



THE MOUNT PLEASANT MESSENGER

Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church

3035 Mt. Pleasant Blvd.

Roanoke, VA 24014

540-427-3064

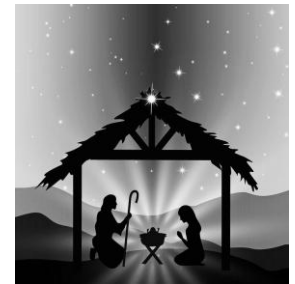
DECEMBER 2018

mpumc.church

CALM AND BRIGHT - 200 years of "Silent Night"

200 years ago, on Dec. 24, 1818, "Silent Night" made its debut at a chapel in Austria. The melody by Franz Gruber is instantly recognizable. The original German text is now found in over 140 languages. In 1914, soldiers in World War I held a cease fire and sang Christmas carols, including "Silent Night." The song is sung around the world during the lighting of candles in churches on Christmas Eve.

Today we find ourselves in a world of division and contention. Families fight. Politicians argue. Hate and ignorance spread on the Internet. It may seem like hope, peace, love and joy are missing. Sometimes darkness seems stronger than light. Our Advent worship series this year will be a time to raise our voices in song, celebrating the birth of Jesus, and seeking the peace and love that transcend all barriers.



Please remember to take time on Saturday or early Sunday morning to say at least a short prayer to prepare your heart for the peace, hope, joy and love of the season. Big Thanks to worship chair Terri Beck and the work team that prepared our worship space for the beauty of the season.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR UPCOMING SUNDAYS

DECEMBER 2 Habakkuk 1:1-7;
2:1-4; 3:17-19

There is still a vision

DECEMBER 9 Esther 4:1-17

Called for such a time as this

DECEMBER 16 Isaiah 42:1-9

A light to the nations

DECEMBER 23 Matthew 1:18-25

They shall call him "Emmanuel"

DECEMBER 24 Luke 2:1-20

They laid him in a manger

DECEMBER 30 Matthew 1:1-17

The genealogy of Jesus

BISHOP'S BIBLE CHALLENGE

DECEMBER 2-8 1 Corinthians 12-16
2 Corinthians 1-13, Acts 20:1-3
Romans 1-7

DECEMBER 9-15 Romans 8-16
Acts 20:4 – 28:31, Colossians 1-4,
Philemon

DECEMBER 16-22 Ephesians 1-6
Philippians 1-4, 1 Timothy 1-6
Titus 1-3, 1 Peter 1-5, Hebrews 1-10

DECEMBER 23-29 Hebrews 11-13
2 Timothy 1-4, 2 Peter 1-3, Jude
1 John 1-5, 2 John, 3 John, Revelation 1-11

DECEMBER 30-31 Revelation 12-22

*The complete day-by-day list is available in
printed form or online at vaumc.org.*

Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion

On Monday, Dec. 24, we gather at 6 p.m. for our annual Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion worship. What a special time this is. Beloved songs like "Beautiful Star of Bethlehem" and "Silent Night" are always a part. This is also a great time to invite a friend, relative, neighbor or acquaintance to attend. Once again we have little "INVITE CARDS" that you can share. This can be a great night for outreach!

"DECEMBER SPECIAL" Offering

As in past years, we ask for your generous help with a "DECEMBER SPECIAL" offering. In addition to your weekly or monthly support, please consider a special offering before the end of the year. Each year, this helps us to complete our budgeted mission and ministry obligations. Whatever the amount, your offering means so much. And remember that our Christmas Eve offering is again designated 100% for ministry beyond our church – this year supporting Meals On Wheels locally and UMCOR disaster relief ministries around the world. Special envelopes will be available this month.

OUR FAITHFUL PARTICIPATION

OUR PRESENCE

November 4	54	NOV. 2018 AVG.	60
November 11	99*		
November 18	49	NOV. 2017 AVG.	72
November 25	39		

* includes Second Saturday

OUR GIFTS

November Budget Offerings	\$ 7,322.10
Average Monthly Need	\$ 9,625.00
**Other November Income	\$ 557.00
**Communion/UMCOR (\$286), Backpack (\$136), Ghana (\$135)	

OUR PRAYERS, SERVICE AND WITNESS

Thank you for your daily prayers for the ministries of MPUMC, for sharing your prayer requests and praise reports, for giving time, energy and talents to make a positive witness for Christ and his church!

YOUR GIVING HAS RESULTS!

Part of our giving supports UMC apportionments - "a portion" of each offering "meant" for the work of Christ around the world. In addition to our apportioned budget items, we also make a \$200 voluntary contribution each year for the annual conference special offering. This year the offering supported ministries in Cambodia, Brazil, Mozambique, Cuba, Haiti, Puerto Rico and Russia, along with Native American ministries in the U.S. Truly your dollars help "go into all the world (Matthew 28)."

NOTES OF THANKS

The generosity of the good folks at Mt. Pleasant UMC will enable the Gideons to place 30 Bibles or 109 New Testaments (or a combination of the two). Thank you for allowing Gideons to visit your church and permitting me to speak on our behalf. Please join us in praying God will bless these Scriptures with a bountiful harvest of souls for the Kingdom and that Christ will be honored.

Loy King, Gideons

We are trying to move from here to where we would have our own place to stay - a church meeting place and learning center. Some children have no footwear and because of that they have to stop schooling. Others have no school uniform and were asked to stay home until they had it. Some could not pay school fees. We still work to help them read and write in the evening, and are looking for books we can use. We are also praying for volunteers to help the needy children. Our doors are open to all volunteers who come and see for themselves. God bless you all!

Pastor Abraham in Ghana

Wow! Thank you for the great supply of sugar, coffee, jelly, peanut butter and socks! We share Jesus daily in the noon gospel message and also through a cup of coffee or water in his name. Thank you for your part in his work here. We are grateful for you! All glory to Jesus.

Your friends at Samaritan Inn

Events near and far...

HURRICANE RECOVER TEAMS are needed in North Carolina and Virginia. Call Lisa Nordan (434-483-3388) or Kirk Culpepper (757-434-0078).

WATCH FOR a short promotional video on finding faith at Christmas - this was produced by district ministries.

DRIVE-THROUGH NATIVITY Dec. 1-2 at Rockingham Court UMC, 6 to 8:30 p.m. All are welcome!

KIDS SOAR (formerly "COP") BREAKFAST WITH SANTA 7:30 or 9:30 a.m. on Dec. 8 at Trinity UMC (342-3103).

ALTA MONS ANNUAL MEETING 2 p.m. on Dec. 8

DISTRICT OFFICE OPEN HOUSE 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Dec. 13 (4502 Starkey Rd.) - stop by and meet our district team.

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA on Dec. 15 at MP Lions Club.

COMMUNITY CAROLING on Dec. 21, 6-8 p.m. at the MLK Bridge downtown. Bring canned goods.

SAFE SANCTUARIES TRAINING 9:30 a.m. on Jan. 19 at Woodlawn UMC.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY DAY in Richmond Jan. 31.

UMC GENERAL CONFERENCE called session is Feb. 23-26 in St. Louis. Please be in prayer (umcprays.org).

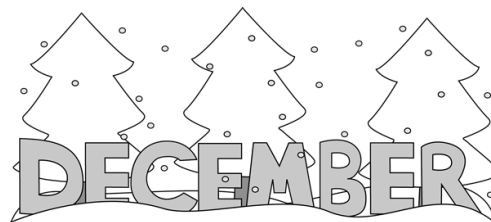
DISTRICT YOUTH RETREAT at Virginia Tech March 1-3. 150th BIRTHDAY OF UNITED METHODIST WOMEN is March 23.

"CHAT AND CHEW 3.0" discussion with Bishop Lewis April 6. Location to be announced.

VOICES OF YOUTH mission choir trip to Poland is June 19 - July 10. Apply now.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED for annual conference here in Roanoke June 20-22. Call 989-3335 for more info. You can give just a few hours to be a greeter, an usher, or help unload food donations.

THE NEXT MONTHLY DISTRICT NEWSLETTER is posted mid-December at roanokeumc.org. More news is also available at the vaumc.org web site.



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Chuck Mattox
- 6 Jane Burks
- 7 Jeanette Semones
- 9 Mike Schoonover, Kendra Coleman
- 11 Karen Tate
- 14 Brandon Taylor
- 16 Billy Altice
- 29 Della Mattox, Tom & Winky McCann

MINISTRY WITH ALL AGES!

2019 budget approved

Our Finance Committee and Church Council have approved the 2019 budget, and copies are available for any interested person. Some of our ministries (including the youth ministry position) continue to be funded through the special Barton gift.

The regular budget for 2019 has been set at \$105,915. This is a decrease of about 9 percent from 2018. This budget covers the basic ministries, outreach and upkeep of the work of our church. It depends on the giving of each participant, young and old!

About a year ago, we approved a plan to gradually decrease our budget year by year between 2017 and 2021 while keeping our ministries strong. Your prayers and support are necessary to make this happen! If you have questions about the church budget, please ask – it can be very confusing – so please ask!

Second Saturday Dec. 8

You are invited to our monthly Second Saturday worship on Dec. 8 at 5:30 p.m. This is a non-denominational monthly time of prayer, praise, Communion and fellowship. During December we will enjoy special music of the season. Maybe you know someone who can't participate on Sunday mornings. Give them an invite to Second Saturday!

Alta Mons winter camp

Registration is open for 2018 Winter Camp, Dec. 14-16 at Alta Mons! The theme is "Beauty of Thy Peace" – and no, we don't sleep under the stars in December! Visit altamons.org for more information or to register your child. We also have registration forms available at the church building. Open to grades 2-12. It's a blast!



"Next Step" online group

Pastor Robert's NEXT STEP online group for men continues most Wednesdays at 9:36 p.m. The brief Bible study is completed before 10 p.m. so that it fits well into most folks' schedules. If you miss it, you can watch it later. We have moved to Facebook Live so you can watch/ participate on your phone or on your computer. It is a closed group so you need to enroll. See Pastor Robert for more info!

Don't miss these...

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

Holiday Open House at the Hermitage, 3-5 p.m. Help support the Roanoke Valley SPCA by bringing pet food donations. Have your photo taken with furry friends from the SPCA. Music and holiday treats!



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 8

Second Saturday worship at 5:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9

"Second Sunday" Potluck after worship celebrates birthdays, anniversaries and Christmas! Chicken is provided – bring the other goodies! Please join your church family and friends for special holiday fellowship!

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

"Dutch treat" lunch at 2nd Helpings. Meet at church at 11 a.m. to carpool. 2nd Helpings is part of the ministries of the Rescue Mission – wonderful food!

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18

Senior Fellowship meets at noon for a potluck meal and holiday music by Pat Musselwhite. Bring your favorite dish and a friend or two friends!

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

Annual MP Youth Christmas party – plans are in the works for this year's party, gift exchange and Christmas scavenger hunt! Watch for more info on the exact gathering time. See Pastor Robert or Sarah Dyess for more info!

NO K&W LUNCH BUNCH IN DECEMBER

Ghana ministry update

We are so grateful to Judy Gibson for coordinating the Ghana ministry contributions for so many years. From this point forward, if you wish to make a contribution to Pastor Abraham and the ministry in Ghana it will be sponsored by Christ's Fellowship Church. To make donations, please make your check to Christ's Fellowship Church, marked for "Ghana." These may be mailed to Cindi McMillan, 3830 Sun Valley Lane, Roanoke VA 24014. Thanks for the difference you have made in the lives of so many youngsters. Cindi will coordinate forwarding the money to Ghana.

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“It’s the most...wonderful time...of the year!” Most of us have heard that song before. But it doesn’t really work out that way for everyone.

There’s something about the holiday season that seems to intensify everything. The “up” moments are higher! But the “down” moments are also more intense.

I have even heard of people who intentionally stay home from worship during the holiday season because it seems to increase their pain rather than give them joy. Some churches have added a “BLUE CHRISTMAS” worship event for those who are going through especially painful times.

Though I appreciate the idea, it also occurs to me that our worship times should be an encouragement to us during our “blues and blahs” all year long. Sometimes we put on a mask of “holly jolly” when we would do so much better to be honest about our ups and downs.

I hope our Advent and Christmas observances will be a blessing to this year regardless of what you have been going through.

Pastor Robert

If you have items for the January newsletter, prepare in written form by December 30 - give or email to Robert or Jenny!



PASTOR
CHATTER

PASTOR OUT & ABOUT

Stop by for chat, coffee or prayer. This can also be an opportunity to bring a friend to “meet your pastor” in a friendly setting.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6

*3:30 p.m. East County Café
300 S. Pollard, Vinton (Library)*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13

*11:30 a.m. 2nd Helpings
1502 Williamson Rd.*

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 18

*4:00 p.m. Mt. Pleasant Library
2918 Jae Valley Rd.*

**NO OUT & ABOUT
CHRISTMAS WEEK**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3

*3:00 p.m. Sweet Donkey Coffee
2108 Broadway*