



# THE MT. ZION MESSENGER

## THE GOOD NEWSletter

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

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**Volume 25: Issue 7 \* Rev. Dr. Atu White, Pastor \* December 2023**

### **WEEKLY SERVICES FOR DECEMBER**

#### **Worship Service**

**Sundays at 10:00 a.m.**

*In Person in the Sanctuary or Livestreamed on  
Facebook.com; YouTube.com; or on our website,  
[wearemtzion.com](http://wearemtzion.com)*

[Masks are optional inside the building.]

If you desire special prayer or would like to join  
Mt. Zion, call the Church and leave a message.  
Someone will return your call.

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#### **\*PRAYER & MEDITATION CALL**

**Wednesdays at 12 noon**

#### **\*BIBLE STUDY**

**Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.**

#### **\*CANCELLATION NOTICE**

The Prayer & Meditation Call  
& Bible Study  
are cancelled on  
Wednesday, December 27<sup>th</sup>.

***Both will resume on January 3, 2024***

### **NO WATCHNIGHT SERVICE**

As of this writing, there will be  
NO Watchnight Service on New Year's Eve.

Any changes to this will be announced.



*Wishing You  
A Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year!*

*From the Mt. Zion Newsletter Ministry*

## HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- Dec. 2.....Sis. Alonzetta Gabriel  
 Dec. 2.....Bro. Marcus Holmes  
 Dec. 3.....Sis. Aunesty May  
 Dec. 5.....Sis. Arlene Garner  
 Dec. 5.....Sis. Diane Jacobs  
 Dec. 10.....Sis. Delania Barbee  
 Dec. 11.....Sis. Carla Connell  
 Dec. 11.....Bro. Solomon Hinds  
 Dec. 11.....Sis. Akisha Maddox  
 Dec. 11.....Sis. Yanitza Nogue  
 Dec. 14.....Sis. Patrice Wood  
 Dec. 15.....Sis. Tonya Shippy-Brice  
 Dec. 15.....Sis. Kathy Griffin  
 Dec. 16.....Bro. Kelvin Baldwin  
 Dec. 18.....Bro. Darrell Coppedge, Jr.  
 Dec. 19.....Sis. Carolyn Herring  
 Dec. 19.....Sis. Sharna Grayson  
 Dec. 22.....Sis. Lynda Long  
 Dec. 25.....Sis. Tracetta Caudle  
 Dec. 25.....Sis. Christine Hartsfield  
 Dec. 26.....Bro. Geordan Dillard  
 Dec. 27.....Bro. Edward Caudle  
 Dec. 28.....Sis. Victoria Washington  
 Dec. 30.....Sis. Keturah Mahdi

## HAPPY DECEMBER ANNIVERSARY

- Dec. 2.....Sis. Tina Garner-Tucker  
 & Bro. Reggie Tucker

## T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE JESUS CAME

Author Unknown

T'was the night before Jesus came,  
 and all through the house,  
 Not a creature was praying,  
 not one in the house.  
 Their Bibles were lain  
 on the shelf without care,  
 In hopes that Jesus would not come there.  
 The children were dressing  
 to crawl into bed,  
 Not once ever kneeling or bowing a head,  
 And Mom in her rocker with  
 baby on her lap,  
 Was watching the Late Show  
 while I took a nap.  
 When out of the north there arose  
 such a clatter,  
 I sprang to my feet to see  
 what was the matter!  
 Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
 Tore open the shutters  
 and threw up the sash!  
 When what to my wandering eyes  
 should appear,  
 But angels proclaiming that  
 Jesus was near!  
 With a light like the sun sending  
 forth a bright ray,  
 I knew in a moment this must be The Day!  
 The light of His face  
 made me cover my head...  
 It was Jesus returning, just like He said!  
 And though I possessed  
 worldly wisdom and wealth,  
 I cried when I saw Him in spite of myself.  
 In the Book of Life, which He held  
 in His hand,  
 Was written the name of every saved man.  
 He spoke not a word as  
 He searched for my name;  
 When He said, "It's not here,"  
 my head hung in shame.  
 The people whose names had been  
 written with love,  
 He gathered to take to his Father above.  
 With those who were ready,  
 He rose without a sound,  
 While all the rest were left standing around.  
 I fell to my knees, but it was too late,  
 I had waited too long, and this  
 sealed my fate.  
 I stood and I cried as they arose  
 out of sight,  
 Oh, if only we all had been ready tonight.  
 In the words of this poem  
 the meaning is clear  
 The coming of Jesus is drawing near...  
 When in a moment shall come the last call,  
 We'll find that the Bible was true after all.

## DECEMBER 2023 MEETINGS

### JOINT BOARD MEETING

Monday, December 18<sup>th</sup>

at 6:00 p.m.

All Joint Board members should attend



### DEACON MINISTRY MEETING

Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>

at 10:00 a.m.

All Deacons & Deaconesses should attend.



### USHER MINISTRY MEETING

Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup>

at 11:00 a.m.

All Ushers should attend.



### MAN CAVE FELLOWSHIP

Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>

at 6:00 p.m.

Topic: The Christmas Story  
 All Men are invited to attend.



### SHE SHED FELLOWSHIP

Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>

at 6:00 p.m.

Topic/Scripture: Psalms 121  
 All Women are invited to attend.



### NO MISSIONARY MINISTRY MEETING THIS MONTH



## ANNUAL CHURCH BUSINESS MEETING

Our Annual Church Business Meeting will be held in person on **Sunday, January 21, 2024**, following the 10:00 a.m. service.

All Mt. Zion members are encouraged to attend.

Mark your calendars!  
More information to come in January.

## *New Members*

*Joining Mt. Zion in November were:*

### **BRO. STEVAN JACKSON**

**Date Joined:** November 12, 2023

**Method:** Restoration

### **SIS. RHINA SEARLES**

**Date Joined:** November 5, 2023

**Method:** Christian Experience

### **BRO. GEORGE WARD**

**Date Joined:** November 5, 2023

**Method:** Candidate for Baptism

## *Welcome All!*

### **NEW MEMBER CORRECTION:**

In last month's newsletter, we welcomed new member, **Sis. Ayanna Spencer** as a Candidate for Baptism, when in fact, she joined by way of Christian Experience. We apologize for this error, and again welcome Sis. Spencer.

## **Mobile Food Truck**

The Western Mass Food Bank Mobile Truck returns this month to our Union Street Parking lot. It will be here at **1:00 p.m.** on **Friday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>**. All are invited to come get free produce.

## DECEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>:

### A FUN & 'DELICIOUS' SUNDAY

*By Sis. Angela Westbrook*

#### *First the fun...*

#### **UGLY CHRISTMAS SWEATER**

On **Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**, for the very first time ever, we are having an "**Ugly Christmas Sweater Sunday**." Yes, you heard it right! Look in your closets, find your ugliest Christmas sweater, and wear it to church. If you don't have an ugly Christmas sweater, not to worry. Put on a regular ugly sweater, wear something red or green, or just come as you normally would and check out everyone else's ugly sweaters. It'll be fun! But remember, more important than what you have on, is that you are here.

#### *Now for the delicious...*

#### **HOLIDAY DESSERT SWAP**

Also on **Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>**, we're having a "**Holiday Dessert Swap**" following service. Our dessert swap will consist of you bringing in your favorite dessert to share. It can be homemade baked goods, store bought items such as cupcakes, cookies, etc., or even individually wrapped candies.

Here are some instructions to follow:

1) For everyone's safety, please pre-package your treats in individual servings, making them ready to grab-and-go after service. For instance, if you're bringing cookies, put two in a snack bag, or for brownies, cakes, and pies, slice and wrap them, and for desserts like cobblers or puddings, place them in small cups with lids to be able to handle with ease. And 2) Label your items and state if nuts are in your treats for those with allergies.

The Welcome Center will be set up to drop off your treats before service that morning. If everyone partakes, we should have a good assortment of sweets to satisfy any sweet tooth.

## A SOLDIER GONE HOME

### DEA. IVRIE THOMPSON

went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, November 8, 2023.

Dea. Thompson was an Adult Sunday School Teacher and served in the Deacon Ministry for many years. He will be sorely missed.

## Christmas Service

### **On Christmas Eve**

Please join us at 10 a.m. on Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup> for a Christmas Candlelight Service.

In addition to the preached Word from our Pastor, there will be a mini-Christmas concert from our Music Ministry, followed by a candlelight service.

What better way to celebrate our Savior's birth than coming together to worship and praise His name on Christmas Eve. Please come and invite family & friends.

## Christmas Program at Mason Wright

The Mt. Zion Missionary Ministry will hold a Christmas Program at Mason Wright Assisted Living on **Saturday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m.** The speaker will be our member, **Sis. Andrea "Mimmie" Dixon**. Everyone is invited to attend. Mason Wright is located at 74 Walnut Street in Springfield.

## Baptism

Our second baptism service of the year will take place on **Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.** It will be at Solid Rock Community Baptist Church, 821 Liberty Street here in Springfield. Please come and support the candidates who are taking this especially important step in their faith walk.

## Missionary Ministry

Last month, the Missionary Ministry supported the Springfield Rescue Mission's effort to provide Thanksgiving meals to families in need. On Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, they took to the Rescue Mission seven (7) turkeys, several gallon cans of green beans and corn, 15 pounds of white potatoes, and two car trunk-loads of other non-perishable boxed food items. Needless to say, the Rescue Mission was very appreciated.

## 2023 TITHES, OFFERINGS, & OTHER DONATIONS

For your tithes, offerings, or other donations to be credited to your **2023** giving, monies must be received by **12/31/2023** if giving via Sunday offering or submitting funds electronically via Givelify or Cash App. Checks or money orders sent via USPS must be postmarked by 12/31/2023

In addition to giving money on Sunday mornings during the offertory period, Mt. Zion offers four (4) other ways to make financial donations to the Church:

**1. SENDING IT THROUGH THE MAIL (USPS)** to Mt. Zion Baptist Church, 33 Oak Street, Springfield, MA 01109. [Only checks or money orders should be sent via the United States Postal Service.]

**2. DROPPING IT OFF IN PERSON** in the brown mailbox labeled "Mt. Zion Only," which is to the right of the Orleans Street entrance.

**3. GIVING IT ON-LINE THROUGH GIVELIFY:** Download and use the free app, 'Givelify.' A picture of the outside of the Church should assure you that you have the correct organization.

**4. GIVING IT THROUGH CASH APP:** Download and use the free app, "Cash App." When you give a donation/ offering through Cash App, it is extremely important that you use the correct Cash App Tag. Our Cash Tag is...

**\$mtzionbaptistchurch**

**The 2023 Giving Statements will be available by January 31, 2024.**

## Paint Night for Young Adults

*Written by Sis. Patrice Wood*

On **Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**, the Young Adult Ministry (YAM) will be hosting a Mind and Paint event from **6:00-9:00 p.m.** YAM's goal is to bring together Mt. Zion members & friends ages 19-39 (20s and 30s). We will enjoy an instructor-lead paint class, a mindfulness discussion, great food, and of course, phenomenal fellowship. This event is free! Tell a friend to tell a friend. Space is limited, so please RSVP and reserve your spot with the QR code located on the flyer throughout the building, or by contacting **Sis. Patrice Wood** or **Sis. Jolene Snowden**. Hope to see you there!

## The Pastor's Birthday

On Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, immediately following morning service, the Church recognized Pastor White's birthday. [His actual birthday was Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup>.]

After the congregation was treated to a brief montage of photos of the Pastor over the years—including his youth--Pastor White made his way to the front of the Church where he was serenaded by the congregation with a rendition of "Happy Birthday To Ya," led by our Minister of Music, Rev. Frank Thompson. At the same time, **Deaconess Deborah Jones**, the Pastor's Aid Ministry Leader, entered the sanctuary with a small cake, lit with three candles. Pastor White (presumably made a wish) blew out the candles, and Deaconess Jones presented him with a love gift from the congregation. He then moved to the back of the church to greet members as they exited the sanctuary where he received many more birthday wishes, cards, and gifts.

Finally, as members walked into the Welcome Center, they were invited to take a cupcake home and enjoy it at their leisure in honor of the Pastor's birthday.

## UBC at MT. ZION AGAIN



For the third straight year, the Annual Session of the United Baptist Convention of MA, RI, & NH, Inc. was held in Springfield, and Mt. Zion was the host church.

The 101<sup>st</sup> Annual Session ran from Thursday, November 9, 2023, through Saturday, November 11, 2023. Member churches, their delegates, and a host of other attendees experienced powerful worship services, enjoyed delicious food, and rekindled old relationships through wonderful fellowship.

Keynote speakers for the event were:

### Thursday's Opening Service:

Dr. Lance Watson, Pastor of Saint Paul's Baptist Church, Richmond, VA

### Friday Evening Service:

Rev. Tellis Chapman, Pastor of Galilee Baptist Church, Detroit, MI

### Saturday's Closing Service:

Dr. Dayhige Wright, Pastor of St. John's Congregational Church, Springfield, MA,

Our Pastor, **Dr. Atu White**, serves as the UBC President.

From the many positive comments from attendees about the services, the food, and the Mt. Zion hospitality, it appears the 101<sup>st</sup> Annual Session was another success! Mt. Zion congratulates the UBC on this great milestone and extends special thanks to all the Mt. Zion Volunteers who gave of their time and talents to make this event so successful!!

# LET'S ELIMINATE OUR DEBT: PROJECT IMPACT PHASE III

As was announced at our Anniversary celebration in September, one of our goals for the next two years will be to eliminate our mortgage debt. We're calling the plan, "Project Impact Phase III."

Through faith and the help and support of all members, we can pay off our mortgage early. Here's how...

Between January 1, 2024, and December 31, 2025 (the next 2 years), individuals or teams are asked to commit to giving \$3,500.00 over and beyond your normal tithes and offering.

Monies can be donated in your name, your Team's name, or in memory of a loved one.

Teams can be comprised of members of your household, your family and friends, or other Mt. Zion members. Each Team determines how much each of its team members needs to contribute to reach the \$3500.00 goal.

[Note: If you want to be on a Team, but do not know any Team to join, we can help you with that.]

**An 'official' kick-off for Project Impact Phase III is planned for next month.**

However, like several members who have already started making weekly/monthly donations toward their commitment, you don't have to wait until January to start.

The chart below may help you decide the best way to determine the commitment course you'd like to take. More information will be shared in future weeks and at the January "kick-off!"

Debt Reduction Payment Options

| Number on Team      | Individual 2-Year Goal<br>(Total Amount Each Person Commits To) | Weekly Individual Giving Amounts for 104 Weeks | Monthly Individual Giving Amounts for 24 Months | Quarterly Individual Giving Amounts for 8 Quarters |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| One (1) Individual  | \$3,500.00                                                      | \$33.70                                        | \$146.00                                        | \$437.50                                           |
| A Team of Two (2)   | \$1,750.00                                                      | \$16.85                                        | \$73.00                                         | \$218.75                                           |
| A Team of Three (3) | \$1,167.00                                                      | \$11.25                                        | \$48.75                                         | \$146.00                                           |
| A Team of Four (4)  | \$875.00                                                        | \$8.45                                         | \$36.50                                         | \$109.40                                           |
| A Team of Five (5)  | \$700.00                                                        | \$6.75                                         | \$29.50                                         | \$87.50                                            |

## PUZZLES!

### LAST MONTH'S PUZZLE: "THANKSGIVING WORD HUNT"

Last month, you were asked to find sixteen 8-letter words in the word 'THANKSGIVING'. There was only one rule... A letter could not be used any more times than the letter appeared in the word 'THANKSGIVING.' How did you do? Here are the 16 words that we found: 1. agisting 2. angsting 3. antiking 4. gnashing 5. hangings 6. sainting 7. satining 8. shanking 9. sighting 10. staining 11. stanging 12. stinging 13. stinking 14. tankinis 15. thanking 16. thinking

### THIS MONTH'S PUZZLE: "FIND THE CHRISTMAS CAROLS"

For this month's puzzle, combine various words below to find the names of ten (10) very popular Christmas Carols. All 38 words must be used only once. Have fun, sing the carols while you work, and....enjoy your Christmas! Answers will be in next month's newsletter.

A Bells Christmas For Holy I'll Jingle Look Night O Silent To White Ye  
 All Be Christmas Faithful Home It's Joy Lot Night O Silver Town World  
 Beginning Christmas Little O To  
 Bells Come Like Of The  
 Bethlehem