



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

What an exciting time here at Mt. Zion. We are busy around the church with many different things going on. I want to take a moment to update you on two of them.

We are planning on starting construction of the ramp in the Sanctuary on February 22nd. It is expected that this will take around 3-4 weeks to complete. While the ramp is being constructed we will meet downstairs in the Fellowship Hall.

The second thing I wanted to update you on is the results of our visioning process. We spent four Sunday afternoons in November and December talking about where the church has been, where we are now, and where it is God may be calling us to. Out of these conversations the Church Council met and set out three goals for the church over the next 5 years. The goals are:

We want to double the Children's Ministry

We want to be more involved in missions, especially hands on missions

We want to build more support for the ministries that we already have

I will spend some time in the near future talking about how we will accomplish these goals. These are goals that will push us, but are also very attainable. It is going to take the work of the whole church to attain these goals, but I am confident that we can. I am excited about the future of Mt. Zion and I hope that you are as well.

In Christ,

Gene



UMW Valentine's Soup Luncheon—Sunday, February 14

The UMW is sponsoring its annual Valentine's **Soup Luncheon** this year on **Sunday, February 14th**. We hope that you will be able to join us for this fun luncheon immediately after the worship service. In keeping with the new goals for the church, the soup luncheon is going to be "advertised" in the community events section of the Seneca Journal/Messenger. Pictured here are two of our sweet Valentines enjoying last year's luncheon. Donations will be accepted and proceeds will go toward mission work.

Sharon Chandler



The **Eloise Gaines and Dolly Brock Circles of Mt. Zion's United Methodist Women (UMW)** met February 2nd at the church with twelve members present. UMW president, **Elizabeth Finley** presided and presented the program titled "Escape from North Korea".

Their March meeting will be held at 2:00 p.m. rather than 2:30 in order to carpool to the Clemson Area African American Museum for their program. The museum is located at the Calhoun Bridge Center, 214 Butler Street. Meet at the church on **Tuesday, March 1st at 2:00 p.m.** for devotion and business. All interested ladies are invited to attend.



From the Trustees:

The trustees are always hard at work in our church. Since many of the things they do are “behind the scenes”, you may not see all the things that trustees do. They ensure that our buildings are in good repair and that includes the heating, air conditioning, and plumbing at the both the church and the parsonage. Many maintenance tasks are completed by trustees and other church volunteers. This keeps the church’s maintenance cost low so we can be good stewards of God’s money. If you discover an issue that you feel needs to be addressed, contact any one of the trustees: **Jerry Chandler, Al Cumbie, Steve Lee, Virginia Norwood, Kathy O’Dell, or John Wisham.**

We are currently completing the church incorporation process and have established our tax exempt status under Section 501 (C-3) of the Internal Revenue Code. As a church member, you should not see any changes to our church. Since we are now one corporate body, it protects our trustees, officers, and members from being named in a church related lawsuit. We still have the same amount of liability coverage to shield us if a claim or lawsuit is filed against the church corporation.

The Sanctuary upgrades are scheduled to start on February 22. Pastor Gene will keep everyone informed about our alternate meeting location. These three to four weeks of inconvenience will be worth it to have a safe handicapped-accessible ramp to reach the offices, class rooms, and restrooms behind the sanctuary. In addition to that, we are upgrading the podium area with attractive hardwood flooring and refreshing the look of the stained wood trim. We hope everyone is looking forward to the work being completed and its dedication.



Jerry Chandler



It's time to get started on the **United Methodist Women's Reading Program** for 2016. Please see **Myra Armistead** (639-6240) for information about the program and a list of approved books that are in the Pickens County Library. Lists of all books in the program are available online by typing United Methodist Women Reading Program. Many works are accessible as E-books through libraries and other sources. Some of the newest selections available in the Pickens County Library, including one about an Upstate church, are listed below.

- *I am Malala: the Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban.* Malala Yousefzai. In 2014, Malala became the youngest person ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize.
- *In Defense of Food: an Eater's Manifesto.* Michael Pollan. (Food wisdom once passed down through generations has been distorted by marketers and others, for gain.)
- *Just Mercy: a Story of Justice and Redemption.* Bryan Stevenson. (Concerns the Equal Justice Initiative, dedicated to defending the wrongly condemned and others in need.)
- *Lean In: Women, Work and the Will to Lead.* Sheryl Sandberg.
- *The Weight of Mercy: a Novice Pastor on the City Streets.* Deb Richardson-Moore. (Concerns an inner city church in Greenville, SC) *

* Editor's note: The church referred to here is Triune UMC. The idea for the South Main Chapel & Mercy Center (mentioned in the last issue of *The Grapevine* and also on page 5 of this issue) grew out of a vision first cast by Anderson District Superintendent, Rev. Susan Leonard-Ray. After a visit by Rev. Leonard-Ray, Rev. Kurt Stutler and Anderson United Way President, Carol Burdette, to Triune Mercy Center in Greenville, plans began to formulate around establishing a church and ministry at what once was Orville UMC on South Main Street in Anderson. Like Triune, South Main Chapel & Mercy Center (SMC&MC) works alongside those dealing with homelessness and poverty. For more information call 864-437-8298.

From Missions and Evangelism Committee

Blankets were delivered and warmly received at the South Main Chapel & Mercy Center in Anderson. The pastor and several members of the church were present when the blankets arrived, and they all expressed how this donation of **33 blankets** was "amazing" and "awesome". Thank you so much, Mt. Zion, for your generous support in our first mission wave of 2016!



Coming up next : **Volunteer Opportunities with Family Promise**

If you are interested in getting involved with Family Promise, a non-profit organization committed to helping low-income families achieve independence, please join us on **Wednesday, February 17 at 6:30 p.m.** We will meet in 402 (conference room) at Clemson UMC's new Christian Life Center which the building at the rear of the property. Training will begin with a sharing of information, the do's and don'ts, followed by a tour of the facilities.

The greatest needs are volunteers spending time doing activities with the families in the evening and on Saturdays, and overnight volunteers that sleep at the church for security and in case any needs should arise in the night. There are other opportunities such as transport of beds, clean-up crew, and providing meals, but the most needed support is in folks willing to give their time in fellowship with the families.



The next time Clemson UMC will host Family Promise is February 28—March 6. Please make plans to join the fun and share the love of Jesus with our neighbors.

Ashley Gelder



Welcome! Mt. Zion's Pianist

Donna Abercrombie began piano lessons at age five and was accompanying junior high and senior high chorus before graduating from high school in Northfield, N.J. Having a strong Wesleyan upbringing, she selected Southern Wesleyan University for her degree in elementary and special ed. and ended up staying in South Carolina. Having to retire early for health reasons, Donna says that she is living her hobbies now...farm life and ridding horses.

As a bone marrow recipient and cancer survivor, Donna readily gives thanksgiving and praise to God as she celebrates her birthday and 20th wedding anniversary in

February. A son of long-time Mt. Zion members, the late Rufus and Ruth Abercrombie, her husband, Harold, grew up in Mt. Zion. The Abercrombie window in the sanctuary is in memory of Harold's paternal grandparents. Harold and Donna are members at Pendleton UMC.

Children's Choir

We are thrilled to announce that **Miriam Coffman** will be leading our Children's Choir at Mt. Zion. She has done this in the past but is now taking a more formal approach. They will practice several times a month during the former Children's Church time. You will notice Miriam leave the sanctuary with the children as they will sing and practice downstairs. We are so appreciative to Miriam as she begins this endeavor.



BIRTHDAYS:

February: Grayson Bowman (1), Peggy Bodie (2), Bill Carson (3), Katie Ferguson (3), Will Mullinax (3), Cherylene Amidon (10), B.J. Skeleton (11), Gene Aiken (14), Taylor Ray (15), Logan Rice (16), Cole Parsons (17), Trent Allen (20), Donna Abercrombie (22), Virginia Norwood (22), David Wingard (28), Rae Romberg (29)

March: Karen Martin (5), Gail Wingard (7), Neil Smith (8), Abigail Wingard (9), John Reeves (11), Mike Ferguson (18), Wanda Miles (20), Dot Johnston (24), Loralee Cassell (25), Allison Wingard (25), Scott Smith (28), Elizabeth Finley (28)



ANNIVERSARIES:

February: Harold & Donna Abercrombie (23)

March: John & Kristine Reeves (8), Trent & Ginger Allen (13), Ron & Eileen Nonnenberg (21), Dave & Cherylene Amidon (27), Scott & Karen Smith (30).

Be sure to contact the church office (639-2101) if we have overlooked your special day.



We thank **Sharon Miller** for donating *The Epworth Story: Epworth Children's Home, Columbia, S. C., 1896-1985* to the Church Library.



An abundance of photograph reproductions add interest to this concise history, as does an institutional peanut butter ice cream recipe that has "75 eggs" as the first ingredient.

Myra Armistead



Lent is a season of spiritual preparation during which we recall the whole life, teachings and ministry of Jesus.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent and continues for 40 days, not counting Sundays. This year it begins on February 10th and Mt. Zion will participate in an Ash Wednesday service at Lawrence Chapel. (see page 12) The ashes used to make the sign of the cross on the forehead of a believer during the service are from the charred remains of the palm branches used on Palm Sunday the previous year. The connection of Palm Sunday and Ash Wednesday is appropriate since Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem led Him quickly to His death. Ashes have been symbolic, since early biblical times, of repentance of sin or of grief in mourning.

These 40 days symbolize Jesus' trail and preparation in the wilderness after His baptism and before the beginning of His ministry. He spent those 40 days fasting and praying. Some individuals or families decide to give up (sacrifice) something during Lent as an offering to God.

Holy Week is the last week of Lent. Holy Week observances began in Jerusalem in the earliest days of the Church when devout people traveled to Jerusalem at Passover to reenact the events of the week leading up to the Resurrection.



Another common service for **Good Friday** is Tenebrae (Latin for "shadows" or "darkness"). Sometimes this term is applied generally to all church services on the last three days of Holy Week. More specifically, however, it is used as the Service of Darkness or Service of Shadows, usually held in the evening of Good Friday. Again, there are varieties of this service, but it is usually characterized by a series of Scripture readings and meditation done in stages while lights and/or candles are gradually extinguished to symbolize the growing darkness not only of Jesus' death but of hopelessness in the world without God. The service ends in darkness, sometimes with a final candle, the

Christ candle, carried out of the sanctuary, symbolizing the death of Jesus. Often the service concludes with a loud noise symbolizing the closing of Jesus' tomb. The worshipers then leave in silence to wait. (see page 12 for service at Mt. Zion)

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. Note **that information for each Sunday's bulletin is due by 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday before. Email to Chery Amidon at: camidon@clermson.edu**

February:

7—Men's Club, 8:30 a.m.

Young Adult Couples Group, 5:00, p.m. **at the Nielubowicz's home, 104 Arbors Court, Central**

9—Bible Study at the parsonage, 6:30 p.m.

10—Pancake supper, 5:30 p.m., Lawrence Chapel UMC (see page 12)

Ash Wednesday Service, 7:00 p. m., Lawrence Chapel UMC (see page 12)

14—Soup Luncheon after church (see page 2)

15—Reservations begin (864-224-2531 - event is free—see March 17th below)

16—Bible Study at the parsonage, 6:30 p. m.

17—Family Promise Training, 6:30 p.m. at Clemson UMC (see page 5)

23—Bible Study at the parsonage, 6:30 p. m.

28-March 6—Clemson UMC hosting Family Promise

March:

1—UMW, 2:00 p. m.

Bible Study at the parsonage, 6:30 p. m.

6—Men's Club, 8:30 a. m.

8—Bible Study at the parsonage. 6:30 p. m.

13—Daylight Savings Time begins

15—Bible Study at the parsonage, 6:30 p.m.

17-20—Journey to the Resurrection, Trinity UMC, Anderson. [www.trinityanderson.com]

20—Palm Sunday

22—Bible Study at the parsonage, 6:30 p. m.

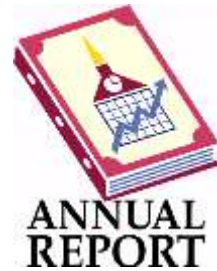
24—Holy Thursday Service, 7 p. m. at Lawrence Chapel UMC (see page 12)

25—Tenebrae Service, 7 p. m. (see pages 8 & 12)

27—Easter Sunday

29—Bible Study at the parsonage, 6:30 p. m.

Year End Finance Report



	December	Year Ended 2015
Donations	31,707	167,714
Operating Expenses	<u>(18,383)</u>	<u>(163,927)</u>
Net Donations In Excess of Expenses	13,324	3,787

We give thanks to God and this congregation for the blessings we have been given. Because of the generous gifts of the congregation, we were able to pay 100% of our apportionment to the South Carolina Conference and meet our expenses for 2015. Those expenses include some major unexpected expenses such as a new AC unit and the moving of a pastor. The faithfulness of this congregation allows us to think about what it is we can do in the future and to set ambitious goals. **Thank you to everyone for your gifts. Each one of you makes Mt. Zion a better place in many different ways.**

The South Carolina United Methodist churches paid 91.1% of their apportionments for 2015 which is the first time the conference has achieved more than the 90% mark since 2002. The conference treasurer said "Our churches have demonstrated their commitment to the connectional ministries of our church in so many ways, including financial stewardship".



Beverly Smith Guild

The Guild had several holiday activities and service projects this season. As a service to the church, we polished the brass in the sanctuary to spruce things up for the season. We also purchased additional acolyte robes. We adopted a family for Christmas and each did some shopping and wrapping to help with a family that Ashley Gelder was working with and had limited resources for Christmas gifts for the children. We filled about 300 gift bags for the annual holiday party given by Clemson Community Care for the clients' children. Our **next meeting will be on February 17th**. If any of you ladies are interested in local missions and would like an evening fellowship, please join us.

Vicki Miesbauer

Those who serve - Thank You!

Nursery

February:

7—Elizabeth Bowman/ Catherine Ferguson

14—Jane Jones/ Janet Crenshaw

21—Ginger Mullinax/ Isaiah Mullinax

28—Libba Carson/ Randy Martin

March:

6—Heather Cumbie/ Benji Cumbie

13—Jan Miller/ (help needed)

20— Libba Carson/ Vicki Miesbauer

27— Sharon Chandler/ Terri Lee



March 13th

Scripture Readers

February

7—Benji Cumbie

14—B. J. Skelton

21—Sharon Chandler

28—John Reeves

March

6—Elizabeth Finley

13—Serena Miles

20—Lynn Martin

27—Benji Cumbie



The Mt. Zion Choir is currently meeting on Sunday mornings at 9:30, in the choir room which is located through the door next to the organ. New members are welcomed.

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



Mount Zion will be joining with Lawrence Chapel UMC in their sanctuary for an **Ash Wednesday Service, February 10th**. There will be a **pancake supper** fundraiser benefiting the Youth Program starting at 5:30 p.m. in the Lawrence Chapel fellowship building. **Pastor Gene** will be **preaching at 7:00 p.m.** Bring a friend or neighbor and join us in fellowship as we begin this Lenten season. Lawrence Chapel UMC is located at 2101 Six Mile Hwy., Central, SC



Holy Thursday Service with Lawrence Chapel, at Lawrence Chapel, **7:00 p.m. March 24th. Rev. Garland preaching.**

Tenebrae Service 7:00 p.m. on Good Friday, March 25th, with Lawrence Chapel, at Mount Zion.

Easter Sunday— 11:00 a.m. Worship , March 27th