

Dear Members of Mt. Zion,

The mid-term election is over. Candidates from all political persuasions have taken down their placards placed in the neighborhoods and along the roads. While political spinners have spun and pundits have pontificated, we all know that the problems and concerns of life don't evaporate after an election. All of us must still deal with our own personal struggles and also find ways to respond to the issues that face our society and rise to the challenge of helping those who are experiencing crisis here and abroad.

We have been heart-broken by the tragic news coming out of California due to the uncontrollable fires that many first responders and firefighters in and out the state are so valiantly trying to put out. At the time of my writing these words, 58 people have lost their lives. Thousands of people have lost their homes. The community of Paradise has been totally destroyed.

I know that you are praying for all whose lives have been completely altered by this disaster. This is important and I encourage you to continue praying. If you would like to respond in a concrete way, you can go on the following website [www.umcor.org](http://www.umcor.org) – find the Advance UMCOR US Disaster Response and Recovery – (901670) and make a monetary gift.

Grace & Peace,

Gary

Sunday Worship

November 18, 2018

Scripture Lessons: 1 Samuel 1:4-20/Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25/Mark 13:1-8

Message: "God's Grace Trumps House Rules"

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

**Shepherding Team #8 Is On Call This Week, November 18<sup>th</sup> to November 24<sup>th</sup>.** Contact Joyce Saunderson

**Safe Sanctuary** - In our continuing efforts to ensure that Mt. Zion is a safe, secure environment for our church community, last month we conducted a safety walk-thru of the church complex with the Howard County Police Department. As a result, there are a number of recommendations that the Trustees are reviewing for implementation. One of those security recommendation, is that during the Sunday worship hours, the rear (side) door to the church should remain locked. Therefore, **beginning Sunday, December 2nd, the rear/side door to the church will remain locked during Sunday worship hours.** We will soon be posting a sign on those doors alerting people that they will be locked. If you have any concerns, please contact the church office and one of the Trustees will contact you. Note: This does not impact the entrance to the kitchen which shares the same parking area.

**The Open Doors Food Pantry** is setting up on Friday, November 16, 12:30 - 2:30 or so. We will also need help bringing in over 6,000lbs of fresh produce on Saturday morning, November 17th starting at 7:30am. Any amount of time you can help out, is very much appreciated. Questions? email [opendoorsfoodpantry@gmail.com](mailto:opendoorsfoodpantry@gmail.com) or see Carol Hill or Laurie Norwood.

**Winter clothing, blanket, and food drive for Ames UMC in West Baltimore:** We are collecting winter items for those in need in Baltimore City. Drop off gently used blankets, clothing, coats, hats, gloves, and scarves in the collection bin located in the west narthex. We are also accepting nonperishable holiday food items. The collection will continue through Friday November 16<sup>th</sup>. Items will be distributed during the community outreach event at Ames UMC on Saturday November 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Operation Christmas Child** - Thanks to everyone who is preparing boxes. All **boxes must be brought to church next Sunday, Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>.** The boxes will be placed on the altar to be blessed before they are sent on their way to children around the world. Thanks for participating in this program. The Mt Zion Youth are collecting new and gently used items for this year's Secret Santa Shop. The shop will be open during the Breakfast with Santa on

December 1<sup>st</sup>. We will be collecting items throughout the month of November. There will be a box in the west Narthex for you to place the items. Thank you for your support. If you have any question please contact Elizabeth Blough.

**Staff Appreciation Sunday November 18, 2018.** Mt Zion has a large salaried church staff made up of incredibly talented and dedicated people. The work they do affects many facets of our church, from everyday office, finance and maintenance activities to our weekly Sunday church services. On Sunday, November 18<sup>th</sup> we will recognize our staff at both services and gather for thank you refreshments for them in the Fellowship Hall between the services. Please join us on the 18<sup>th</sup> to show our appreciation for the wonderful work they do. Please feel free to bring goodies to augment the celebration.

**Oven use guaranteed to keep your kitchen warm and cozy!!** Bakers needed for the UMW Annual Thanksgiving Bake Sale on Sunday Nov. 18, 10am-12.15pm. We would be ever so grateful for any and all contributions! Contact Joyce Saunderson.

**Surviving the Holidays - Advent Grief Study** – Beginning on Sunday, November 25<sup>th</sup> we will begin this four-week study that addresses issues that grieving people face during the Christmas and holiday season. The study is open to everyone and will run four weeks through December 16<sup>th</sup> in the Chapel during the Sunday School Hour. Topics include “What to do with your Holiday Emotions”, “Having a Plan”, “Tips for Surviving Social Events” and “Surviving Christmas Day” and consist of a video followed by discussion. If you have any questions contact Carol Messerly, Jenny Burtzloff or any of the Stephen Leader team.

Program books are being sponsored by the Stephen Ministry team and there is not charge to attend. Additional information about the program, as well as, some informative videos for those struggling to deal with the emotions of the season may be found on the Grief Share web page at <https://www.griefshare.org/holidays>



**Please join the annual Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, 1 December.** Two seatings are available at 8:30 or 10:00 a.m. Reservations can be made by going to the following link:

<https://santabreakfast18.eventbrite.com> or calling the church office, extension 12. The Secret Santa shop will be open for the children to purchase gifts.

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**Join us for an Advent Study in Fellowship Hall on Sundays at 10:15 starting on 12/2 - 12/30.** Pastor Gary and Pastor Ken will lead this study titled **The Gift of New Hope**. This will be an opportunity to explore the bible readings from worship service during the advent season. This study includes commentary and reflection on readings from the Old Testament, the Gospels and the Epistles. It offers the opportunity to understand, appreciate, and engage in meaningful and joyous celebrations of Advent and Christmas and to live each day in God's hope through Jesus Christ.

**Reservoir High School** students with special needs complete jobs for the school system and community members. Our class is working on developing pre-work skills. We need more work to do and hope that you can help us. We can complete mailings (and drop it off at the post office upon request) We can label, collate, fold papers, fold brochures, file papers alphabetically, put together folders, hole punch, count out tickets or other items, shred documents, scan documents, stuff goodie bags and wrap gifts. This is just a sample of work we have done in the past. Please ask us if you have any other job you think we can help with-we are open to most possibilities. All of our services are **FREE**. You can drop work off at Reservoir High School (please make arrangements in advance) or we can pick it up and return it to you. We look forward to working with you! Please contact **Grace Dellinger**

**Save the Date! Marriage Enrichment Retreat:** February 15-17, 2019 in Ocean City, MD. Make plans now to enjoy this winter weekend getaway with your spouse! This year's theme is "Love to Last a Lifetime: Letting God Lead the Way." **Location:** Dunes Manor Hotel Ocean City, MD. **Cost:** \$350/couple (includes accommodations Friday and Saturday nights, 2 meals on Saturday and brunch on Sunday). Registration Brochures will be available in November. For more information contact Barb Jacques. The marriage retreat is a sponsored by Mt. Zion United Methodist Church, Triadelphia Seventh Day Adventist Church, and Maranatha Seventh Day Adventist Church.

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

**A Shoe box to collect Box Tops for Education** is being placed in the church entry way. The local elementary school collects them to earn money to purchase items for their school. They will be collected and donated. Thank You, Marcy McAdoo.