

MOUNT PLEASANT MESSENGER January 2017
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BIBLE CHALLENGE 2017

Bishop Lewis has issued a challenge for us to read through the Bible during 2017. (See letter below) We have a list of the daily readings that allow you to go from Genesis to Revelation in 365 days! We also have giveaway paperback Bibles in an easy translation if you would like one! Note that the print is quite small, so if you would like to order this easy translation (NIRV) in larger print, please see Pastor Robert! May God's Word be a blessing to you this New Year!

BISHOP LEWIS'S CHALLENGE! - I think you would agree with me that every New Year there are individuals who decide to make a New Year's resolution. All of us have made New Year's resolutions ranging anywhere from losing 10-20 unwanted pounds, starting a new exercise program, paying off our credit cards and giving up a bad habit.

Unfortunately, it has been proven that New Year's gym resolutions are normally broken in 90 days, and the gym equipment becomes the new and latest clothes rack in our homes.

As your new bishop, I would like to challenge you to look at this yearly tradition from another perspective. Make a "Christian resolution" by joining me in reading the Bible together this year.

Choose your own translation to make this experience engaging and exciting. Invite others to join you on this journey. Commit to sticking to the outlined plan at this link.

backtothebible.org/reading-guide/15

Let's become Bible scholars in 2017. Peace and Blessings!
 Bishop Sharma D. Lewis



THE READINGS FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

(These are listed by week but you can get them broken down by day on the handout at church, or online, or in the weekly bulletin.)

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|------------------|------------------------------------|
| JAN. 1-7 | Genesis 1-24 |
| JAN. 8-14 | Genesis 25-42 |
| JAN. 15-21 | Genesis 43-50, Exodus 1-12 |
| JAN. 22-28 | Exodus 13-32 |
| JAN. 29 – FEB. 4 | Exodus 33-40, Leviticus 1-13 |
| FEB. 5-11 | Leviticus 14-27, Numbers 1-2 |
| FEB. 12-18 | Numbers 3-17 |
| FEB. 19- 25 | Numbers 18-34 |
| FEB. 26 – MAR. 4 | Numbers 35-36,
Deuteronomy 1-16 |

FAITHFUL PARTICIPATION THROUGH

OUR PRESENCE – Worship Attendance for December

Dec. 4	65	Dec. 18	52**
Dec. 11	116**	Dec. 25	31

**12/11 includes Second Saturday and 12/18 includes Alta

		Mons campers
Christmas Eve Attendance	78	
Dec. 2016 Average	66	Dec. 2015 Average 73

As we begin 2017, let us all be challenged to honor God with faithful participation in the worship and community life of our church family!

OUR GIFTS

December Offerings/Income	\$ 7,659.14
Christmas Off. (Budget)	1,393.00
Christmas Eve (Outreach)	1,465.00
Average Monthly Need	\$ 9,961.00
**Other December Income	\$ 516.75

Thank you for every effort to be faithful in your weekly or monthly giving to the mission and ministries of MPUMC.

**Other offerings/income for the month include Backpack Program (\$282.75), Ghana (\$125), Bus (\$50), Poinsettias (\$30), Communion (\$19) and Youth (\$10).

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 - Most months our Communion rail "extra" offering goes to our Discretionary Fund, used for occasional special needs for households in our community. Last month we covered one night's lodging for a couple on a cold night. We also used this fund to purchase some inexpensive paperback Bibles in an easy-to-read translation. Please pick one up and keep it your car, ready to give away to anyone who might need it. If you give one to someone, write a note of blessing on the front page before giving it to them! When we run out, we will order more!

KROGER DONATION UPDATE - We receive regular checks from Kroger through their Community Rewards program. If you shop at Kroger, be sure to link your Kroger card to MPUMC or another charity of your choice. It costs you nothing extra. There is now no separate donation card. Instead just link your preference to your Kroger card or tag. You can do that online. Our organization number is 82373. If you have problems setting this up, please see Terri Beck. She will be happy to help! (Our last quarterly check from Kroger was \$86.18.)

2017 ENVELOPE BOXES - 2017 giving envelope boxes are available for anyone to use for your Sunday offerings. Just pick one up in the sanctuary entrance area. (If you place cash in the envelope, please be sure to include your name on the front, so your offering can be recorded correctly.)

PASTOR CHATTER

I received this note from Paul Nickerson who served as our "How to reach people" consultant. It had some great reminders, so I have adapted it to share with you! Paul says: **I hear lots of people WISH good things for their church:**

- + I wish we had more members.
- + I wish we saw more people growing in their faith.
- + I wish we had more impact in our neighborhood.

Those are all wonderful wishes but the key for them to come true is in what we do daily. The road from a WISH to a REALITY is based on what we concretely do every day to make a difference.

In 2017, challenge yourself to adopt action steps on a regular basis to help your church to flourish. (See list below). The list of things you can do is endless, but at least choose one thing. Then go and DO IT on a regular basis. It may be time to stop wishing. Stop wishing your church was different. Instead – with God's help – go and make a difference!

Pastor Robert

TURNING WISHES INTO REALITY – SOME IDEAS!

- Pray daily for your neighborhood.
- Go outdoors and do a prayer walk.
- Invite someone to join you for coffee at a "Pastor Out and About!"
- Have a church group or gathering in a public place instead of in the church building.
- Talk to others in your community, and ask where the needs are.
- Contact a friend or neighbor, inviting them to coffee, or to lunch, or to a volunteer opportunity, like packing backpacks for MPES! (Remember some people will say YES to serving before saying YES to the church service!)
- Start a small neighborhood prayer circle or Bible study. It doesn't have to be big, and it doesn't have to be "official!"
- Don't just send "get well" cards to those who are ill. Send cards of blessing and encouragement to those may be searching spiritually.

"THANKS" TO ALL WHO SERVE - Sunday, January 22, we will honor and dedicate all who serve and lead, including our church leaders and officers and anyone who has a place of serving in 2017. This is how our church family lives out its mission of making disciples! This is the shared work of ministry!

EXTENDING THE COMMUNION TABLE - If you know of someone who cannot attend on Communion Sunday, but would like someone to bring them Communion on Sunday offering, please let Pastor Robert know. We have trained servers available to help with this! (Let Robert know if you would like to be trained.)

IN CASE OF SNOW AND ICE... - Thanks to our "snow angels," only once in the past three winters have we had to completely cancel Sunday worship. That was a day in 2014 when roads were icing on Sunday morning. We try to use Channel 7 and Channel 10 to announce if there is a closing. (But note that there is more than one MPUMC in the viewing area!) You can also access this information on their web sites (WDBJ and WSLS). Most Sundays we will continue to have worship, even if some can't make it. PLEASE use good sense and discretion if roads are hazardous in your area. Your pastor will ALWAYS make every effort to open the doors for anyone who shows up!

IF we must cancel worship (or if numbers are very small due to travel conditions), we will give a try at doing worship by Facebook Live on my personal page. Never done it before – so no guarantees – and remember that there may also be interruptions to cell service – but we'll try! And if we must cancel worship, depending on travel conditions, we will try to open the doors at 5:00 p.m. the next day (Monday) for anyone who wishes to gather for an informal time of praise and prayer! We'll do our best to make weekly gathering available for you!

BACKPACK PROGRAM - It's hard to believe, but it's January and our time again to pack the bags of food for the children at Mt. Pleasant School! We really need your help! There is a sign-up sheet in the sanctuary for those who are interested in helping. It's great fellowship, too.

Also, don't forget! We still need your donations of food as well as your financial support. We supply the Mac & Cheese in the individual microwave containers, the small individual boxes of cereal and Beanie-Wienees. Pictures of these items are posted on the bulletin board downstairs. If you write a check, please label it "Backpack Program" and place it in the offering plate.

Any questions, please contact Jenny Basham, 427-5248, or 797-4003. Thank you for loving all our children!

CONFIRMATION CLASS 2017 - We may have the potential for a good group of 6th-10th graders for a Confirmation Class this spring. Please contact Pastor Robert if you are interested. More details coming soon, but we need to find out who might want to participate! If all goes as planned, we will be able to participate in the multi-state Confirmation Experience at Lake Junaluska, N.C. in March!

WANT TO REBOOT? - We are looking at participating in a "REBOOT YOUR WORSHIP" 6-session training! Time will be set based on interest. The training helps churches to make choices that lead to immediate improvements in the spirit of their Sunday worship experience! The training is available to Roanoke UMC's at no charge. Might you be interested? Let Pastor Robert know!



FROM THE CHILDREN, TEENS, AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

Thank you for all the support for our children, teens and family ministry in 2016. We were able to reach so many due to your support. Please continue praying for our ministry as we embark on this New Year! (And we're still looking for a few more who LOVE kids and/or teens, and Jesus... no experience necessary!! See Heather if interested!)

Kids Church happens on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month.... normally!

Beginning in mid-January, we'll start our journey through the Jesus Storybook Bible. I can't even begin to tell you how much I love this book! (If you look at the one I own, you'll see how much.. it's well loved and well used!)

Your kids are going to love this journey... with video, audio and hands on lessons, I can't wait to share this with them!

PSSSSSS... I highly recommend one of these for your home. You won't be disappointed. And the kindle version is just \$2.99!

Here's our Kids Church Schedule Through June!

* **Sunday, January 1** (NO KIDS CHURCH - but please do come to church! Robert will have a great inter-generational service!)

* **Sunday, January 15** - The Story and the Song - To understand that the whole Bible is about Jesus!

* **Sunday, January 29** - The Beginning: A perfect Home - To understand that God created everything, and it was good.

* **Sunday, February 5** - The Terrible Lie - To understand that our sin spoiled God's perfect creation

* **Sunday, February 19** - A New Beginning - To understand that God rescued Noah and his family, and promised never to destroy the world with a flood again.

* **Sunday, March 5th** - A Giant Staircase to Heaven - to understand that people cannot get to heaven by themselves.

* **Sunday, March 19th** - Son of Laughter - To introduce the promise God made to Abraham regarding his family and to understand that God keeps his promises.

* **Sunday, April 2nd** - The Present - To understand that Abraham was willing to sacrifice his only son.

* **Sunday, April 16th** - EASTER SUNDAY! NO KIDS CHURCH

* **Sunday, April 30th** - The Girl No One Wanted - to understand that God chooses those whom others may not choose.

* **Sunday, May 7th** - The Forgiving Prince - To understand that God is in control of everything

* **Sunday, May 21st** - God to the Rescue! - To understand that God's people were rescued by a lamb dying in their place.

* **Sunday, June 4th** - God Makes a Way - to understand that God has done amazing miracles to rescue his people and that we can trust him.

* **Sunday, June 18th** - Ten Ways to Be Perfect - To become familiar with the 10 Commandments and to understand their purpose.

Please join us at 11:00 a.m.!

Youth Group (6th-12th Grades) returns Sunday, January 15! (5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.)

To kick off the New Year, join us for **Resolution Runner...** What if this New Year, you made resolutions you didn't give up on by February? The goal of this series is to let the Bible shape our resolutions and rely on God to help us keep them. Imagine that: actually keeping our resolutions!

Dinner is served.

Join our Facebook Group

(<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1048130521924244/>) to be kept up to date on all the happenings of youth group!

VT Missions Weekend!

Join us **February 10-12** at Virginia Tech for a fun weekend of fellowship, outreach and missions. Cost of this trip will be \$20. Please register ASAP if you wish to attend.

Also, let me know if you would like to accompany us on this trip (adults!) It's always a GREAT time with other churches from our area!

Family Movie Nights Are Back!

Mark your calendar for Family Movie Nights!

Friday, January 27 - Secret Life of Pets

Friday, February 17 - Trolls

Friday, March 31 - Movie TBA

Friday, April 28 - Movie TBA

Movie starts at 7:00 p.m. Popcorn provided. Please bring a 2-liter to share. **(Elementary Age Children must be accompanied by an adult).**

Youth Super Bowl Party (Sunday, February 5) Open to grades 6-12 at Miss Heather's house! Bring a dish to share!

5:45-10:00 p.m. (or the end of the game!)

Come for the game or the fellowship or both... games for both die hard football fans and for those who simply like the commercials.

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

OUT AND ABOUT IN JANUARY

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

Tuesday, January 3 – 1:00-2:00 p.m.

Hope's Café, 3327 Garden City Blvd.

Tuesday, January 10 – 12:30-1:30 p.m.

Little Green Hive Coffee, 16 Church Ave., SW

Thursday, January 19 - 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Tanglewood Mall (mall walking)

Saturday, January 21 – 6:30-8:30 p.m.

William Byrd HS Gym

Wednesday, January 25 – 4:00-5:00 p.m.

Mount Pleasant Library, 2918 Jae Valley Rd.

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

JANUARY 8 - Second Sunday reception (after worship) to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries.

JANUARY 9 - Lunch Bunch. Meet outside the entrance at K&W Tanglewood at 11:30 a.m.

JANUARY 14 - “**SECOND SATURDAY**” - January 14 is the next “SECOND SATURDAY” – a monthly community-based casual worship time with Communion and lots of singing! We meet the second Saturday each month downstairs at 5:30 p.m. We host it, but it is open to all. Help share the word about SECOND SATURDAY! This can be especially helpful for folks who cannot attend at the usual time! Worship is followed by fellowship and food – so feel free to bring munchies to share!

JANUARY 15 - Sunday after worship the Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Women will have a short meeting. All women are welcome.

JANUARY 17 - Tuesday, at 12:00 noon - Senior Fellowship will meet for lunch and a program; Shannon Abel of LOA will speak on various powers of attorney. Bring a neighbor or friend!

JANUARY 19 - Administrative Council will meet at 7:00 p.m.

HAWAII 2017 - Brochures are now available for this inspirational group trip – a cruise around Hawaii sailing on June 10, 2017. Pastor Robert is one of the trip hosts through Educational Opportunities, a leading provider of Holy Land and other learning and leisure trips for faith-based groups. Nothing like fun and inspiration in this beautiful part of God's world! If you have questions, see Pastor Robert. You'll be hearing more. Help spread the word to friends from other churches!

ACROSS THE DISTRICT AND CONFERENCE

- DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TRAINING DAY is Saturday, February 4, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Greene Memorial. Several workshops are available, and child care is provided if needed! See Pastor Robert for a brochure!
- 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. Team Leader Training is set for March 11 in Pembroke. See Pastor Robert for registration info.

- UMC DAY at the Virginia General Assembly is Thursday, February 2, at 2:00 p.m. Come find out more about our faith at work in our state! Go to vaumc.org for more info.
- STOP HUNGER NOW! More than 10,000 meals were packaged for “Stop Hunger Now” at the District Conference in November. These meals are going to Haiti and will ship out in January.
- LAY SERVANT ACADEMY for Virginia is March 31 – April 2 at Smith Mountain Lake. Registration is now open. See Pastor Robert for more info! Courses are open to any interested person!
- SAVE THE DATE – MAY 21 – for Bishop Lewis's next visit to the Roanoke District!
- VOICES OF YOUTH, a Virginia UMC summer youth mission choir, is currently accepting applications for their tour July 6-23.
- KINDRED PROJECT is a monthly contemplative gathering of anyone interested in growing in their awareness of God's present. Second Thursday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at Cave Spring UMC.

A CHRISTMAS NOTE

We miss all of you! Just wish we were able to come back every Sunday! Have a blessed Christmas!

Ed & Helen Granger

THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE would like to thank everyone who helped to add beauty to our sanctuary this Christmas season. We hope that it enhanced your own personal worship. Thank you.

THANKS to the choir for all of their hard work in 2016. We look forward to another good year of singing. If anyone is interested in joining the choir, we meet every Wednesday at 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

We thank you all givers who made it possible for us to enjoy a healthy Christmas, with these needy children in our home. God bless you all. It has been a long journey since you givers, prompted by the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, to give hope, life, love, health, education, Christianity and salvation. Money helps us to serve God better, but the love of it is evil. We need money to help those who do not have to make our Christianity better. Christianity is all about giving as Christ gave all mankind.

We love you all and we pray for a prosperous New Year in Jesus' Name. Amen

Abraham

January Birthdays

- (9) Heather St. Clair; (10) Brittany Stanley
(11) Drew Beck; (18) Matthew Jacobson;
Pam Noble; (20) Jennifer Holmes;
(24) Raheem Brownell

January Anniversaries

- (1) Wayne & Charlotte Myers

DEADLINE for the February newsletter is **January 29**.