

To the folks and friends of Mt. Zion,

I again thank you for participating in Advent/Christmas events this year. Our theme, “*The Road to Christmas*”, invites us to travel on a road that enables to explore the deep, spiritual mystery of God’s gift to us in the birth of Jesus.

You probably have noticed the various road signs that have appeared on our Sunday bulletins and those signs that have been placed in front of the sanctuary. The message displayed on a sign last Sunday read: “PRAYING ANYTIME -12 A.M. TO 12 P.M.” Spending time in prayer is an important way to help us prepare our hearts to receive God’s message of hope, love, and peace. And that’s a discipline we can practice anytime of the day.

I will keep you and your family in my prayers as you prepare for this important holy season. And I ask that we all join together to pray for peace; peace for the world, peace for the country, and for an everlasting peace that envelops our hearts; a peace that the world cannot give nor take away.

Grace & Peace,

Gary

Sunday Morning Worship December 17, 2017 **Third Sunday of Advent**

Lesson: John 1:6-8, 19-28

Sermon “John’s Opening Act”

Advent & Christmas Theme

“The Road to Christmas”

December 17, 2017 Third Sunday of Advent - The Purpose of the Road

Sermon Title: “*John’s Opening Act*” John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24, 2017 Fourth Sunday of Advent - The Travelers on the Road

Sermon Title: “*Room For Those on the Outside*” Matthew 1:18-25

Only one service on Sunday morning at 10 a.m.

December 24, 2017 Christmas Eve - The Road that Leads Home

Sermon Title “*Good News for You!*” 4 pm Luke 2:1-7

Sermon Title “*God’s Unlikely Entrance*” 7 pm & 9 pm Luke 2:1-7

Here are some **events and opportunities** for you to get connected in the church:

Shepherding Team #5 Is On Call This Week, December 17th to December 23rd. Contact Frances and Roger Colvin.

SCRIP on Sale for Missions: Wow!!! What a super day of Gift Card purchasing and Giant Card donations. Ordered cards will be delivered next Sunday and more purchases can be made. Please order cards I have in stock: \$10 denomination cards include Chipotle, Cracker Barrel, Dunkin Donuts, Starbucks, (\$5 ones too), Target, and Walmart, Domino’s, Pizza Hut, Subway, Panera, Bob Evans, Bath and Body Works, and Barnes and Noble. \$15 iTunes. Special \$25 Dunkin Donuts. And many more \$25 cards. See you Sunday! Thanks again for your purchases for Missions. First come, first served.

SAGE Brigade: Friday, December 15th at Noon. We will enjoy our Christmas celebration together. Please join the group for lunch and fellowship and bring a side dish or dessert to share. Contact Debbie Burgio for more information.

The Open Doors Food Pantry needs your help! When: Friday December 15, 2017 from 1:00 to 4:00 to help organize **lots** of food and set up for our Christmas Pantry **and/or** Saturday December 16, 2017 from 7:30 to 12:30 to serve those in need and help clean up. Any time you have to come on out and help is a blessing. Don't forget to drop your loose change in the offering basket! Questions, email Carol Hill or Laurie Norwood: opendoorsfoodpantry@gmail.com.

UMM will be selling nuts (various types) in the fellowship hall between services (10-11am) from now until Christmas, or until supply lasts.

This years Advent Study is Christmas: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly. We currently have 3 options - Wednesdays at 7:00pm with Pastor Gary & Monday Mornings at 10:00am starting 12/4; Sundays at 10:10 with the Drop in Class starting 12/3. or if you would like to host a group - we are still looking for facilitators. Books will be available in Fellowship Hall

The Ginny White Circle will meet on Wednesday, December 20 in Conference Room 2. Betty Cashmark is chairman and is also in charge of devotions. Following the meeting, we will have lunch at Seasons 52 at the Mall in Columbia at 12:30.

UPCOMING NEW MEMBER SESSIONS – For those interested in joining Mt. Zion Church, new member classes will be held on the following Sundays, January 14, 21, & 28 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Calling all cooks and those who like to eat! Join our Cooking Group once a month and cook a meal to eat as well as enough to freeze for use by the Shepherding teams. If you are interested, please contact Debra Leiss.

The Care Giver's Group meets the 3rd Sunday of every month between services, in the church library. Contact Judy H. Johnson..

Seated Chair Class in the Chapel on Wednesday mornings 9:30-10:00. Join us as we build strength, increase flexibility and balance in 30 minutes. **No class on the following dates:** Dec. 20, Dec. 27*, Jan. 17, Feb. 21, Mar.21, Apr. 18, May 16, June 20. *Class vote. Contact: Bettye Ames. or Front Office.

Pajamas Needed!! Nights are getting colder and the need for new pajamas is getting greater for children without the security of a stable home who are living in shelters, long-term foster care and group homes. Winter is the coldest January thru March but, unfortunately, this is when the PJ Program receives the lowest number of donations. Please donate New Pajamas (sizes Infants through Teens) and/or new storybooks. Collection at Mt Zion January 1 thru January 15, 2018. Distribution in Maryland is by the Pajama Program (www.pajamaprogram.org). Let's not let the season of giving end when the nights are the coldest! Contact: Karen Williams