mason Sims
9 Kathy O'Dell	30 Ethan Green
19 Allan Bomar	



January Birthdays

2 Susan Pressley	19 Charles Baker
3 Irene Buchanan	23 Heather Cumble
* 11 Anderson Mullinax	25 Quint Cumble
13 Buddy Evatt	26 Amanda Mullinax
17 Ava-Rae Six	29 Ashley Malmgren

December & January Anniversaries



December 1 - Danny & Susan Pressley
December 20 - Jerry & Sharon Chandler
December 29 - Lane & Jan Miller
December 31 - Terry & Mary Handegan
January 16 - David & Allison Wingard

Worship

On November 7, we celebrated **All Saints Sunday**. This is a day each year when we remember those people who have gone before us who have helped us become the people and the church we are today. In particular, we remembered the following members of Mt. Zion who passed from this life to life eternal since last year's All Saints service:

Silas Benjamin "Ben" Carson

Barbara "Bobby" Carson Garrett

Edith Lackey Wisham

"For all the saints, who from their labors rest, who thee by faith before the world confessed, thy name, O Jesus, be forever blest. Alleluia, Alleluia!"

Advent Worship Series: "Awaiting a Savior"



Advent isn't just about preparing for Christmas. It is not even just about celebrating the savior who arrived in a manger more than 2000 years ago. Advent is ultimately about readying ourselves for Christ's return. Join in worship each Sunday as we remember Christ's first coming and look ahead to when Christ comes again!

Christmas cantata - December 19

The choir will lead us in a cantata of special music to help us prepare for Christmas and our celebration of God's gift of a Savior. You will not want to miss this special offering that our choir has prepared!



Worship, continued



January Communion Change

Did you know that in The United Methodist Church, Communion can be administered only by an ordained elder or by a pastor appointed to that charge? Because Pastor Jonathan will be away on January 2, we will celebrate Communion in January on the second Sunday, January 9.



Baptism Remembrance & Commissioning of Leaders, January 9: During worship on January 9, we will celebrate a remembrance of our baptisms, renewing our vows to be disciples of Jesus. We will also commission and bless those who are serving as leaders at Mt. Zion in 2022.

Each new year is a new beginning! No matter what is in the past, we get a fresh start. The gospel is full of new beginnings. Join in worship each week from January 9 to February 6 as we hear about the new beginnings that others experienced and celebrate God's grace that always offers us a fresh start!



United Methodist Women

Mt. Zion United Methodist Women
Christmas Luncheon
December 2, 2021 @ 11:30 a.m.
Rails 133 Restaurant
115 Broad St. in Central



United Methodist Women Special Recognition 2021

The United Methodist Women presented **Chris O'Dell** with their **Special Mission Recognition Pin** during the Church Council meeting on October 11, 2021. Along with the pin, a donation will be made to missions in his honor. You all know the longtime commitment that Chris has shown to this church. Our favorite is his devotion to our church choir and his joyous singing voice. Chris has worked in many capacities over the years but most recently as treasurer for Mount Zion. Our pastor, Rev. Jonathan Harris, had this to say about Chris: "Chris has been incredibly faithful and dedicated as Mount Zion's treasurer not just during the pandemic, but also for years before that. His behind-the-scenes work is necessary in order for ministry to happen, and his recognition is well-deserved." Congratulations, Chris, on being chosen for this honor!



Wreaths across America, December 18 at noon



All are invited to a wreath-laying ceremony at the Mt. Zion Cemetery at noon on Saturday, December 18. During the ceremony, wreaths will be laid on the graves of all veterans who are buried there. Part of the purpose of this community event is education, so all ages are invited to participate.

Veteran Recognition, November 7

During worship on November 7, we celebrated these 14 veterans who call Mt. Zion their church home. Thank you for your service!

David Amidon
U.S. Air Force

Steve Lee
U.S. Air Force

Lane Miller
U.S. Air Force

Dick Singleton
U.S. Army

Fred Cone
11th Airborne

John Malmgren
U.S. Air Force

Ron Nonnenberg
U.S. Army

Wes Witcher
Army Air Force

Joe Dyar
Army Reserves

Lon Martin
U.S. Army

John Reeves
Army National Guard

Randy Hayes
U.S. Marines

Ansel Miller
U.S. Army

Cecil Rowland
U.S. Army

Thank you to
Mt. Zion's
veterans for
your service
on behalf of
others! We
are grateful
for you!

Adult Discipleship!

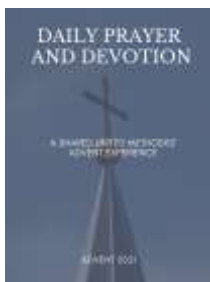
Advent Bible study, Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.



Zoom ID: 733 349 126; Pass code: 456030



Advent Devotionals Now Available!



Members of Mt. Zion, Bethel, Central, and Lawrence Chapel UMCs recently completed an Advent devotional book with devotional readings for November 28 through December 24. Hard copies will be available in the sanctuary beginning Sunday, November 28. Devotionals will also be posted daily to [facebook.com/MtZionCentral](https://www.facebook.com/MtZionCentral) and sent out to Mt. Zion's bulletin email list. Thanks to all who contributed to this project!



Emergency Contact Information

At Mt. Zion's most recent Church Council meeting, the trustees recommended, and the council approved, changes to Mt. Zion's Safe Sanctuaries policies. The council also approved a conference-mandated policy on sexual misconduct. In any emergency situation, it is important to be able to have

contact information readily available. Please keep the following names and numbers in a place where you can find them in the event that you witness or suspect abuse or misconduct on church property or at a church-sponsored activity. These numbers are also posted in each of the children/youth Sunday school classrooms and in the church office.

Staff-Parish Relations Committee Chairperson:

- Kathy O'Brien, 678-682-4313 (through 12/31/2021)
- Phil Davis, 404-734-4678 (beginning 1/1/2022)

Pastor in charge - Rev. Jonathan Harris, 864-639-2101, jdharris@umcsc.org

District superintendent - Rev. Steve Patterson, 864-226-6649, sapatterson@umcsc.org

Presiding bishop - Bishop L. Jonathan Holston, 803-786-9486, bishop@umcsc.org

SC Department Social Services Abuse & Neglect Hotline: 1-888-227-3487

Pickens County Sheriff's Office - 864-898-5500

Operation Christmas Child



From left to right: Isaac Harris shares the 66 books of the Bible in order during worship on October 31 as part of a fundraiser for Operation Christmas Child; Dean and Elizabeth Finley prepare to deliver 116 filled shoeboxes to the distribution center in Easley; Members of Mt. Zion move shoeboxes downstairs on November 14 following worship.

This year's Operation Christmas Child collection was a huge success! On Sunday, November 14 we blessed all 116 boxes that Mt. Zion members filled with toys and goodies that will spread Christmas joy to children all around the world. Way to go!

A special thank you goes out to the United Methodist Women, who ordered and folded 150 boxes and then filled 50 of them with toys. Thank you also to Dean and Elizabeth Finley for delivering all 116 of Mt. Zion's boxes to the distribution center on November 17. Finally, thank you to Zechariah Copeland, who had the idea of encouraging children to learn all 66 books of the Bible in order as an Operation Christmas Child fundraiser. Four children memorized all 66 books, and the congregation contributed \$364, which allowed the children to pack 16 boxes of their own!

Help bring Christmas cheer to some of our homebound members and others connected to Mt. Zion. We will meet at the church and caravan to houses around our community, where we will sing outside. Please plan to come (and invite a friend) as we share Christmas joy!



Discipleship for Children and Youth!

Children's handbells - As of November 21, all children are invited to join Marissa Harris at 9:40 each Sunday morning to practice handbell music for the Advent and Christmas season. Practice will be done in time for Sunday school at 10.



Sunday school

Sunday school for children and youth is downstairs **in the fellowship hall** each Sunday morning at **10 a.m.** All children, youth, and volunteers are asked to please wear a mask and practice social distancing. Any who are not yet comfortable meeting inside, in-person, are invited to participate online through Zoom.

Zoom ID: 871 6710 1740

Pass code: 650438



All Christmas party participants are asked to please wear a mask. The party will take place in the fellowship hall.



Per our recently revised [Safe Sanctuaries Policy](#), we ask that guardians of children and youth please complete and turn in a 2021-2022 Medical and Photo Release Form. You can find this form online at <http://mtzioncentral.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/Medical-and-Photo-Release-Form-2021-22.pdf> or from Zechariah Copeland.

Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
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Address Correction Requested

