



# THE MOUNT PLEASANT MESSENGER

Mount Pleasant United Methodist Church  
3035 Mt. Pleasant Blvd. Roanoke, VA 24014

DECEMBER 2019  
540-427-3064 mpumc.church

## Special offerings this month

Beginning December 8 we'll have envelopes available for our "DECEMBER SPECIAL" offering. We invite you to honor the season with a special gift to the work of Jesus through our church family. Your December generosity allows us to complete our annual budget with no gaps! If you have any questions about the financial situation of the church, please contact Pastor Robert or any of the church leaders!

We will again give 100% of our CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING for outreach! Since Christmas is a time for generosity, it is a great time for MPUMC to be generous! The 2019 Christmas Eve offering supports mission projects for women and children - the Blue Ridge Women's Center in Roanoke, and Babyfold, a ministry with abandoned children in Zimbabwe. Thanks so much for your December generosity!

### SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR UPCOMING SUNDAYS

DECEMBER 1	Exodus 1:8—2:10 <i>Jochebed and the birth of Moses</i>
DECEMBER 8	Judges 13:2-24 <i>The wife of Manoah and the birth of Samson</i>
DECEMBER 15	Luke 1:5-7, 11-25, 57-66 <i>Elizabeth and the birth of John the Baptist</i>
DECEMBER 22	Luke 1:26-42 <i>Mary and the birth of Jesus</i>
DECEMBER 24	Luke 2:1-20 <i>The Christmas story</i>
DECEMBER 29	Matthew 2:1-23 <i>Repercussions of the Christmas story</i>
JANUARY 5	John 8:12-20 <i>Light of the world</i>

### BISHOP'S BIBLE CHALLENGE

DEC. 1-7	2 Chronicles 25-36, Esther 1-5 Luke 9:37—12:59
DEC. 8-14	Esther 6-10, Haggai 1-2 Joshua 1-12, Luke 13-16
DEC. 15-21	Joshua 13-24, Nehemiah 1-9 Luke 17:1—20:26
DEC. 22-28	Nehemiah 10-13, Micah 1-7 Zechariah 1-8, Luke 20:27—23:25
DEC. 29-31	Zechariah 9-14, Malachi 1-4 Luke 23:26—24:53

*The complete day-by-day list is available in printed form or online at [vaumc.org](http://vaumc.org).*

### What does the Advent wreath mean?

The Advent wreath was once a Scandinavian and German home custom, marking Advent week by week. Families would light a candle for each passing week at mealtime or evening prayer. The candles could be any color, and they might be in a circle or a straight line. Most importantly, as December grew darker, the Advent light grew brighter!



Churches began to use Advent wreaths in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Church candles were larger than home candles, and colors of purple or blue became most common to coordinate with the Advent fabric colors. Ceremonies were developed around the lighting of candles each week. Even later, weekly themes of hope, peace, joy and love were added by some. But the historic theme of Advent is more broad and deep than any one-word theme can capture.

We may still draw meaning from its original home use – marking time while light increases. The "Christian Year" begins with Advent, and it is all about time. We await the day when the holy city needs no sun or moon, because God's glory is its light (Rev. 21:23). We prepare for the promise that in Christ, "the true light that shines on all people was coming into the world" (John 1:9).

[taken from [umc.org/what-we-believe](http://umc.org/what-we-believe)]

## OUR FAITHFUL PARTICIPATION

### OUR PRESENCE

November 3 54 NOV. 2019 AVG. 51  
November 10 61\*  
November 17 59 NOV. 2018 AVG. 60  
November 24 32

\* includes Second Saturday

### OUR GIFTS

December Budget Offerings \$ 7,581.67  
Average Monthly Need \$ 8,826.00  
Other December Income \$ 324.69  
Backpack Ministry (\$203.60), Kroger Rebate (\$121.09), Upper Rooms (\$28.00), Communion (\$23.00)

### 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!

Our budget giving has shown a slight decline year to date, but careful budget planning has kept us "in the black." Your generous support in December will bring us home!

### OUR "LEAVES OF GRATITUDE"

On Nov. 24 we placed our autumn "leaves of gratitude" on the "Thanksgiving tree." Here is a list of some of the things we shared:

*my health	*my family
*friends	*my church family
*Jesus	child
God's grace	*food and clothing
Lucy	being debt free
Gift of Jesus	promised gift of heaven
*my life	God
God's love	our country
faith health	life, liberty, happiness
dancing	excellent health
shelter	warm house
each new day	answered prayer
neighbors	my walk with Jesus
MPUMC	Jesus, my dearest friend
love	living in a free nation
my godchildren	having enough
our marriage	all God's blessings
74 years since last "world war"	
doctors and nurses and Medicare	
wife, son and all my friends that I love	
God's hand in my life	
marriage of 48 years	
Mike greeted me at the door	
all beauties of nature	
finding joy in the "little things" in life	
people who have prayed for me	
opportunities to love others	
forgiving me for my sins	
providing for our family	
my parents taking me to church	
mentoring saints who have gone before	
Jesus loves me no matter what	
strength God gives me in caring for family	
going to him in prayer for myself and others	

(\* appeared two or more times)

## Worship notes for December

Christmas Eve will again be a very special time for us at MPUMC, with our traditional candlelight Communion worship service at 6 p.m. Our four Advent Sundays will also help us to remember the reason for the season. This year our Sunday scriptures have a unique theme – IMPORTANT BIRTHS (see list on front page). We'll see common themes in these stories of times when God used the birth of a child to transform the world! Remember that this month is a great time to extend an invitation to friends, relatives and neighbors to hear the message of the season.



Christmas Eve  
CANDLELIGHT  
SERVICE

### In memory

ED GRANGER

November 24, 2019

TODD BOOTH

November 25, 2019

We commend these brothers in the Lord to his eternal care.

### Events near and far...

DISTRICT CLERGY "DAY APART" Dec. 5.

WOUNDED HEARTS/HEALING LOVE RETREAT for singles who are struggling with pain as the holidays approach – Dec. 6-8 at Camp Overlook (540-269-2267).

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA 8 – 11 a.m. on Saturday, Dec. 7 at the Mount Pleasant Lions Club Building on Mayfield. This annual event is offered to ALL AGES at no charge by the Lions Club. Help spread the word to your neighbors!

BOOK FAIR benefiting Kids Soar, 3 – 7 p.m. Dec. 7 at Barnes & Noble Valley View. Any purchase in store Dec. 7-13 or online Dec. 7-18 will benefit Kids Soar – use code 12573812.

CHRISTMAS MUSIC Concert 6 p.m. Dec. 8 at Thrasher UMC.

HERMITAGE OPEN HOUSE 3 to 5 p.m. Dec. 10. Refreshments, decorations, entertainment. Bring donation of "soup for seniors."

DISTRICT OFFICE OPEN HOUSE between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Dec. 12 (4502 Starkey Rd.).

"ON THIS SHINING NIGHT" dinner concert 5:30 p.m. Dec. 12 at Greene Memorial UMC (call 344-6225 for ticket info).

"IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE" – free showing at 10 a.m. Dec. 14 at the Grandin Theatre.

KIDS SOAR CHRISTMAS PROGRAM 6 p.m. Dec. 16 at Trinity UMC.

WINTER CAMP AT ALTA MONS Dec. 20-22.

DISTRICT YOUTH EVENT Jan. 12 at Windsor Hills UMC.

UNITED METHODIST DAY Jan. 30 at Virginia General Assembly in Richmond.

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

# MINISTRY WITH ALL AGES!

## 2020 budget approved

Our new 2020 church budget was approved, and copies are available for anyone interested! The total budget of \$129,076 includes items funded by the Barton gift. This is a decrease of \$4,621 compared to 2019. The amount needed from our general offerings is about \$8,805 per month, again a small decrease compared to 2019. The decrease was made possible by a smaller apportionment for district and conference projects.

Since 2017 we have made a few adjustments to our budgeting that enable us to live within our means, and we are very grateful for each one whose faithful giving allows our work to go forward. Lives are touched and changed because of your gifts!

## Drive-through live nativity

Rockingham Court UMC, 4615 Bryan Rd. (just off Yellow Mountain Rd.) will again host a live, outdoor, drive-through nativity on Saturday and Sunday, December 7-8, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. (weather permitting). Don't miss this special presentation. They can also use volunteer "cast members" who work outdoors in 30 minute shifts. Call 427-0112 for info on volunteering!

## Thank you from Samaritan Inn

We are grateful for God's faithfulness to us! Surely he is faithful to you as well. Thank you to MPUMC for the Walmart gift card and the razors and ponchos. You always bless us! Thank you for your part in his continued provision for many each day here at the Inn. Please pray for our guests as the nights get colder. God bless you! All glory to Jesus,

Your friends at Samaritan Inn

## Christmas Eve outreach projects

As we spend December thinking about how God used mothers and children to transform the world, our Christmas Eve outreach projects will focus on mothers and children. Our local project is the Blue Ridge Women's Center on Williamson Road, offering a medical clinic specializing in unplanned pregnancy, relationships, and reproductive health. The center is dedicated to improving the well being of women and their families. Quality care is provided at no cost to their clients.



Our global project is Babyfold, an UMCOR project that is part of the Old Mutare Fairfield Children's Home in Zimbabwe. Babyfold cares for abandoned and other vulnerable children, giving them a homelike environment. Offerings help provide baby formula, health care, education, and house parents. The Old Mutare Mission is located adjacent to Africa University, and was established in 1897 by Bishop Joseph C. Hartzell.

## Mark these dates...

### EVERY WEDNESDAY

Next Step – a 15-20 minute online devo for men Wednesdays at 9:36 p.m. See Pastor Robert for info.

### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

2<sup>nd</sup> Helpings "Dutch treat" lunch – meet in church parking lot at 11 a.m. to carpool or meet us there at 11:30 a.m.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

UMW meets for potluck lunch, program and business meeting. We will collect 2020 birthday gifts for children at Henry Fork (\$10 limit). Women of all ages welcome.

### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

Second Saturday worship at 5:30 p.m., with food and fellowship afterward! All are welcome to this non-denominational time of inspiration and fellowship.

### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

Senior Fellowship meets at 12 noon for a potluck lunch and Christmas music provided by Pat Musselwhite. Open to the community!

*K&W 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday Lunch Bunch will resume in January 2020!*



## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Chuck Mattox, Taylor Reed                            |
| 6  | Jane Burks   |
| 7  | Brenda Davis,<br>Jeanette Semones Yohe               |
| 9  | Kendra Coleman, Mike Schoonover,<br>Joanna Schroeder |
| 10 | Paul Schroeder, Robert Workman                       |
| 11 | Karen Tate   |
| 13 | Andy Conner, Betty Grant                             |
| 14 | Brandon Taylor                                       |
| 16 | Billy Altice   |
| 23 | Charles & Betty Grant                                |
| 24 | Sylvia Addis   |
| 29 | Della Mattox, Tom & Winky McCann                     |

NOTE: We include birthdays and anniversaries which are on file. Our list is not complete, so see Jenny Basham to make sure we have your info!

**MOUNT PLEASANT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**3035 Mount Pleasant Blvd.**  
**Roanoke, Virginia 24014**



This is one of those years when Advent begins on the first day of December. (The date varies each year based on when Christmas falls, and it can begin in November or December.)

Advent presents constant challenges to pastors and worship leaders. While the rest of our culture is “making merry” seven days a week, our church traditions call us to slow down and reflect. Admittedly, it is hard to be spiritually reflective while munching fruitcake and sipping eggnog.

I resolve not to be one of those cranky pastors who whine too much about this. But I do try to make sure that our Sunday worship honors the true spirit of Advent. Many Christians are surprised to learn that the traditional focus of Advent includes an emphasis on the Second Coming of Jesus. This is the time of year to assess our readiness for his return!

For 2019 we’re doing a series I’ve never used before – four “birth stories” in the Bible, along with the mothers involved – Jochebed and her son Moses, Mrs. Manoah and her son Samson, Elizabeth and her son John, and Mary and her son Jesus. Keep your eyes open to the connections in these stories of our faith!

Pastor Robert

### **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.

*TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3*

*4:00 p.m. Sweet Donkey Coffee  
2108 Broadway*

*THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12*

*11:30 a.m. 2<sup>nd</sup> Helpings  
1502 Williamson Rd. NE*

*WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18*

*12:00 noon Arby’s  
1401 Jameson Ave.*

*FRIDAY, JANUARY 3*

*8:00 a.m. Hardee’s  
605 Ninth St. SE*

