



THE MT. ZION MESSENGER

THE GOOD NEWSletter

Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 33 Oak Street, Springfield, MA 01109

VOLUME 22; ISSUE 11

REV. DR. ATU WHITE, PASTOR

APRIL 2021

IN-SANCTUARY SERVICES TO RESUME

Starting on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021, we will begin for the second time offering Sunday worship services in the sanctuary for a limited number of people.

Each Sunday morning, at the conclusion of the service, call the Church [413-785-5664] between 11:00 a.m. and 12 noon if you want to attend the *following* Sunday service. Someone will take your information (i.e., name, telephone number, etc.) and you will receive a phone call the *following* Thursday to confirm your attendance.

Remember, there is reduced seating in the sanctuary. Also, anyone attending services must...

1. R.S.V.P. for each service.
2. Sit in an assigned seat.
3. Wear a mask throughout the service.
4. Practice social distancing (i.e., stay at least 6 ft apart).

[Note: Additional requirements may be added.]

While in-person services have resumed, livestreaming continues. (See instructions in article to the right.)

GOOD NEWS!

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started over a year ago, the lives of some Mt. Zionites have been bombarded with 'bad news' about family, jobs, income, etc. While it is easy to dwell on negative things, we should change the narrative and reflect on God's goodness.

This issue of "THE MT. ZION MESSENGER: THE GOOD NEWSletter" is dedicated to declaring just what its name says, 'good news.' Read how God has continued to show His faithfulness--even during this pandemic--in the lives of His people.

On behalf of Pastor White and the Newsletter Ministry, "Thanks" to all who took the time to share!

JOIN US FOR

HOLY WEEK PRAYER!

March 29, 2021 - April 3, 2021 @ Noon- 12:10p
Conference Line: (470) 480-9021

Daily Bible Verses and Prayer Focuses can be found on the front page of the March 2021 newsletter.

WEEKLY SERVICES FOR APRIL

While in-sanctuary services are beginning this month (see article to the left), virtual worship services will continue. Services, on both Sundays and Wednesdays, will be livestreamed on our social media platforms or are accessible by phone:

Virtual Worship Service

Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Livestreamed on Facebook.com; YouTube.com; or

<http://www.wearemtzion.com>; or

*Dial-in Number: 1-646-749-3117

Access Code: 140-800-541

If you desire special prayer or would like to join Mt. Zion, call the Church at 413-785-5664 following Sunday service until 12 noon.

~~~~~

#### Prayer & Meditation Call

**Wednesdays from**

**12 noon to 12:10 p.m.**

\*Dial-in Number: 1-646-749-3117

Access Code: 140-800-541

~~~~~

Virtual Bible Study

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Livestreamed on

Facebook.com; YouTube.com; or

<http://www.wearemtzion.com>

HAPPY APRIL BIRTHDAYS



- April 1-----Sis. Angela Westbrook
- April 2-----Bro. Alvin Parker
- April 7-----Sis. Michelle Fairman
- April 7-----Sis. Laura Green
- April 7-----Deaconess Wanda Powell
- April 8-----Bro. Brian Lawrence
- April 8-----Sis. Jean Frazier
- April 10-----Sis. Ebony Jordan
- April 11-----Sis. Lois Bass-Peterson
- April 16-----Sis. Rhonda Sherrell
- April 17-----Bro. Timothy Williams
- April 19-----Bro. Kimble Reaves
- April 21-----Sis. Chicana Cousby
- April 23-----Sis. Letha Harrison
- April 24-----Sis. Billie Jo Spears
- April 24-----Sis. Phyllis Tolbert
- April 27-----Sis. Tai Lanae Brantley

Jesus Rose to Life

By John R. Cross

If Jesus be dead,
in the grip of a tomb,
There'd be nothing for us
but fear and doom.

Life would be sad,
with no way to cope.
Death would reign all,
without any hope.

If Jesus be dead,
in the grip of a tomb,
We'd have no future,
only dark and gloom.

No life after death,
no eternity in sight,
No hope, no joy,
no Saviour, no light.

But....

(And aren't we thankful there is a "but")

But thanks be to God,
Jesus rose to life.
The debt all paid,
though sin was rife.

His body lay
in the tomb three days,
Then up from the grave
his life was raised.

Yes, thanks be to God,
Jesus rose to life.

He conquered death,
all sin and strife.

To those who believe,
from death set free.

With hope, with joy,
their Saviour to see.

A poem by John R. Cross
2013 © John R. Cross

Jesus rose to life - A poem for Easter -
The GoodSeed Blog



CHURCH ANNIVERSARY

DATE CHANGE

The date to celebrate our 44th Church Anniversary has been changed to next month. The celebratory service will now be held on **Sunday, May 16 at 10:00 a.m.** More information to come.

As a reminder, all members are asked to give a sacrificial offering of \$244.00 above your normal tithes and offering to help mark this anniversary. We are prayerful that some of the anniversary funds will go towards a new boiler on the historic side of the building. You can begin paying on this offering now.

APRIL 2021

UPCOMING MEETINGS

~~~

#### MISSIONARY MINISTRY MEETING

Thursday, April 8<sup>th</sup>  
at 6:00 p.m.

All MISSIONARIES & anyone who  
wishes to join, should  
Dial-in: (470) 480-9021

~~~

YOUTH BIBLE STUDY

Friday, April 16th
at 6:00 p.m.

All YOUTH are invited to attend
via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 893 5399 9325
Passcode: 208710

~~~

#### SHE SHED

Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

All WOMEN are invited to attend  
via Zoom.

Meeting ID: 861 7008 0435  
Passcode: 173488

Or the dial-in number is:  
+1-301-715-8592

Topic: "Jesus Loves Us All"  
Scripture: John 3:16

# **GOOD NEWS!**

Last month, members were asked to share some 'good news' that they experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are the responses...

Hello My Zion,

The good news that I want to share is...I was accepted into the MSW (Master of Social Work) program at Westfield State, I will be starting this coming fall. I thank God for continuing to open up doors and opportunities for me!! 🙏🙏

**Sis. Stephanie Fahey**

Good Morning My Brothers and Sisters,

Not only has our Heavenly Father kept me and my family safe, but my faith has grown every day. God has blessed me and my family with our own home and gave me and my twin sister, Connie Williams, another year of life.

**Bro. Ronnie Williams**

First, we would like to say thank you LORD!

On March 22, 2020, my nephew became ill and went to the hospital emergency room for treatment. Upon arrival, he was diagnosed with the coronavirus. His health deteriorated rapidly. Within twenty-four hours, he was intubated and sedated in ICU. With communication from his loving wife, his father kept us informed of his condition. As always, we knew it was praying time and God could do all things but fail. I immediately started praying and solicited prayer from my pastor, Rev. Atu White. Other family members did the same as well. We constantly prayed and kept the faith. We had individual, church, and conference call prayers. Doctors had to make many life-saving decisions.

Near the end of these challenging two weeks of hospitalization, the miracle work of God transpired, and prayers were answered. The medical providers informed us that they were going to gradually remove some of the life-saving devices. After three days, the devices were removed.

With prayers and God's Amazing Grace, he was healed.

**Sis. Anna Howell**

I'm glad that I've been safe this past year! And I'm happy that God kept me able to come to the Church to make sure the building was safe and clean for those who come through the doors.

**Bro. Al Dixon**

In the last year, I have reconnected with several of my high school classmates. Back in the day, we were all very close, but time & life got in the way. Through Zoom, phone calls, and especially text messages, we now stay in touch regularly. Considering we graduated high school over 50 years ago, this, for me, is genuinely good news!

**Deaconess Wanda Powell**

We got both of our COVID vaccinations and feel good! Thank God, no one in our family caught the virus yet.

**Rev. & Mrs. Bert Johnson**

Tracetta Caudle received High Honors for the 1st semester at Pope Francis High School & was inducted into the St. Tomas Aquinas chapter of the National Honor Society.

Zachary Caudle received Honors for the 1st semester at Pope Francis High School.

**Sis. Patrice Caudle**

I thank the Lord for my health and strength. I have been blessed throughout this COVID virus pandemic, not to be sick or show any symptoms. I have been safe.

**Bro. Richard Scroggins**

We thank the Lord for His keeping power and faithfulness. Our family is all well—even my 93-year-old aunt, who is feeling better today. God continues to meet all of our needs. We are grateful!

**Deacon Dan Jones & Deaconess Deborah Jones**

## **GOOD NEWS! (CONTINUED)**

This past pandemic lockdown year was indeed an opening of things for a lot of us.

For me, it was the usage of technology, for example, ZOOM, whew! [(I thank God (Amen), my mind is still good (for some people it's not!)]

Also, during this time, I read the scriptures more thoroughly! Not just reading but studied what I read thru different avenues—my Study Bible, and my Everyday Bible, and my Bible Dictionary, and Google! (Thank you again, God for a good mind and the resources for researching Your word!)

So, my “Good News” is the expansion (stretching , as Pastor Atu says) of my mind, and the upkeeping of my soul! But DAILY, I thank God for keeping us “negative” (by our testing) in such a negative time as this! And “positive” in our spirits!

GOD, You're awesome and I praise You!

**Sis. Andrea “Mimmie” Dixon**

During the pandemic year, I have been extremely blessed and it's hard to narrow down all the ways God has favored me!

To highlight one...

My responsibilities at work were expanded and I was promoted at work. My salary was increased, and monetary stress was decreased. I am also now at a level that affords me the opportunity to actively influence programs for our black and brown teammates. I'm going to use my talent--"God sho gave you the gift of gab" (as my Grandmother would always say)--to mentor and represent others outside of my division so that together we can break the many layers of glass ceilings in corporate America!

**Sis. Patrice Wood**

Throughout the pandemic, solitude and prayer have given me Great Faith and a more intimate walk with God. I lost a second brother in January 2021 . God has given me His peace.

My Grandson, Bobby Brown, has received a huge promotion in his field of Cyber Security. My niece, Chelsea W., has graduated Dental School and is working at Hartford Hospital. A nephew, Kevin W., a Medical Student Graduate at Baystate Medical, will be doing his residency at Walter Reed Hospital in Virginia. See attached his picture. To God be the Glory.

**Sis. Carolyn Scarnici**



During COVID and while in quarantine...

- I found more time to read my Bible.
- I changed the focus of my prayers to be less about me, and more for others.
- I helped others, like doing grocery shopping for my sister when she was ill.
- In my conversations, I listened more, resulting in more meaningful conversations with family and friends.
- And finally, I discovered that God had blessed me with talents that I didn't know I had, and I shared these talents with others. For instance, I baked a carrot cake for the first time ever (for a friend), and planted a garden, which I hadn't done in over 30 years.

**Sis. Pamela Medlock**

This pandemic has caused life to slow down. Prior to last year, I found myself seemingly always 'busy.' When the pandemic hit and for months we were quarantined and unable to visit family and friends, go shopping just for the fun of it, eat inside a restaurant, or even go to work at an office building, there was no option but to slow down and take a breath. In so doing, instead of connecting with high school friends only on holidays as we had previously done, it became weekly Zoom calls to chat & laugh. What had been weekly phone calls to my parents became daily calls “just to say hello” and hear about their day. And previous coffee (for me, tea) breaks at work turned in to regular walks outside to enjoy fresh air and the beauty of nature. I thank God for the slow down!

**Sis. Kelli Powell**

## GOOD NEWS! (CONTINUED)

In 2020, GOD saw fit to make an adjustment in our family by calling John home to eternal rest! BUT GOD also saw fit to continue to keep our family close and focused. On December 4, 2020, our son Jahleel graduated from Northern Vermont University at Lyndonville with his Bachelor's in Business Management with a concentration in Sports Management. Currently Jahleel is a manager at FedEx in CT.

Continuing our praise report, on December 28, 2020, our oldest daughter Adriean became engaged. Anticipating a September wedding in 2021.

Last, but certainly not least! Our Kasha!! There's so much to say about this remarkable young woman! Even after being laid off from the Postal Credit Union she was able to land a job with Wellfleet Insurance Company. Specializing in college insurance coverage. The best part is she can work from home!! Which is a blessing as she has a very weak immune system!

Then there's me..... I'm continuing to Praise GOD as I go through the process. When I finally let go AND LET GOD..... I began to have a better understanding and a better relationship with Him. Finding myself studying, fasting, and praying more! Trusting GOD and the process

**Sis. Alonzetta Gabriel**

- We trusted God throughout the pandemic!
- Sold and bought a house in the pandemic.
- Was able to financially support Cameron Scott going to college – yes, he resides on campus Cameron was the recipient of a scholarship from the Pastors' Council.
- We both maintained employment this past year and Charlette was offered an unsolicited secondary part time opportunity.

We are so grateful and give him all the honor and praise! 🙏🙏

**Bro, Tavis Scott &  
Sis. Charlette Scott**

I've been well all through this pandemic, also received my two vaccines with no side effects.

**Sis. Shirley Walker**

Last September, I was elected President of my high school's alumni group, the National Westside Alumni Association. Although it's proving to be a lot of work, it has also been rewarding working with friends and family across the country and especially in my hometown of Chadbourn, NC. I thank God for this opportunity.

Also, after over 50 years, I recently reconnected with my cousin in Boston, who is also a high school classmate. She is a retired nurse and is currently the CEO of a tenants' association.

**Deacon Steve Powell**

Valley Creation Stations Inbox ☆

 **Britt Ruhe** 1:45 PM  
to me ▾

Hi Brianna,

Thank you so much for applying for the Valley Creation Stations project. As we all know, there are lots of creative people in the Valley doing amazing work, so we got lots of applications! Among all of the applicants, your work stood out - you are one of the 20 artists selected to participate in this exhibit!

In the next few days I will be reaching out to you with a more detailed email about preparing for the photoshoot and scheduling your photo session.

On behalf of the Selection Committee, I want to congratulate you on your impressive work! We are excited to have you as part of the Valley Creation Stations exhibit!

Warmly,





First, God woke me up this morning and all the other mornings.

My husband went into the hospital for a one-day visit but spent 2 days. He's doing fine. God is good!

My grandson graduated from high school and he's now in college. God is good!

My stove broke and my son said, "What is it going to cost? He bought me a new stove. God is good!

My daughter told me she was coming home for Christmas and she did. She wrote her first ever grant (for her company) and received the amount of \$400,000.00, and she was promoted to Director of Finance. God is good!

**Sis. Mary Moore**

**Sis. Brianna Woodard**

# A YOUTH ACTIVITY

Submitted by Sis. Patrice Caudle

## The Bible Times Herald

A Special Report on John 20:1-18

### “Jesus Rises from the Dead.”

Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb where Jesus was buried. To her surprise, the stone in front of the tomb was rolled away! Mary ran to get Peter and John.

“They have taken the Lord out of tomb, and I don’t know where they have put him,” cried Mary.

Peter and John ran to tomb. John saw the strips of linen and the cloth that was wrapped around Jesus’ head just lying there.

John believed that Jesus had risen from the dead. The disciples left leaving Mary behind. As she stood outside the tomb crying, she saw two angels dressed in white inside the tomb!

The angels asked why Mary was crying.

“They have taken my Lord away and I don’t know where they put him,” she sobbed.

When Mary turned around, she saw Jesus standing there. She did not realize that it was Jesus. She thought Jesus was the gardener and asked him for Jesus’ body.

When Jesus said Mary’s name, she cried out, “Teacher!”

Jesus told Mary to tell the disciples that he was going to return to his Father in heaven.

Mary gladly did as Jesus asked.

To find out more details about this story, read John 20:1-18 in your Bible.

### Questions

1. What did Mary find when she went to Jesus’ tomb?
2. Why was Mary crying outside the tomb?
3. What happened to Jesus?
4. Why do you think Jesus appeared to Mary?

**Memory Verse:** “He is not here; he has risen!” Luke 24:6

### Word Scramble:

JESUS TOMB MARY EMPTY ANGELS DISCIPLES

YTPME: \_\_\_\_\_

BMTO: \_\_\_\_\_

SALENG: \_\_\_\_\_

RMAY: \_\_\_\_\_

SDICSLPIE: \_\_\_\_\_

SEJUS: \_\_\_\_\_

This activity came from Free Sunday School Curriculum (freesundayschoolcurriculum.weebly.com).

## JOINT BOARD MEETING

This month’s virtual Joint Board Meeting will be held on **Monday, April 12, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.** All Joint Board members should dial in.

## MOBILE FOOD TRUCK

The Western Mass Food Bank Mobile Food truck will be in the Union Street parking lot on **Friday, April 23<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.** Free fresh produce is available to all, regardless of income. Tell family and friends.

## Parking Lot Changes

To enhance the safety in our parking lots and around our facility, last month we closed our parking lots to unauthorized vehicles. Signs, indicating that unauthorized vehicles will be towed, are now posted throughout all three lots. In addition, the Union Street parking lot is chained off unless or until Mt. Zion authorizes it’s use.

## WHAT A DIFFERENCE, A YEAR MAKES! CORONAVIRUS STATISTICS THEN & NOW

| Mass.           | March 31, 2020 | March 25, 2021 |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Confirmed Cases | 6,620          | 619,816        |
| Deaths          | 89             | 16,970         |

| U.S.            | April 1, 2020 | March 25, 2021 |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Confirmed Cases | 186,100       | 30,709,627     |
| Deaths          | 3,606         | 558,460        |

| Global          | April 2, 2020 | March 25, 2021 |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Confirmed Cases | 986,808       | 125,623,581    |
| Deaths          | 50,509        | 2,759,605      |

source: [worldometers.info](http://worldometers.info)

# ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S "BIBLE FIND-IT" PUZZLE

Submitted by Sis. Earlean Caldwell

In last month's word search, your challenge was to find at least 3 items in each category within the box of letters. Words could either be in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally and could be read either forward or backward. When you finished finding them, the leftover letters spelled out an additional fact about one answer. How did you do? See for yourself.

## Find the Names of at Least...

**3 Bible Women:** Eve, Mary, Sarah

**3 Apostles:** John, Peter, Philip

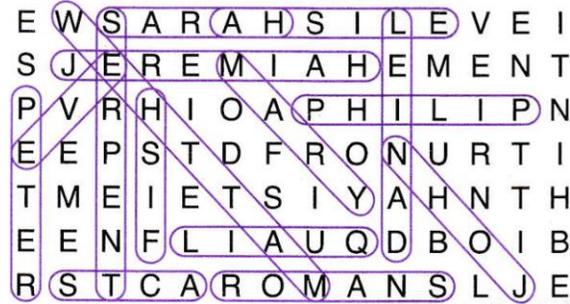
**3 Bible Animals:** fish, quail, serpent

**3 Prophets:** Daniel, Elisha, Jeremiah

**3 New Testament Books:** Acts, Matthew, Romans

**Leftover letters spell:**

"Eve is mentioned four times in the Bible."



## THIS MONTH'S PUZZLE: "WOMAN, WHY WEEPEST THOU?"

Submitted by Sis. Pamela Medlock

In this word search puzzle, and in recognition of Easter, read John 20:1-14 below. Find the bold, capitalized words in the box of letters. Words can either in a straight line horizontally, vertically, or diagonally and can be read either forward or backward. Enjoy & Have Fun! Answers will be in next month's issue.

<sup>1</sup> The first day of the week cometh Mary **MAGDALENE** early, when it was yet dark, unto the **SEPULCHRE**, and seeth the **STONE** taken away from the sepulchre.

<sup>2</sup> Then she runneth, and cometh to **SIMON** Peter, and to the other **DISCIPLE**, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the **LORD** out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

<sup>3</sup> Peter therefore went **FORTH**, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

<sup>4</sup> So they ran both **TOGETHER**: and the other disciple did **OUTRUN** Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

<sup>5</sup> And he **STOOPING** down, and **LOOKING** in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

<sup>6</sup> Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

<sup>7</sup> And the **NAPKIN**, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but **WRAPPED** together in a place by itself.

<sup>8</sup> Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

<sup>9</sup> For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the **DEAD**.

<sup>10</sup> Then the disciples went away again unto their own **HOME**.

<sup>11</sup> But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

<sup>12</sup> And seeth two angels in white **SITTING**, the one at the head, and the other at the **FEET**, where the **BODY** of Jesus had lain.

<sup>13</sup> And they say unto her, Woman, why **WEEPEST** thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my **LORD**, and I know not where they have laid him.

<sup>14</sup> And when she had thus said, she **TURNED** herself back, and saw Jesus **STANDING**, and knew not that it was Jesus.

