



NEWS from the pews

Mount Zion United Methodist Church
Finksburg, Maryland

The bi-monthly newsletter for our members and friends



WINTER 2024

CALENDAR

JANUARY

TUESDAY, JANUARY 2

7:30 p.m. - Finance Meeting

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service
Communion Sunday

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

7:30 p.m. - Trustees Meeting

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service & Fellowship

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16

7:30 p.m. - Church Council

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service

FEBRUARY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service
Communion Sunday

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service & Fellowship

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14

12:30 & 7 p.m. - Ash Wednesday Services; *Lent Begins*

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service

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Notes from the Pastor



Rev. Shawn Vollmerhausen

Happy New Year! It's still hard to believe that 2023 has come to an end and we are now entering into 2024. I hope everyone had a blessed Christmas and a great New Year.

I think we can all say that 2023 brought its ups and downs in each of our lives. Some of us experienced loss and illness and there were times when it felt so dark. Some experienced change in our lives and we have definitely seen

change in the church. Even though there were times when things seemed dark and depressing, there also have been times of joy and celebration.

The most amazing thing about 2023 and all of these times that we all went through personally is one thing that is guaranteed is that God was walking all of these steps with us the whole time. One joy and blessing I can share from last year has been becoming your pastor. These past several months have been amazing for not only myself but for my family as well. Mount Zion has something special going on and I can't wait to see what the Lord has in store for us, not only in the coming months but further into the future.

As we enter into 2024, we know that as in years past we don't know what lies ahead of us. However, we can enter into this new year with optimism and hope for things to come.

We will be meeting soon to start planning different events such as bringing back the Pancake Breakfast that the community has been hoping would return. In addition to that, possibly a spring craft event and as the weather warms, an early picnic. If anyone has any other ideas for the coming year, please let myself, Jerry, or LaDonna know and we can explore those opportunities.

The Season of Lent and Easter are coming up over the next three months. Here are some key dates:

- **February 14** - Ash Wednesday; Service times 12:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.
- **February 17 to March 28** - Lent; During Lent, I will have study material for those interested to take home
- **March 24** - Palm Sunday
- **March 29** - Good Friday



PRAYER MINISTRY

As followers of Jesus, it is very important that we stay in touch with each other. Remember to call, send cards, visit, and pray for these members of our church family who are under the weather.

JANUARY

- 2 Kim Fitzwater
- 5 Bonnie Graham
- 8 Renee Clifford
- 13 Lee McDonough
- 16 Barbara Menchey
- 18 Marc Binkley
- 23 Lisa Tingler
- 25 Amanda Cobb-Crock
- 26 Barbara Hayes
- 28 Willa Johnson
LaDonna Schemm

FEBRUARY

- 7 Nancy Cross
- 9 Gerri Rhodes
- 10 Debbie Hockett
- 17 Justin Bussard
- 25 Cindy Hunter

MARCH

- 1 Shirley Loveless
- 7 Melissa Johnson
- 10 Lew Wimmer
- 12 Jo Tully
- 15 Travis Bussard
Jeanette Holbert
- 16 Doris Euler
Elizabeth Kirby
- 23 Isabelle Diaz
- 30 David Fitzwater

The family of **Kay Newcomb** who passed away on December 20 (mother of Joyce Mirfin) • The family of our faithful supporter, **Joan Resch**, who passed away three weeks ago in Florida • The family of **Bobby Graham**, who lost his brother William

Gerri Rhodes • Marty Brown • Ginny Hoy • Peggy Bosley • Pat Murphy • Mary Moores • Morrisa Vollmerhausen (wife of our Pastor) • **Tracey Davidson** (Bonnie Moores)

Hutton (son of Wendy Raymond – Sherry Reed – in Israel) • **Sandra Hawkins** (Bonnie Moores) • **Robert Tighe** (Joan Tighe) • **Adam Zepp** (Dawn Zepp)

Ethel Briggs • Adam Haught (Leslie Gabler) • **Larry Elavsky** (Jerry & Becky Knop) • **Valerie McNeal** (LaDonna Schemm) • **Barbara Hayes** (upcoming surgery)

At Home or in Care Homes:

- **Virginia Hoy**, 5060 Harney Road, Taneytown, MD 21787
- **Peggy Wade** Spring Arbor of Severna Park, Room #114, 345 Ritchie Hwy, Severna Park, MD 21146
- **Tommy DeMoss**, Westminster Healthcare Center, #221, 1234 Washington Rd, Westminster, MD 21157
- **Wayne Wray**, 5836 Bartholow Road, Eldersburg, MD 21784

Help us keep our Prayer Ministry up to date! Report any needs or concerns to Pastor Shawn 410-790-5214 Barbara Hayes 410-596-1483, bbhayes@verizon.net or Pastor Emeritus Lou. We update our prayer list every thirty days.

An Attitude of Gratitude!

We are grateful to those of you who are not able to be in Sunday worship attendance yet continue to financially support the ongoing ministry and outreach of the Mount Zion congregation.

Thank you to our ushers:

- January - **Dave Fitzwater** and **Eddie**
- February - **Don Hennessee** and **Eddie**
- March - **Shirley Love** and **Bob Hayes**

We need sponsors for **The Upper Room** for January-February and March-April. Get your copy of this Daily Devotional Guide! Both regular and large print are available.

The Bulletin Board

Newsletter News

PLEASE NOTE: Publication of the Newsletter will be discontinued after this one, the Winter 2024 issue.

Music Ministry

Music is a vital part of our congregational worship of God. Why not become part of our Sunday music yourself? Become a member of our "Faithful Few!" To get involved please talk to **Director of Music Leslie Gabler**. Rehearsals are on Wednesday evenings.

Ushers and Greeters

We need ushers and greeters for 2024! Please see **Barb Hayes** or call her at 410-596-1483 to sign up for a month or just a Sunday. Ushers and greeters are asked to come early and hand out bulletins and help collect the offering. Please help!

The Upper Room Sponsors

We need sponsors for **The Upper Room** for 2024! Get your copy of this Daily Devotional Guide! Both regular and large print are available.

Welcome to Mount Zion!

Pastor Shawn
Vollmerhausen
410-790-5214

Leslie Gabler,
Director of Music

A United Methodist
community congregation
since 1856



3006 Old Westminster Pike • P.O. Box 511
Finksburg, Maryland 21048
410-517-2300 • MtZionUMC-Finksburg.org

"SOUPER" BOWL SUNDAY!

Sunday, February 11

We don't yet know which teams will be playing in **Super Bowl LVIII**, but we do know that we will be holding our annual **"Souper Bowl Sunday"** on Sunday, February 11!

Whip up a batch of your favorite soup (or soups) and bring it in a crock pot to share. We will provide crackers and bread.

Please check in with "souper-visor" **Becky Knop** and let her know what soup(s) you will be bringing. Kathy Giroux will be helping her with bread and crackers.

Don't forget those in need!

Please bring a pop-top can of soup to donate to the food pantry at Shepherd's Staff.



5 THINGS TO DO (NOT GIVE UP) FOR LENT

Patty Kirk, Guidepost Magazine

Lent is usually a time to give something up. But could it also be a time to try something new? To commit to a new positive habit? Are there things to do for this season that can bring us closer to God and teach you the deeper meaning of Lent?

Lent doesn't always mean forbidding ourselves some pleasure. It can be an opportunity to seek the pleasure of God's presence. Having discovered my faith after spending two decades abstaining from everything God-related, I like to devote the Lenten period to seeking out and indulging in God's presence. Here are five suggestions of things to start (not give up) during this Lenten season.

1. Get outdoors

One of the simplest and most immediate ways for me to get a sense of God's presence is to go outside and look for it.

Although I live out in the country, I'm indoors much of the time, often spending whole days—in my office at the university where I teach, in my house, in stores—barely aware of the weather or what's growing or what birds are singing.

To remind myself of God's omnipresence, I plan outdoor time: a trip across campus for my mail instead of having it delivered, a long run on the country roads near my house, a magically relaxing moment of bird watching.

My garden has always been for me what Celtic believers call a "thin place": a place where the membrane between our world and God seems particularly thin.

When I'm out turning the cold wet dirt with my spade or sowing early seeds—spinach, radishes, peas—or harvesting the slender onions that volunteer themselves to the sunlight after the long winter, I connect with the presence of the One who created it all.

2. Spend time with others

Another place where I'm sure to find God is in others, specifically those who are—or should be—the recipients of my generosity and compassion. The needy themselves, according to Jesus, are God. In answer to his disciples' questions about what to expect at the end of time, Jesus envisions himself enthroned in

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CALENDAR, CONT'D

MARCH

SUNDAY, MARCH 3

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service
Communion Sunday

TUESDAY, MARCH 5

7:30 p.m. - Finance Committee

SUNDAY, MARCH 10

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service

TUESDAY, MARCH 12

7:30 p.m. - Church Trustees

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

9:55 a.m. - Sunday Service

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

7:30 p.m. - Church Council

SUNDAY, MARCH 24

9:55 a.m. - Palm Sunday Service

FRIDAY, MARCH 29

12 noon - Good Friday Service
7:30 p.m. - Good Friday Service

SUNDAY, MARCH 31 - EASTER

7:00 a.m. - Sunrise Service
9:55 a.m. - Easter Service



JANUARY

- 6** Lori & Mark Lesky
Heather & Dan Bussard
- 20** Clara & James Kirby

FEBRUARY

None

MARCH

None

MISSIONS REPORT

By Barb Hayes

THE GOAT IS HUNGRY!! We are asking everyone to continue to Feed the Goat each week. Remember.... just one canned good per person each week will help us help others. We have been able to assist so many folks with your help and we want to continue. And don't forget, if you know someone who needs food or if you need assistance yourself, please do not hesitate to ask.

Remember, we are always collecting personal hygiene items for the **Shepherd's Staff**. Please place all donations in the Goat, or contact **Barb Hayes** for pick-up.

SIX 2024 NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS YOU SHOULD KEEP

The practice of making New Year's resolutions goes back over 3,000 years to the ancient Babylonians. There is just something about the start of a new year that gives us the feeling of a fresh start and a new beginning. In reality, there is no difference between December 31 and January 1. Nothing mystical occurs at midnight on December 31. The Bible does not speak for or against the concept of New Year's resolutions. However, if a Christian determines to make a New Year's resolution, what kind of resolution should he or she make?

Here are 6 resolutions for our Mount Zion members to consider making for 2024:

1. I will deepen my faith in God by spending 8 to 10 minutes each day in quiet meditation speaking to God but more importantly - listening to God.
2. Each day I will lift up one positive thought based on the teachings of Jesus rather than a negative thought.
3. If I am able to get to the church building, I will put the Sunday morning worship of God as a priority in my life.
4. If I am not able to get to the church building, I will take the 9:55 worship hour and spend it on meditation and prayer.
5. Each month, I will get in touch with one person who may be homebound or in health care by sharing a call, visiting, sending a card, or sharing God's love in some way. Our Pastors can help with a name and contact information.
6. My goal will be to read at least one of the Gospels (Mark, Matthew, Luke, John) during this coming year. Don't know where to start? Try "Mark" since it was the first one written.



GET THE BUZZ ON THE BUSY BEES

One of the groups that use our social hall is called the **Busy Bees**. Our own **Lois Pulket** is one of the Bees and helps coordinate the meetings and projects. The Bees are a group of women who like to teach each other quilting methods, techniques, and patterns. They're also buzzing around doing charitable projects that are both local and worldwide in scope, including their commitment to bring canned goods to each meeting to help fill our Goat. Among their good works, the Bees assemble and ship boxes of goodies for military personnel stationed overseas and make quilts and blankets for Project Linus, which gives these blankets to hospitalized children. The group also makes t-shirt dresses for young girls in Haiti, who would otherwise have no clothes. These dresses are styled using a t-shirt with material added to the bottom as a skirt. A pocket is added to each dress and stuffed with a pair of underwear.

The Busy Bees recently held their Christmas Party in the church social hall (see photo).



Lent, continued from page 3

heaven, dividing the nations into two groups: those who showed him hospitality when he was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick and alone, and those who did not. Neither group remembers encountering Jesus in such circumstances, and he explains, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." I don't have to go very far to find God in the needy. They're all around me: retired colleagues, a neighbor kid whose mom needs a break, the mom herself. During Lent, I consciously set out to enjoy moments with them.

3. Pray for the little things during Lent

During Lent I pray more often—out in the garden, on my runs, over lunch with friends. I also pray smaller, about the most minor details of my life: to-do lists, writing deadlines, lost keys. Others may consider such prayers inappropriate or irreverent. Many limit their prayers to desires they think God wants for them, not what they want for themselves.

Certainly, we should put God's will before ours. But aren't we also meant to be childlike in our faith? My daughters prayed about the most minute details of their lives—a lost toy, a sibling fight, a hard test, a bad breakup. Often, even when they prayed in anger or malice, I sensed a peace in them afterward, as though God had heard and answered their prayers. It's never wrong to pray about anything.

4. Look for miracles during Lent

Early in my adult faith I longed to read the Bible daily. As a full-time teacher and the mother of two toddlers, though, I had to spend what little unoccupied time I had grading papers. So I prayed for more time.

I didn't really expect anything to change. And nothing did, exactly. I stayed just as busy at work, grading papers, just as busy at home, as I always had. Nevertheless, somehow I was able to get it all done. Every morning, that whole year, I read the Bible. I was granted the miracle of time.

Lent is a time to consciously acknowledge and appreciate life's daily miracles. The miracles of dirt and winter onions and answered prayers.

5. Turn worry into Lenten prayers

If I ever felt challenged to give a cherished or unhealthy habit up for Lent, it would have to be worrying. Worries about my daughters or money or some conflict wake me most nights. I even worry about worrying. And I'm forever vowing, in vain, to stop. In the spirit of Lenten renewal, though, I weave my worrying into prayers. I call it "pray-worrying," the closest I've ever come to that mysterious faith achievement of "just giving it to Jesus." "Here's this problem," I rant, as though God were a student who had skipped several classes. Then I worry forth my certitude of how bad things are and how much worse they're likely to get.

I may sound pushy, disrespectful even, in my prayer-worries, and I am. I am as self-absorbed and demanding as my teenage daughters can be. But here's the thing. During Lent and always, God is present. Nearby. Listening. Longing to respond. If the one thing I give up during the Lenten season is worry, it's only because I take on prayer. Prayer always draws us closer to God, and that is what Lent is all about—finding greater opportunities to bring the Divine into our daily lives. Hopefully that is what I can teach my daughters.

ONLINE GIVING

Are you tired of writing checks or bringing cash to the service? Do you keep forgetting to bring your envelope? Consider the convenience of online giving! It's fast, easy, and safe! You can give one time or set up recurring gifts.

For questions or help, contact Mark Hemler at 410-299-7517 or Mark.Hemler428@gmail.com. You can give your offering online, using a credit card, a debit card, or a bank ACH transaction at the following website:

mtzionumcfinksburg.breezechms.com/give/online

I Love This Church!

I love its history and heritage!

I love its vision and future!

I love the spirit of Jesus which is in the hearts and lives of our members and friends!

We aren't perfect but we are pressing on to be more "Christ-like" every day!

I love this church!



HELP FILL THE GOAT!

The need is year-round! Shepherd's Staff *always* needs your donations of paper towels, toilet paper, clothes soap, deodorant, and other personal items, like body wash, shampoo, shaving cream, toothbrushes and toothpaste, dental floss, lotions, etc.

Also, please bring non-perishable food items to donate on the first Sunday of every month. Place all donations in the "goat" in the social hall.



Mount Zion United Methodist Church

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Our Winter 2024 Newsletter!