

**MOUNT PLEASANT MESSENGER January 2018**  
**3035 Mount Pleasant Blvd., Roanoke, Virginia 24014**  
**Phone: 540-427-3064 website: mpumc.church**

**“52” – OUR BIG GOAL FOR 2018**

On December 31 Pastor Robert issued a challenge to celebrate 52 faith commitments during the coming year. This could be baptisms (adult, youth or child), people taking the membership vows, confirmations, or inactive members making a renewal. This is a BOLD GOAL that can only be accomplished through prayer! Please keep the “52 GOAL” in your daily prayers. We’ll share more info about expectations for baptism as well as the different types of church membership!

**CHURCH FAMILY MEETING – JANUARY 28**

ALL are invited to remain after worship on Sunday, January 28, for a “Church Family Meeting” beginning at approximately 11:50 a.m. Pastor Robert and church leaders will share a presentation on our church’s financial health and adjustments being made to the church budget for 2018, 2019 and beyond.

Beginning July 1, both pastor hours and pastor compensation at MPUMC will be reduced by 25%. This can help us to preserve the long-term financial health of the congregation while keeping our ministries strong! Annual giving remains at a good level, but for the last several years has fallen short of the amount needed to fully fund our ministry budget.

The meeting will also include an update on how Barton Fund monies have been spent since 2012. We will keep the Church Family Meeting “short and sweet,” but Pastor Robert and other church leaders will be available for your questions after the meeting. Please make every effort to be present!

**LETTER FROM UMC BISHOPS**

Bishop Bruce R. Ough has shared a New Year’s Greeting letter on behalf of the entire UMC Council of Bishops. Copies of this letter are available in the back of the church. Please pick one up and read it!

**NEW NEIGHBORHOOD MEN’S PRAYER BREAKFAST**

Larry McCulloch invites any interested men from the community to a new men’s prayer breakfast. The first meeting was Thursday, January 4, at Hope’s Café. Future meetings will be set based on interest. Please contact Larry for more info at 890-1244 or larrym68@cox.net.

**SPECIAL MUSIC ON JANUARY 21**

How exciting that Pat Musselwhite has put together a group of singers and instrumentalists to help lead our worship on Sunday, January 21. This special music will bless your soul and make your toes tap! Be sure to be here and to invite a friend! Or an enemy, for that matter!

**LENT BEGINS FEBRUARY 14**

Even though Advent just ended, note that the season of Lent (the forty days before Easter) begins this year with Ash Wednesday on February 14. Easter this year falls on April 1. (That’s right – from Valentine’s Day to April Fools Day!) Watch for more info about special faith-building opportunities during Lent.

**FAITHFUL PARTICIPATION THROUGH**

**OUR PRESENCE – Worship Attendance for December**

Dec. 3	72	Dec. 24	72
Dec. 10	74**	Dec. 31	54
Dec. 17	52		

\*\*12/10 includes Second Sunday

Dec. 2017 Average	65	Dec. 2016 Avg.	66
Christmas Eve	82		
Candlelight			

**OUR GIFTS**

December Budget Offerings	\$ 14,438.10
	(includes “December special”)
Average Monthly Need	\$ 10,337.00
**Other December Income	\$ 1,237.86

\*\*Other offerings/income for the month include Christmas Eve (\$426), Backpack ministry (\$304.67), Music (\$200), Ghana (\$155), 12/3 Communion (\$70.19), Youth (\$70), and 12/31 Communion (\$12).

THE DECEMBER SPECIAL OFFERING amounted to \$4,532 as of 12/31. Thank you so much!! This helps us to finish the year in a strong way. (It is included in the budget offering total above.)

**YOUR GIVING HAS RESULTS!** Part of our monthly budget supports UMC apportionments – “a portion” of each offering “meant” for the work of Christ around the world. If you were to look at the list you might be baffled by an item called “PRE-1982 PENSION LIABILITY ASSESSMENT.” What on earth is that? Let’s try to simplify!

Before 1982, UMC retired pastors received their monthly pensions but there was no money set aside for it. The money had to be raised each year. In 1982, the UMC moved to a fully funded pension. That was a tough but wise decision. Since that time, churches have paid a set amount each month to support their pastor’s pension. (Pastor Robert says THANK YOU!!!)

However, we are still supporting pensions for retired pastors and their surviving spouses for years they served prior to 1982. This line item provides funding for these pre-1982 years. So many retired pastors and surviving spouses count on this support! For 2018, our budget provides approximately \$63 monthly for this cause.

**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!

**THE DANIEL PLAN**

Starting in February, we will offer a six-week small group study called THE DANIEL PLAN. This Bible study includes practical application for personal health, with specific help on food and physical fitness. Many churches have used this study, and the group members help encourage one another. We hope to offer this at more than one time slot. Watch for more info on this six-week practical learning experience!

## PASTOR CHATTER

THREE SIMPLE RULES. If you haven't yet done so, pick up your gift copy of this book by the late Bishop Reuben P. Job. It is now a Christian classic that explains how these simple rules have the power to "change our world." 1 – Do no harm. 2 – Do good. 3 – Stay in love with God.

CHURCH FAMILY MEETING. As we shared a few months ago, I have made my plans to "officially retire" on July 1 yet still be available to pastor here at "three-fourths of full time." The Church Family Meeting on January 28 will show how this affects our finances and ministry. Do remember that pastor appointments are reviewed EVERY YEAR – regardless of this budget decision. These reviews and decisions are made by Bishop Lewis through late spring. This is still the standard procedure every year for all the UMCs in Virginia.

THE "52" GOAL. I almost gulped when I shared this goal last week. It's exciting to see new folks on our list of attenders. Some Sundays as many as half of our attenders have no "official" connection to the church family. (They are no longer "guests," but not yet members!) We had several new members and baptisms in 2016, my report for 2017 does not show fruit in that area. 2018 can be a year in which we reclaim our shared call to baptize and make disciples! Please pray with me that 2018 will be a year with much fruit!

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN. Up until Easter we have 17 weeks with the Gospel of John on Sunday mornings. John's gospel offers a unique perspective on Jesus' life and ministry. Starting January 28, we have five weeks on a series from John called "TURNAROUNDS" - looking at five stories of how God's power helped turned lives around.

THE DANIEL PLAN. I don't know if YOU need this but I surely do! Take a peek at the article on page one, and think about being a part of this small group.

Pastor Robert

**IN CASE OF SNOW OR ICE...**- Thanks to our "snowplow angels," it has been 2014 since we have had to cancel worship! Last January when many churches cancelled, we were open!

We work with Channels 7 and 10 to announce closings, but note that there are several Mt. Pleasant churches in other counties! You can also find the info at wdbj7.com or wsls.com. We make every effort to be open but PLEASE use good sense and discretion if your roads or sidewalks are hazardous. We do make every effort to open the doors for anyone who shows up!

Even if we must cancel worship, we will try to go live on Facebook, depending on power! We'll also try to open the doors at 5 p.m. on the next day (Monday) for a brief time of praise and prayer. We'll do our best to worship WEEKLY!

## BISHOP'S BIBLE READING CHALLENGE

JAN. 1-6	Genesis 1-11, Job 1-13
JAN. 7-13	Job 14-37
JAN. 14-20	Job 38-42, Genesis 12-26
JAN. 21-27	Genesis 27-45
JAN. 28 – FEB. 3	Genesis 46-50, Exodus 1-15
FEB. 4-10	Exodus 16-35
FEB. 11-17	Exodus 36-40, Leviticus 1-15



## FROM THE CHILDREN, TEENS, AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

And just like that...the hustle and bustle is gone, it's a little darker, a lot colder and we face what I believe they call the "bleak mid-winter." We're going to try to have a little fun though in the children and teen departments and do hope that you'll join us!

### Children

**Wonderful Wednesdays** resumes January 17. Do you have a free Wednesday that you can spare a few hours? We'd love to have your help!

### Youth

**Youth Group** resumes **Sunday, January 21, from 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.** and start our series, "Why, Jesus?" Able to cook for us? We're not picky.

**Save the Date - Our VT District Weekend is February 9 - 11** and costs just \$10. More details to follow but make sure you mark your calendar - it's so much fun! (I think the kids have a good time, too!)

**Super Bowl Party** at Miss Heather's on Super Bowl Sunday from 6:30 p.m.-10ish (when it's over!) Let me know you're coming and bring a dish to share!

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. Others may be added and listed in the weekly bulletin. Stop by for chat, coffee, or prayer! This can be an opportunity to bring a friend to “meet your pastor” in a non-threatening setting.

FRIDAY, JAN. 5 - 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Arby's, 1401 Jameson Ave.

FRIDAY, JAN. 12 – 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Hope's Café, 3327 Garden City Blvd.

FRIDAY, JAN. 19 - 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

2<sup>nd</sup> Helpings, 1502 Williamson Rd. NE

MONDAY, JAN. 22 – 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

William Byrd HS Gym

2902 E. Washington Ave.

TUESDAY, JAN. 30 – 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Mt. Pleasant Library, 2918 Jae Valley Rd.

**MONDAY, JANUARY 8** - Lunch Bunch – Meet outside the entrance at K&W Tanglewood at 11:30 a.m.

**SECOND SUNDAY, JANUARY 14** – “Eleanor Fisher Day” will be celebrated after worship. As a church, we want to acknowledge (with much appreciation) Eleanor's years as pianist and treasurer. January birthdays and anniversaries will also be recognized. Please join us!

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 16**, at noon – Senior Fellowship will meet for lunch. The program will be on ‘LEAP.’”

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 18** - Church Council will meet at 7:00 p.m. Please plan to attend.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 21**, after worship, Mt. Pleasant United Methodist Women will have a short meeting. This is open to women of any age.

## A NOTE OF THANKS

Thank you for the donation of 38 jars of peanut butter and 25 jars of jelly! Thankfulness to God and remembering the birth of the Savior of the world. God continues to show himself strong on our behalf and we are grateful. Please pray for our guests while out in the elements! Thank you for your care, prayer, and support. All glory to Jesus.

Your friends at Samaritan Inn

## NEWS FROM GHANA

May the good Lord bless you all the time. May He continue to guide you all to accomplish His purpose in your lives. We are here on a mission with different Vision. It is my prayer that we identify our role in this World before we depart so that we would not be found wanting. If you had not contributed to the "Welfare" of these children, I would be at the verge of collapse by now, but with your support over the years, we have been able to sustain the lives of these children.

WE WISH YOU A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR. HERE ARE THE YEARS IN WHICH THESE CHILDREN WERE BORN. I WAS TO SEND THIS TWO MONTHS AGO. I AM VERY SORRY FOR THAT.

LUCY APININI BORN, 3 MARCH 1992, from Veve Bolgatanga Upper East Region of Ghana. She gave birth to Margaret in our house when some one took advantage of her when she went to one of the big cities to seek for a greener pasture to finance herself to continue her education. She was in Form 1 and it was during Vacation.

Margaret is in school now. Lucy is learning a trade but visits very often.

ELIJAH, 21ST JUNE 1993, JOSHUA, 23 JANUARY 1995, MERCY, 17 FEBRUARY 2000 - These children are brothers and sister. They lost their father during a very heavy rain fall in the middle of the night when they were all asleep. The Switch building in which they were sleeping collapsed, the father was sent to the Hospital but did not survive. We took it upon ourselves to care for the children after we buried the father. The father happens to be a member of the Church of which I was a Head Pastor. Two of them are learning trade. Mercy is still in School. J.S.S 3

MARY & MARTHA, are twin sisters. They lost their father and the whole house is broken down and they cannot go live in that house until the house is built, this time with Cement so that it would last. The mother has traveled 100 miles away from home to look for a job to take care of herself and the young ones she is caring for. BORN 2 JANUARY 2002, they are in J.S.S 3, when school reopens after Christmas.

ALAMISI OPHELIA: BORN 14 APRIL 1994 – Learning a trade.

This is where you have brought these children and you deserve all the blessings in Christ name. Thank you.

Abraham

## ACROSS THE AREA (go to [roanokeumc.org](http://roanokeumc.org) or [vaumc.org](http://vaumc.org))

- UMC DAY AT THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY is Thursday, Feb. 1. This is a great way to learn about how our faith affects public policy.
- DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TRAINING is Saturday, Feb. 17, 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at Greene Memorial.
- LAY SERVANT ACADEMY is March 2-4 at the 4-H Center at Smith Mountain Lake. This is an important next step for any church members wishing to grow in their role of leading and serving. See Pastor Robert for all the info!
- DISTRICT WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL LIFE RETREAT is April 14 at Crockett Springs/Alta Mons.
- REMEMBER THAT CAMP ALTA MONS (near Shawsville) is open to the public every day from sunrise to sunset. Come out for a hike to the falls or just a walk around camp. Picnic tables are also available. Call 268-2409 for more info!
- THE NEXT MONTHLY DISTRICT NEWSLETTER is posted mid-January at [roanokeumc.org](http://roanokeumc.org). More news is also available at the conference web site – [vaumc.org](http://vaumc.org).

## January Birthdays

(9) Heather St. Clair; (10) Brittany Stanley; (11) Drew Beck; (18) Matthew Jacobson, Pam Noble; (20) Jennifer Holmes; (21) Sam Heath Bradford; (24) Raheem Brownell, Audree Mae Smith

## January Anniversaries

(1) Wayne & Charlotte Myers

**DEADLINE** for the February newsletter is **January 28**.