

MOUNT PLEASANT MESSENGER December 2016
3035 Mount Pleasant Blvd., Roanoke, Virginia 24014
Phone: 540-427-3064 website: mpumc.church



CHRISTMAS EVE/CHRISTMAS DAY

On Christmas Eve we offer Candlelight Communion at 6:00 p.m., with music of the season, the Christmas message, sharing at the Lord's Table, and the beautiful lighting of candles. 100% of our offering that night goes to outreach (see related article).

Invite and bring a friend, relative, neighbor, or acquaintance to be a part of this HOLY NIGHT! We have small "INVITE CARDS" that you can pick up to share with others!

We will also offer brief Communion at 12 noon on Christmas Eve. This is a short, informal time, and may be helpful to folks who can't be present that evening.

Since Christmas Day is a Sunday, we have Christmas morning worship at 11:00 a.m. This is a fun, casual worship time led by Heather St. Clair. No Sunday School on Christmas morning.

Many thanks to all those who have helped beautify our worship space during Advent, and for all who have placed poinsettias as memorial and honor gifts.

"FROM HEAVEN ABOVE" – SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11

Our Christmas mini-pageant and musical is "FROM HEAVEN ABOVE." It is presented by the children and youth ministries, along with the choir. It will be part of our 11:00 a.m. worship on Sunday, December 11. Don't miss this opportunity to experience the special joy of the Advent/Christmas season. The presentation is based upon the traditional hymn "From Heaven Above" written by Martin Luther.

CONFIRMATION CLASS 2017

It looks like we may have a good group of 6th-9th graders for a Confirmation Class this spring. Please contact Pastor Robert for more information. Details will be shared soon, but we need to know who all is interested!

SHARE YOUR MANGER SCENE

If you have a manger scene or other Christmas arrangement that has a special place in your home, please share a photo with Pastor Robert. We will share some of those scenes on the screen during Christmas Eve worship. Best of all is to share an electronic copy by email (robertstutes@hotmail.com) or text (540-353-9276) – be sure and let him know who it is from! If you cannot text or email, please ask a friend to take a cell phone photo and get it to him, or it is also possible to share a print that can be scanned. We still have the photos from last year and plan to use those again!

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING FOR OUTREACH

For the second year, all of our Christmas Eve Candlelight offering goes to outreach and missions! We will support two special projects – the ministries to children and families through the Roanoke Community Outreach Program (C.O.P.), which includes the new literacy program, and for the global health project of providing clean water around the world. If you can't be present on December 24, you may make your special gift by marking your check or envelope for "CHRISTMAS EVE."

FAITHFUL PARTICIPATION THROUGH

OUR PRESENCE – Worship Attendance for November

Nov. 6	53	Nov. 20	54
Nov. 12/13	73	Nov. 27	50

(**includes Second Saturday)

Nov. 2016 Average	57	Nov. 2015 Average	71
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OUR GIFTS

November Offerings/Income	\$ 7,015.30
Average Monthly Need	\$ 9,961.00
**Other November Offerings	\$ 1,653.00

OUR PRAYERS, SERVICE AND WITNESS

Thank you for your daily prayers for our ministry, for sharing your prayer requests and praise reports, for giving of your time, energy and talents, and for making a positive witness for Christ and his church!

YOU MADE IT HAPPEN

Your giving from disaster response offerings has been put to good use right here in Virginia. Since mid-October teams have been at work in neighborhoods in Hampton Roads affected by Hurricane Matthew. As of mid-November, 259 volunteers had worked on 76 homes, totaling 2,571 volunteer hours. Your offerings helped provide supplies – you made it happen!

OUT AND ABOUT IN DECEMBER

Pastor Robert will be OUT AND ABOUT this month at these locations. Stop by for chat, coffee, or prayer!

FRI. DEC. 2, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Hardee's, 605 9th St.

TUE. DEC. 6, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Mount Pleasant Library, 2918 Jae Valley Rd.

WED. DEC. 14, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Arby's, 1401 Jameson Ave.

FRI. DEC. 23, 8:30 – 9:30 a.m.

Hope's Café, 3327 Garden City Blvd.

No "OUT AND ABOUT" between Christmas and New Year's.

REMEMBER that OUT AND ABOUT can be an opportunity to bring a friend to "meet your pastor" in a non-threatening setting.

"SECOND SATURDAY" - DECEMBER 10

December 10 is the next "SECOND SATURDAY" – a monthly community-based casual worship time – the second Saturday each month at 5:30 p.m., hosted here at MPUMC. Help spread the word about SECOND SATURDAY! Worship is followed by fellowship and food – so feel free to bring munchies to share! Be sure to invite someone you know to experience Second Saturday!

PASTOR CHATTER

On the Sundays in Advent we've been thinking together about the themes of "The Advent Conspiracy" (adventconspiracy.org). This "conspiracy" began in 2006 when five pastors imagined a better Christmas practice for their faith communities.

The question they raise is this. "Can Christmas still change the world?" How did the best story in the world turn into stuff, stress, and debt? The Advent Conspiracy is now a global movement of Christians and congregations who seek to resist the Christmas narrative that is focused on consumption. These Christians CONSPIRE to change the way we celebrate Christmas, and to invite the world into a better Christmas story! The Advent Conspiracy challenges us in four ways.

To WORSHIP FULLY – putting down our burdens and lifting a song up to God.

To SPEND LESS – being more realistic about our gift-giving, thus freeing ourselves from the anxiety of debt.

To GIVE MORE – remembering that the most powerful, memorable gift you can offer is yourself.

To LOVE ALL – freeing up our resources to love as Jesus loves by giving to those who really need help.

The Advent Conspiracy is a perfect follow up to our series on LOVING GENEROUSLY. Remember that it is not enough to say NO to the way others are celebrating Christmas. We must also say YES to a different way of celebrating!

Pastor Robert



FROM THE CHILDREN, TEENS, AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

Lots of exciting things going on in the Mt. Pleasant community these next few weeks. Don't let the busyness of the holidays ruin it for you.

Thank you to all who donated money and shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. We collected 15 boxes! Please save your shoe boxes for us as we will be participating in this again in the upcoming year! If you don't have your tree yet, stop by the **Mt. Pleasant Rec Club tree lot** at the Fire Department between Noon and 8 and pick one up! You're supporting a great cause! The Rec Club wouldn't argue if you wanted to get in the holiday spirit and work a shift or two... see Heather if interested!

And make sure, if you're not participating, that you take some time and drive through the **LIVE Nativity at Rockingham Court Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4!** You will be blessed! If you would like to participate, please let Heather know ASAP. We'll be meeting at Rockingham Court at 5:00 p.m. to be assigned roles. You work outside for 30 minutes and then are inside for 30 minutes. It's a lot of fun!

Our **children's program** will take place on **Sunday, December 11**, during the 11:00 a.m. worship service. It's not too late to sign up! **Rehearsal** is Sunday, December 4, at 9:45 a.m. and December 11, at 9:00 a.m. Let me know if your child would like to participate!

Winter Camp is for 2nd-12th graders and we have all the fun of summer camp at Alta Mons in the Winter... right before Christmas... as in I'll take your children the weekend before Christmas! The cost of this camp is \$99 for the weekend and includes all meals, snacks and lodging. Register online or download registration form here (<http://www.altamons.org/winter-camp.html>) (Camp is expected to fill up this year so please register early... and let me know if you registered so I can keep track of who I'm taking!)

Resurrection is a Youth Conference for students in 6th-12th grades held in Pigeon Forge in **January (20-22)** with thousands of teens! (It's a lot of fun!) The cost for this trip is \$120 plus the cost of food. **\$50 deposit due by December 15.**

I know these things, this close to Christmas, can be a hinderance financially but we want all students to be able to participate. Please let us know if you need financial assistance.

We are looking forward to some great trips this winter!
Youth Christmas Party - Saturday, December 10, 5:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m. - We'll start with worship at Second Saturday and then head to the mall for our 5th annual photo scavenger hunt. When we return, it's a round of Dirty Santa! Bring your friends and a \$5 wrapped gift to play! **I NEED DRIVERS!** Adults! This is the MOST fun you'll have... (whether you like kids or not!)

Crafternoon - Sunday, December 11, 12:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. - with a hotdog lunch served. Kids in grades K-5 are welcome to come and make 4 different crafts so they have gifts to give at Christmas! Cost is \$5. **Preregistration is required by December 1.**

5th Annual RACKing (Random Acts of Christmas Kindness) - This is a FAMILY event! Mark your calendar for **December 23** - Time TBA - We're collecting wrapped candy, quarters, gift cards of various amounts and cash so that we can spread some Christmas cheer around the Mt. Pleasant and Vinton areas!

Wonderful Wednesdays is back for a brief moment, Wednesday, December 21, (9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) We're having a Christmas PJ party! We'll have pancakes for lunch, do crafts, watch Christmas movies and more! Cost is \$5 per child and **pre-registration is required by December 15!** (Adult and Teen, grades 8 and up, help is needed to make this a success and I hear Santa might be in the neighborhood). Kitchen help to make the pancakes would also be AWESOME.)

Heather St. Clair,
Director of Children, Teens, and Families

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3 - BREAKFAST WITH SANTA!

Happy Holidays to the neighborhood from the Mount Pleasant Lions Club. All ages are welcome to the free BREAKFAST WITH SANTA event on Saturday, December 3, 8:00 to 11:00 a.m., at the Lions building, 2432 Mayfield Dr. Stop by for pancakes, sausage, juice, milk and coffee. Thanks to the Lions for this annual community event!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4 – Potluck meal after worship. The church will provide the meat and beverages. Come join us for our Christmas fellowship meal. Birthdays and anniversaries will also be celebrated on this day.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 8:30 a.m. – The United Methodist Women will meet for a covered dish breakfast and business meeting. Gifts will be collected to be used as birthday presents for children at Henry Fork. All women are welcome!

MONDAY, DECEMBER 12 - Lunch Bunch. Meet outside the entrance at K&W Tanglewood at 11:30 a.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, at Noon – Senior Fellowship will have its Christmas meeting. Lunch will be potluck and Pat Musselwhite will provide music. Join us and bring a friend. Senior Fellowship is open to the community!

ACROSS THE DISTRICT AND CONFERENCE

- CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE is Thursday, December 15, any time between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Meet the district office leaders and enjoy refreshments and fellowship with other area United Methodists.
- 2017 LEADERSHIP TRAINING is Saturday, February 4, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Greene Memorial UMC downtown.
- COMMUNITY OUTREACH BOOKFAIR is Saturday, December 3, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Valley View. A portion of each sale supports the Community Outreach Program. Or enter bookfair ID # 11937505 at bn.com/bookfairs between December 3 and December 14. C.O.P. has served at-risk children in our area since 1989.
- EARLY RESPONSE TEAM TRAINING for disaster relief is offered January 14 in Moneta and January 21 in Blacksburg. This training prepares you to be an on-call volunteer in times of storms or other disasters. See Pastor Robert for registration info.

NOTE OF THANKS

Special thanks for the generous gifts for Ministry Appreciation Month! We love our place of service at MPUMC, and your thoughtfulness and generosity are appreciated. Thanks so much!

Robert and Heather

A NOTE FROM PCC

The support from MPUMC brings such JOY to many. Joy can be seen in the faces of recipients of the pantry food orders. Joy can be heard in each volunteer's enthusiastic chatter. Joy is felt by each PCC staffer distributing assistance. I'm sure that joy fills your heart as you share!

MPUMC food donations from August through November total \$65.46. The PCC is so very thankful for you and your congregation! Thank you for supporting the Presbyterian Community Center in fighting against the harsh reality of hunger and poverty in our community.

Cheryl H. Poe
Director of Volunteer Services

TO ALL GIVERS OF MT. PLEASANT UMC

Thank you again for your support. All the children are doing very well by God's grace. Before I traveled to Bolgatanga last month, October, I gave them enough money for their needs. Immediately I came back, I was faced with examination fees plus money for transportation to a nearby town to participate in basketball competition which lasted for 3 days; this requires extra money for transportation in and out. I have to make sure I have enough money to respond quickly to meet their needs each time we are confronted with money matter to solve their problem.

In my previous letter I showed you some pictures about Mary and Martha's house which is completely down due to a heavy downpour rendering them homeless. If they should go back to their house now, they would not have a place to sleep. We thank God they are safe here. But it is all due to your continuous support for them. God bless you all. Amen

Abraham



December Birthdays

- (1) Chuck Mattox
- (6) Jane Burks
- (7) Jeanette Semones
- (9) Mike Schoonover
- (11) Karen Tate
- (14) Brandon Taylor
- (16) Billy Altice
- (18) Sharon LaPradd
- (29) Della Mattox



December Anniversaries

- (18) John & Matah Leslie; Bill Noble
- (23) Jim & Karen Tate
- (29) Tom & Winky McCann

DEADLINE for the January newsletter is **January 1**.