

THE GOOD NEWSletter

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

Phone: 413-785-5664

E-mail: wearemtzion@gmail.com

Website: wearemtzion.com

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Rev. Dr. Atu White, Pastor

February 2023

SALUTE TO BLACK HISTORY!

In this issue of "The Messenger," we salute Black people who had ties in some way to the **COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**. How much local & state Black History do you know? Read on and see...

WEEKLY SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY

Worship Service Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

In-Person or Livestreamed on Facebook.com; YouTube.com; and on our website, wearemtzion.com

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

*Prayer & Meditation Call
Wednesdays from
12 noon to 12:10 p.m.

The Dial-in Number is (470) 480-9021.

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## \*Bible Study Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Livestreamed on Facebook.com; YouTube.com; and on our website, <u>wearemtzion.com</u>

\*There will be NO Prayer & Meditation Call, nor Bible Study on February 22, 2023.

## **IN-PERSON SERVICES**

Anyone wishing to attend Sunday service in person must be at the Church by 9:55 a.m. Doors will close at 10:00 a.m.

In addition, all who attend must:

- 1. Have their temperature taken upon entering.
- Wear a mask throughout the service.
   [Note: Masks are still required to be worn while inside the building.]
- 3. Practice social distancing (i.e., stay at least 6 feet apart, which means, no hugs, handshakes, close contact, etc.).

For those who choose <u>not</u> to attend services in the sanctuary, you can continue to worship virtually via livestreaming. (See article to the left.)

## Mt. Zion Turns 46!

In late 1976, a small group of Christians, mostly from Faith Baptist Church in Springfield, decided the time and spirit was right to form a new church. On **February 6, 1977**, the group was officially set aside as Mt. Zion Baptist Church of Greater Springfield. This month marks Mt. Zion's 46<sup>th</sup> Church Anniversary!

From humble beginnings of just 42 members, Mt. Zion has seen membership topple over 600. The Church has been led by only four (4) pastors, has been housed in three (3) different facilities, and has come through both a fire and a pandemic. Mt. Zion has provided thousands of meals to the hungry, made numerous financial donations to support community events and organizations, and held hundreds of drives, programs & activities to benefit local residents.

God has been faithful to Mt. Zion! We must continue to be faithful to Him, because all that we have accomplished is only because of His Goodness and Mercy toward us. So, for today, and days to come, we thank God for 46 years!!!

## Happy 46th Anniversary, Mt. Zion!

Note: We will celebrate this milestone in May.

Also, for a complete Church history, visit our website at wearemtzion.com

## HAPPY FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

February 1.....Sis. Zyina Volkinski February 2.....Sis. Patricia Grundy February 2.....Sis. Lavone Johnson February 3......Bro. Darrell Coppedge, Sr. February 3.....Sis. Shana Lowery February 5...Sis. Shanice Coppedge-Nicholas February 11.....Bro. Linwood Garner February 11.....Rev. Milton White, Jr. February 12.....Sis. Priscilla White February 16.....Sis. Narvis Handford February 18.....Bro. Timothy Morris February 19.....Bro. Alfonso Shaver February 21.....Bro. Maxwell Maddox February 24.....Sis. Adriean Gabriel February 25.....Sis. Patricia Nulls February 26.....Sis. Delores Culo February 28.....Sis. Faye Caldwell February 28.....Sis. Patrice Caudle



## HAPPY FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARY

February 9.....Sis. Phyllis Tolbert & Bro. John Tolbert

## A Salute to Black History: Phillis Wheatley

Phillis Wheatley Peters, also spelled Phyllis Wheatly (c. 1753 - December 5, 1784) was an American author who is considered the first African-American author of a published book of poetry. Born in West Africa, she was kidnapped and sold into enslavement at the age of seven or eight and transported to North America, where she was bought by the Wheatley family of BOS-TON. After she learned to read and write, they encouraged her poetry when they saw her talent. Wheatley was emancipated by her enslavers shortly after the publication of her book, and eventually, married John Peters. Wheatley-Peters died in poverty and obscurity at the age of 31 in **BOSTON**, MA. Phillis Wheatley - Wikipedia

## On Being Brought from Africa to America

By Phillis Wheatley

Twas mercy brought me from my Pagan land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God,
that there's a Saviour too:
Once I redemption
neither sought nor knew.

Some view our sable race
with scornful eye,
"Their colour is a
diabolic die."
Remember, Christians,
Negro's, black as Cain,
May be refin'd,
and join th' angelic train.

On Being Brought from Africa to America poem - Phillis Wheatley (best-poems.net)

## FEBRUARY 2023 MEETINGS

The following meetings will be held in person at the Church:

### **JOINT BOARD**

The Joint Board will meet on

Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m.

All Joint Board members
should be present.

#### **DEACON MINISTRY**

The Deacon Ministry will meet on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. All <u>Deacons & Deaconesses</u> should attend.

### **USHERS MINISTRY**

The Ushers Ministry will meet on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m. All Ushers should attend.

### **MISSIONARY MINISTRY**

The Missionary Ministry will meet on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at 11 a.m.

All Missionary Ministry members
should be present.

## **Man Cave**

Man Cave will NOT meet this month.

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SHE SHED

She Shed will NOT meet this month.

COLD WEATHER WATCH-OUT!

During the cold weather, particularly during freezing temperatures, please check on the **4 P's**:

PEOPLE

PLANTS PETS

PIPES

Stay warm! Stay Safe!

Pastors' Council's 1st Lenten Service

The first Lenten Service of the Season, presented by the Pastors' Council of Greater Springfield, will be this month on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 2023. The preacher for the service will be Rev. Catharine Cummings, Pastor of Wesley United Methodist Church, also where the service will be held. (The address is 741 State Street, Springfield.) Everyone is invited to attend.

The remaining Lenten Service schedule will be printed in next month's newsletter.

Welcome New Members

Joining Mt. Zion in January were:

BRO. JOHN BRICE

Date Joined: January 1, 2023 **Method:** Christian Experience

BRO. CARMEN GARNER

Date Joined: January 8, 2023 **Method:** Christian Experience

SIS. KORTNEY STEWART-CARROLL

Date Joined: January 22, 2023 **Method:** Christian Experience

A Salute to Black History: W.E.B. DuBois

William Edward Burghardt DuBois, an American sociologist, socialist, historian, and Pan-Africanist civil rights activist, was born February 23, 1868 in **GREAT BARRINGTON**. MA. Du-Bois was one of the founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909. He was also a prolific author. His collection of essays, 'The Souls of Black Folk,' is a seminal work in African American literature. DuBois died, August 27, 1963.

W. E. B. DuBois - Wikipedia

SOUP KITCHEN TURNS 24!

The Mt. Zion's Soup Kitchen opened its doors for the very first time in February 1999. The goal was to help feed those in our community who were hungry. This month, the Soup Kitchen marks 24 years of doing just thatserving our community by feeding the hungry.

Unfortunately, when the COVID-19 pandemic began in March 2020, the Soup Kitchen had to cease meeting weekly. The Ministry has, however, continued to provide, on a limited basis, food for various funeral repasts and Church activities/events, and food to individuals in need. The staff also regularly helps sort and distribute to community residents non-perishable items donated to the Church from other organizations.

As these very important activities continue, the fervent prayer of the Soup Kitchen Ministry as well as the Church at large is that this vital Ministry will be back in <u>full</u> operation—serving meals on a weekly basis-- again soon.



GIVING STATEMENTS AVAILABLE

2022 Giving Statements were distributed during the last weekend in January. Statements were either handed out during Sunday service on the 29th or mailed to home addresses on Saturday the 28th or Sunday the 29th.

If you made financial donations in 2022 and have NOT received a statement and would like one, or if you have a question about your statement, call the Church at (413) 785-5664 and leave your name and telephone number. Our Financial Secretary, **Sis Phyllis Tolbert**, will get back to you.

Family Fun Night is Back!

Written by Sis. Alonzetta Gabriel & Sis. Angela Westbrook

It's time to refresh and get back active as a church family, like the old times. We will be coming together for an in-person evening of Mt. Zion Baptist Church style family fun.

Join us on Friday, February 24, 2023, from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. for a night of games, old fashion fun, competition, and a lot of laughter with one another. This will be a fun way to reconnect with all those we have missed over the COVID years and a great opportunity to meet new people and get to know one another better.

We look forward to seeing each one of you and bring your best wit and skills to win. The Get Connected Ministry is heading this event.

MISSIONARIES TO HOST PRAYER LUNCHEON

The Missionary Ministry will host a "Heart Health Prayer Luncheon" on Saturday, February 25, 2023, here at the Church. The luncheon, which is free, runs from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Our own **Dr. Patrice Caudle**, PharmD. will be the guest speaker.

Anyone wishing to attend should R.S.V.P. by February 18th by seeing Sis. Anna Howell or calling her at 783-0454.

MOBILE FOOD TRUCK

After an unscheduled absence last month, the Western Mass Food Bank Mobile Food



truck will be back this month. It will be in the Union Street parking lot on Friday, February 24th from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The fresh produce is free and available to all, regardless of income. Tell family & friends.

Our One Candlelight

Written by Sis. Andrea Dixon

The following short reading is how I envision our Pastor, Rev. Dr. Atu White "As One Candle:"

Pastor has shown us LOVE from his first day of pastoring us!! The Candlelight.

Pastor demonstrates LOVE in everything he does and everyone he encounters! The Candlelight.

Pastor Atu is LOVE!! Our One Candlelight.

Happy (new) year Pastor, we love you. Happy (new) year Mt. Zion family & friends. Stay blessed. Stay well. Stay safe. --Sis. Mimmie--

Just One Candle

Author Unknown

It takes just one candle to spread a ray of light To split the darkness with its flame And quell the black of night.

It takes just one whisper To speak God in prayer, To draw near to His presence And find peace and comfort there.

It takes just one Savior To save the world in need. A holy God wrapped in flesh To heal, to guide, to lead...

It takes just one candle To spark the memory Of the night the Light of heaven Came to change our lives with love.

CALLING ALL YOUNG SCHOLARS

Elementary and secondary school students are encouraged to turn in their A's for the 1st marking period and be rewarded for their work.

To qualify, youth MUST...

- > Be a member of Mt. Zion or a regular Mt. Zion attendee
- Be an ACTIVE member in at least one (1) Church ministry
- Be in grades 1-12
- Provide a copy of an official report card for the 1st marking period & a Young Scholars form.

The **deadline** to submit grades & the form (see next paragraph) is Sunday, February 12th, to Sis. Pamela Medlock. Young Scholars will be recognized on the 4th Sunday of this month, February 26th.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Awards will not be given without the student's grades and a copy of a Young Scholars form. (Note: Forms are available at the Church or can be requested via the Church's e-mail.)

COLLEGE SCHOLARS

Mt. Zion members who are currently attending college are eligible for a College Scholars award. Complete and submit a College Scholars form, along with your 1st semester grades, to Sis. Medlock, or e-mail them to the Church by Sunday, February 12, 2023.

Anniversary Assessment

As noted on the cover page of this issue of The Mt. Zion Messenger, this year marks Mt. Zion's 46th Church Anniversary.

For the Church's 46th Anniversary, members are asked to give \$246.00. This sacrificial offering is over and beyond regular tithes and offerings. You can begin paying on your assessment now. The Anniversary will be celebrated on Sunday, May 21, 2023.

"Sport Your Sport" Sunday

For some people, Sunday, February 12th is Super Bowl Sunday. Here at Mt. Zion, it's "Sport Your Sport" Sun-



day. What's that, you ask?...

Come to the 10:00 a.m. worship service on February 12th and wear your favorite sport team's t-shirt, sweatshirt, jersey, or any other apparel. It can be from high school, college, or the pros, and it can be from any sport--football, baseball, basketball, soccer, etc. Let everyone know what sport (and team) you cheer for!

If you don't have any sports apparel, come comfortable and come any way. It's all in fun!!

A Salute to Black History: Primus Mason

The Mason Square Neighborhood in SPRINGFIELD is named after Springfield's first Black philanthropist and famous Black entrepreneur from the 1800s, Primus Mason.

Born in 1817 in MONSON to free Black parents, Mason worked as an indentured servant until running away to Springfield. He got a \$50 loan to invest in real estate, paid it back and begun building up Mason Square. By 1888 he was one of the wealthiest men in Springfield. Mason left \$25,000, nearly all his estate, to create "A home for worthy old men," in the area.

Eleven years after Mason's death the trustees found a ten-bedroom house on 74 Walnut Street in Springfield and founded the home. They then expanded to a 30-bedroom building in the 1920s, then in 1999 the current building opened with 90 assisted living apartments and one floor of memory care. Now they have 128 assisted living and independent living apartments, a home care agency, and a childcare center. They've kept the 74 Walnut Street address since the beginning.

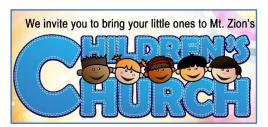
You may be wondering who the "Wright" is in the Mason Wright foundation's name. In the 1940s, Horace Wright left over half a million dollars to the foundation to continue Mason's mission. Mason also gave a piece of his land to the McKnight brothers of Springfield's McKnight neighborhood. Primus Mason is buried at Oak Grove Cemetery in Springfield.

Mason Square Neighborhood named after Springfield's first Black philanthropist | WWLP

Mt. Zion's 2023 Calendar of Events

At our January Church Business Meeting, Pastor White shared planned upcoming events for 2023:

| Month | Day | Activity/Event | Ministry in
Charge | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|--|
| January | Sunday, 22 nd | Annual Church Business Meeting | | |
| February | Sunday, 5 th | Installation of Officers | | |
| | Sunday, 12 th | "Sport Your Sport" Sunday (Wear Sports Apparel) | | |
| | Wednesday, 22 nd | 1st Pastors' Council Lenten Service | | |
| | Friday, 24 th | Family Fun Night | Get Connected | |
| | Saturday, 25 th | Heart Health Prayer Luncheon | Missionary Ministry | |
| | Sunday, 26 th | Black History Celebration Young Scholars Recognition | Music Ministry Youth Ministry | |
| March | Wednesdays, 1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd , 29 th | The Pastors' Council's Lenten Service | | |
| April | Sunday, 9 th | Resurrection Sunday | | |
| | Sunday, 30 th | Ordination of Minister, Deacons & Deaconesses | | |
| May | Sunday, 21st | 46th Church Anniversary Service | | |
| June: Men's Emphasis | Saturday, 17 th | Father's Day Fish Fry | Trustees & Get Connected | |
| Month | Sunday, 25 th | Graduation Sunday/Young Scholars Recognition | Youth Ministry | |
| July | VACATION MONTH | | | |
| August | TBA | Mt. Zion Family Reunion (Church Picnic) | Trustee Ministry | |
| September: Women's
Emphasis Month | | | Women's Ministry | |
| October | Wednesdays, 4 th , 11 th , 18 th , 25 th | Empowerment Sessions | | |
| | Tuesday, 31st | FunFest 2023 | Trustee Ministry | |
| November | ThursSat., 9th-11th | 101st UBC Annual Session | | |
| | TBA | Activity/Event | Get Connected | |
| December | Sunday, 17 th | Ugly Sweater Sunday | | |
| | Sunday, 24 th | Candlelight Christmas Celebration | Music Ministry | |
| | Sunday, 31st | Watch Night Service | | |



Just a reminder...Children's Church is back!

On the 2nd Sunday of each month (this month, that will be **Sunday**, **February 12**th), the Youth Ministry will hold Children's Church simultaneously with our regular worship service—at 10:00 a.m. Parents are encouraged to bring their children between the ages of 5 and 11 to have their own worship experience, filled with learning activities,

crafts, and snacks. (Note: Let a Youth Ministry Leader know if your child has any food allergies).

If you have questions or want to volunteer to help, see Youth Ministry Leader, Sis. Pamela Medlock.

LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE----RIDDLE-ME-REE

Last month, you needed to solve the riddles by finding one letter per line, following the clues given in the verse below. The example given was, 'My first is in houses, but never in homes' gives the letter 'U' as the first letter. When you finished, the letters would spell a name. How did you do? Here are the answers:

My first is in TEETH, and also in CHEW.

My second is in FALSE, as well as TRUE.

My third is in UNDER, but not in BENEATH.

My fourth is in FLOWER, but not found in LEAF.

My fifth is in WINDOW, as well as in DOOR.

My whole is a king: one you've heard of, I'm sure.

| 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Н | E | R | 0 | D |

A Salute to Black History: African Americans in Massachusetts

This Month's Puzzle----African Americans in Massachusetts

How much do you know about black people with ties to Massachusetts? To find out and/or learn a little... First, unscramble the names to the left, and then match each one to a description to the right. You can write your answer in the last column. To see how you did, look for the answers in next month's newsletter.

| Unscramble Name | Historical Clue | Match Letter to
Number |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 1. AMEJNIS UGY | A. Taught in SPRINGFIELD School System in the 1940's. 1st Black Principal in Springfield | 1 |
| 2. RIPUSCS TAUTSKC | B. Born in WORCESTER ; Starred as "Mother Jefferson" on the 70's sitcom, <i>The Jeffersons</i> | 2 |
| 3. VARTIS STEB | C. Born in SPRINGFIELD ; Played Pro-basketball in NBA from 1995 to 2005 | 3 |
| 4. LILMAIW BREWEDRY | D. Born in BOSTON ; Starred on the 80's sitcom, <i>A Different World</i> | 4 |
| 5. RAZA LUCYL | E. From FRAMINGHAM , 1st person killed in the Boston Massacre | 5 |
| 6. THRU CARRET | F. Born in SPRINGFIELD ; 1st black person to win Oscar for Best Costume Design | 6 |
| 7. BACREEC NNOOJSH | G. Moved to SPRINGFIELD in 1899; Community Leader; Pastored St. John's Congregational Church | 7 |

A Salute to Black History: Massachusetts: Boston African American Historic Site

"At the end of the American Revolution, Massachusetts had more free black people than slaves, and by 1783, Massachusetts had abolished slavery. The first Federal census in 1790, recorded Massachusetts as the only State in the Union that had no slaves. Between 1800 and 1900, most of the free African Americans in **BOSTON** lived in an area now called the North Slope of Beacon Hill, a hilly neighborhood with winding streets and narrow pedestrian alleyways. The people there actively participated in the Underground Railroad and worked to better the rights of all African Americans. Boston African American National Historic Site preserves many of the buildings and a memorial associated with this thriving community. Fourteen sites linked by the 1.6-mile Black Heritage Trail tell the story of the struggle, perseverance, and commitment of this African American community to black equality."

A Salute to Black History: Prince Hall

Prince Hall (c. 1735/8—1807) was an American abolitionist and leader in the free black community in **BOSTON**. He founded Prince Hall Freemasonry and lobbied for education rights for African American children. Hall is considered the founder of "Black Freemasonry" in the United States, known today as Prince Hall Freemasonry. Hall formed the African Grand Lodge of North America, and was unanimously elected its Grand Master and served until his death in 1807. Steve Gladstone, author of *Freedom Trail Boston*, states that Prince Hall was one of the most influential free Black leaders in the late 1700s".



A Brief History of Prince Hall Freemasonry in Massachusetts

On March 6, 1775, Prince Hall and 14 men of color were made masons in Lodge #441 of the Irish Registry attached to the 38th British Foot Infantry at Castle William Island in Boston Harbor, Massachusetts. It marked the first time that Black men were made masons in America.

About a year later, since the conflict between England and America had commenced, the British Foot Infantry left Boston, along with its lodge, leaving Prince Hall and his associates without a lodge. Before the lodge left, Worshipful Master Batt, gave them a "permit" to meet as a lodge and bury their dead in manner and form. This permit, however, did not allow them to do any "masonic work" or to take in any new members.

Under it, African Lodge was organized on July 3, 1776, with Prince Hall as the worshipful master. It wasn't long before this lodge received an additional "permit" from Provincial Grand Master John Rowe to walk in procession on St. John's Day.

On March 2, 1784, African Lodge #1 petitioned the Grand Lodge of England, the Premier or Mother Grand Lodge of the world, for a warrant (or charter), to organize a regular masonic lodge, with all the rights and privileges thereunto prescribed.

The Grand Lodge of England issued a charter on September 29, 1784 to African Lodge #459, the first lodge of Blacks in America.

African Lodge #459 grew and prospered to such a degree that Worshipful Master Prince Hall was appointed a Provincial Grand Master, in 1791, and out of this grew the first Black Provincial Grand Lodge.

In 1797, he organized a lodge in Philadelphia and one in Rhode Island. These lodges were designated to work under the charter of African Lodge #459.

In December 1808, one year after the death of Prince Hall, African Lodge #459 (Boston), African Lodge #459 (Philadelphia) and Hiram Lodge #3 (Providence) met in a general assembly of the craft and organized African Grand Lodge (sometime referred to as African Grand Lodge #1).

In 1847, out of respect for their founding father and first Grand Master, Prince Hall, they changed their name to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge, the name it carries today. In 1848 Union Lodge #2, Rising Sons of St. John #3 and Celestial Lodge #4 became the first lodges organized under the name Prince Hall Grand Lodge.

From these beginnings, there now are some 5,000 lodges and 47 grand lodges who trace their lineage to the Prince Hall Grand Lodge, Jurisdiction of Massachusetts.

The tradition started by Bro. Prince Hall over 200 years ago is still carried on today.