



Greetings in Christ.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks and appreciation for the service of our committee chairs and members. Thank you so much for your labor of love with the ministry of Mount Vernon United Methodist Church.

I would like to recognize the leaders who are stepping down: David Parrish (Chair, Staff-Parish Relations Committee), Steven Gould (Chair, Finance Committee), and Robert Wooding (Chair, Missions Committee). For all your time, effort, hard work, and prayers, please accept the thanks and appreciation of this church, its leaders and staff, and me. You have truly been a blessing to this congregation!

Also, I would like to welcome the new leaders who are coming on: Melissa Herke (Finance), Sonny Morton (Staff-Parish Relations), and Chuck Sampson (Missions). Thank you for your willingness to step in and serve as committee chairpersons during this difficult time.

To serve on a committee requires one to put aside one's own interests in order to spiritually discern what is right and best and God's true calling for the church. Thank you so much to all who serve on our committees for your heart and service. Your willingness to use your gifts and abilities has strengthened the mission and ministry of this church.

With sincere gratitude,

Jae W. Cho

Pastor and Chair of the Leadership Development and Nominating Committee

Mount Vernon UMC Foundation: 2021/2022 Scholarships and Grants

Mount Vernon United Methodist Church Foundation distributes all of its net income annually. A limited amount of scholarship funds for students in the Danville–Pittsylvania County–Caswell County area pursuing undergraduate degrees will be awarded.



Awards will be made based on a combination of financial need, academic merit, and community involvement.

Other distributions are made to worthy causes, some as directed by our donors, while others are approved requests for various ministries.

You can download scholarship applications from the church website (mtvernonumc.org) or pick up an application on the table in the glass enclosure at the fellowship hall door.

The deadline for returning completed applications is Friday, February 26, 2021. Completed applications must be mailed to 107 W. Main St., Danville VA 24541, and postmarked by the due date (no emailed applications). **Requests for grant funds are also due by Friday, February 26, 2021.** Put these in the Foundation mailbox (next to the Hamlin-Buchanan classroom).

Please contact Ken Larking for further information. (ken.larking@gmail.com or 434.713-0952).



The 2020 Advent Offering now totals \$4,915.00, exceeding our goal of \$3,500.00. Of that, \$435.00 was raised through the sale of Habitat note cards, with art by our children.

The offering will be equally divided between two local charitable organizations, the Danville YMCA and Habitat for Humanity. It will make a difference for people in our community who need safe, affordable housing, and for those who will benefit from the Y's Scholarship Program. The Scholarship Program helps youth participate in Y programs, one of which is virtual learning. This serves students who are expected to do school work from home, but are unable to do so. They can do their work from the Y via a computer.

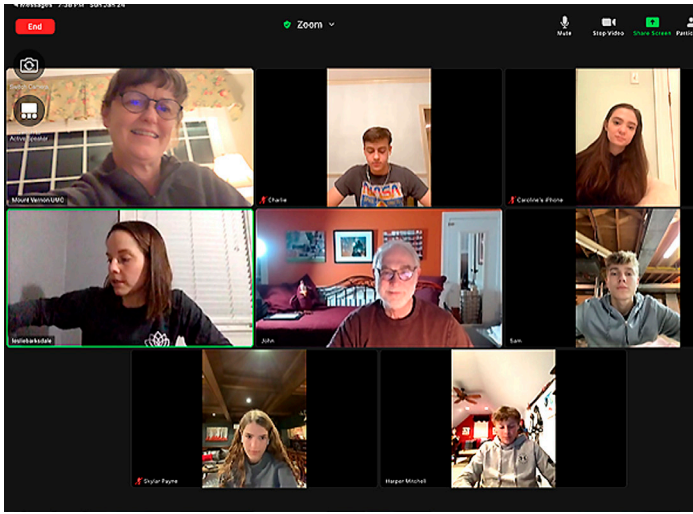


The Habitat for Humanity Deshazor home: Sheet rock work paid for by our Advent Offering

Because of soaring Covid cases in our area, our Youth and Children's ministries have returned to Zoom meetings. On Sunday mornings, our children gather for Godly Play lessons. Our confirmands and older youth meet on Sunday nights. We all look forward to returning to in-person gatherings as soon as we can! The Godly Play lessons are still posted on the church website for those who are unable to attend our Sunday morning gatherings.

Children's House Update

Please continue to hold our Children's House teachers and children in your prayers. We continue to follow strict Covid protocols and are thankful we can offer this service to our parents and community.



Boomers Zoom Class Update

The Boomer's Sunday school class has been meeting via Zoom since shortly after Mount Vernon discontinued in-person church gatherings. Zoom was new to all of us, so we were not sure how this would work out. Not only has it gone really well for members of our in-person class but we have added new members along the way. I think we all look forward to our class each Sunday, as it has been a blessing in our lives during this strange time of isolation.

We are a discussion class. We read books from various theological writers and discuss them one chapter at a time. Authors we have read include C.S. Lewis, Adam Hamilton, Francis Collins, Amy-Jill Levine, and Barbara Brown Taylor.

If you are interested in joining us, email me at lgbenefield@comcast.net or text or call me at 434-489-9530, and I will send you an invitation to our next class. You can attend the Zoom class on your desktop or laptop, tablet, or smart phone. You will have to download the free Zoom app and



have a camera and microphone on your device.

The class meets at 9:45 a.m on Sunday. Most of us are in the "baby boomers" age group, but anyone is welcome to join us.
 – Gary Benefield

Tristan Woodard Now in the Navy

Tristan, son of Elmer and Linda Woodard and grandson of Pat Maurakis, has joined the Navy and finished basic training. He is now in Florida for further training in air traffic control.



Tristan attended Children's House, went on Mount Vernon mission trips, and assisted at Vacation Bible School.

Pat says, "I know he would appreciate getting mail." His address is:

Woodard, Tristan Lee
 USS Abraham Lincoln 354A
 Pensacola FL 32508



A Thank-You for Our Knitters

Mount Vernon's knitting group has received a thank-you from Living Waters Church in Cherokee, North Carolina:

"Thank you to Mount Vernon United Methodist Church for sending hats and scarves for the Christmas giveaway."

STAFF CONTACTS

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Sandee Parker: (434) 793-6824; sparker.mtvernonumc@gmail.com

MOUNT VERNON UMC LEADERSHIP 2021

CHURCH COUNCIL

Jan Sutherland, Chair
John Ranson, Lay Leader
Budge Kent, Trustees Chair
Budge Kent, Treasurer
Melissa Herke, Finance Chair
Sonny Morton, Staff-Parish Relations Chair
Margaret Scott, Worship Chair
Tom Underwood, Gary Benefield, Property Co-Chairs
Beth Ranson, Evangelism Chair
Chuck Sampson, Missions Chair
Catherine Bendall, Caring Ministry Chair
Butch Dalton, Safety
Lindsay Payne, Children's House Board Chair
Fran Ashby, Memorials Chair
Ken Larking, Foundation Chair
To be named, Children's Council Chair
Bill Smith, At-large
Lin Benefield, At-large
Rosalind Morton, UMWomen President
Juliet Cho, Music Director
Beth Bauman, Children & Youth Director
Jae Cho, Minister

TRUSTEES

Budge Kent, Chair
Terms ending 2020: Jason Payne, John Ranson, Richard Turner
Terms ending 2021: Ellen Beville, Tommy Hodges, Gary Miller
Terms ending 2022: Budge Kent, Libby Spainhour, To be named

NOMINATIONS & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Jae Cho, Chair
Terms ending 2021: Briggs Bauman, To be named
Terms ending 2022: _____, _____
Terms ending 2023: Skylar Payne, Libby Spainhour, Joyce Underwood, Leah Cooter

FINANCE

Melissa Herke, Chair
Budge Kent, *Treasurer*; Fran Ashby, *Memorials*; Jim Daniel, Frank Davis, Ellen Joyce, Ken Larking, Charles Majors, Derek Mitchell, Joyce Obstler

STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS

Sonny Morton, Chair
John Ranson, Lay Leader
Dan Newell, Frank Wickers, Kathryn Waters

PROPERTY

Tom Underwood, Gary Benefield, Co-Chairs
Butch Dalton, Frank Davis, Howard Lester, John Ranson, Chuck Sampson, Darrell Williamson, Sonny Morton

WORSHIP

Margaret Scott, Chair
John Ranson, *Lay Leader*; Sam Newell, *Usher Coordinator*; Tammy Waters, *Acolyte/Crucifer Coordinator*; Margaret Scott, *Flowers Coordinator*; Jan Sutherland, *Altar Guild Coordinator*; Libby Spainhour, Lewis Williamson

MISSIONS

Chuck Sampson, Chair
Frank Davis, Frances McMillan, Margaret Milam, John Ranson, Betty Ann Smith, Jan Sutherland, Carol Williamson, Lewis Williamson, Robert Wooding, Beth Bauman (*Staff*)

EVANGELISM

Beth Ranson, Chair
Briggs Bauman, Mary Lou Dunn, Suzanne Fisher, Rosalind Morton, Sam Newell, Lindsay Payne, Lois McFadden, Linda Sampson, Linda Saunders, Gene Saunders, Betty Ann Smith, Kathryn Waters, Tammy Waters, Vida Wilkes, Ann Williamson

CARING MINISTRY

Catherine Bendall, Chair
Suzanne Fisher, Frances McMillan, Margaret Milam, Rosalind Morton, Vera Stephens, Joyce Underwood, Ann Williamson

CHILDREN'S COUNCIL

To be named, Chair
Beth Bennett, Laura Daniel, Beth deAristizabal, Elizabeth Hylton, Alana Mitchell, Sandra Morales, Beth Bauman (*Staff*)

MEMORIALS

Fran Ashby, Chair
Mary Franks, Joyce Fuquay, Betty Turner

CHILDREN'S HOUSE BOARD

Lindsay Payne, Chair
Aliea Lewis, Matthew Switick, Tafton Trent, Elizabeth Ware; Lindsey Fehl, *Director*; Beth Bauman, *Staff*

MOUNT VERNON FOUNDATION BOARD

Ken Larking, Chair
2020: Mary Franks, Margaret Scott, Steven Gould, Karen Miller
2021: Fran Ashby, Bonnie Griffith, Martha Jo Hodges, Ken Larking, Jane O'Neill, Libby Spainhour
2022: Ken Miller, Steve Daniel



*Our deepest sympathy
to the family of Betty Jennings,
who died on January 21, 2021.*

Betty Shumate Jennings was born in Lynchburg, Va., on April 24, 1928, the daughter of the late Thomas Daniel Shumate and Lucille Deacon Shumate.



She was a 1950 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, earning a Bachelor's of Science degree. She was a teacher and taught 23 of her 38 years at Woodberry Hills Elementary School until her retirement in 1988.

Mrs. Jennings was a member of Mount Vernon United Methodist Church for 84 years and a member of the United Methodist Women and the Knitting Group.

She was married to Lloyd Baxter Jennings, Sr., who died in 1964. She is survived by a son, L. Baxter Jennings, Jr., and several nieces, nephews, and cousins. She was also predeceased by two brothers, T. Daniel Shumate, Jr., and Edwin Shumate.

*A gift in honor of **Sonny & Rosalind Morton**
has been received from
Margaret (Peggy) O'Sheel.*

*A gift in memory of **Judy Lynn Turner**
has been received from
her parents, Donald & Beverly Turner,
on the occasion of her birthday on January 6.*

*A gift in memory of **Tom & Betty Leggett**
has been received from Judy Wallace.*

*A gift in memory of **Betty Jennings**
has been received from Jim & Helen Cheyney.*

*A gift in memory of **John Stoneburner**
has been received from Bobby Ray Womack.*



February Birthdays

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2 Gayle Miller | 25 Gary Benefield
Sally Fuller |
| 3 Matt Charles
Kaleigh Longerbeam
John Southward | 25 Sonny Morton
Mac Newell
Jordan Sater
Elizabeth Scott Turner |
| 6 Courtney Bailey | 26 Chris Colbert
Steve Jones |
| 7 Jean Gauldin
Elizabeth Hylton
Pierce Turbiville
Susan Turner | 27 Lynn Eller
Budge Kent, Jr.
Kirk Milam |
| 8 Barbara Brande | 28 Phil Blackmon
Suzanne Harris |
| 9 Cayla Barker
Jay Barker
Amanda Foster
Steve Huff
Jane McMillan
Nik Tiver Belanger
Lewis Williamson | |
| 11 Beth Eller | |
| 12 Wright Garrett | |
| 14 Anna Cho
Martha Sule | |
| 15 Nancy Rudder
Frank Sule | |
| 17 Will Anglea
Bob Sutter | |
| 18 Chris Eller
Jenny Sessoms | |
| 19 Barbara Caldwell
Glenn Giles | |
| 20 Pat Maurakis
Louis Dibrell, III | |
| 23 Mary Lou Dunn | |



March Birthdays

- | |
|--|
| 1 Parson Jacob Lutz |
| 2 Anne Hatton Mitchell
Sam Newell
Lauren Harless |
| 3 B. G. Lewis, III
Judith Terry |
| 4 Fran Darkis |
| 5 Caroline Brande
Frankie Jean Thomas
Anne Wayne Patterson |
| 6 Sandy Burch
Shirley Duncan
Margaret Harden |
| 7 Lauren Miller
Robert Wooding |
| 8 Jan Lester |

At home:
**Dorothy Stephens,
Frances Stoneburner,
Rev. Joyce Johnson, Bill Hardy,
Berkeley & Van Keck**



At Roman Eagle:
Marian Adkins, Tom Darkis

At Commonwealth/Stratford House:
Ruth Waggoner

Scan with cell phone
for online giving



LENT

The forty-day season of Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, February 17**. It is a time when many set aside some of the distractions of normal life in order to focus on God and God's will, as Jesus did in the days he spent in the wilderness before starting his public ministry.

Ways to observe Lent include giving up something (traditionally it was not eating meat on Fridays; today it could be giving up screen time) or adding something, such as daily reading of scripture or a devotional. The idea is to observe a period of spiritual discipline in some intentional way.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.

Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand.

His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. – Philippians 4: 6-7 (NLT)

I do realize I might have shared this particular scripture more than once. Sorry, it is a personal favorite. Verse 6 is actually one of the scriptures that the Cabinet is particularly praying on during this appointment season. The other is Proverbs 3:5: Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. These passages remind us that this is the Lord's work, and while we bring all of our knowledge, experience, information, and preparation to the table, it is the Holy Spirit we call on to guide our conversations, discernment, and decisions.

These verses remind me of this for my daily life as well. We live in a time when "expertise" is valued (and it is valuable as wisdom). We live in a time when having all the answers can seem more important than asking the right questions (which is valuable to hear others' wisdom). We live in a time where there is such a complex confluence of so much, that it can be overwhelming to sort out. But I can't help but wonder if our primary "go to" should be the One thing that is constant yet creative. I wonder if trying to "do it by myself" should be replaced with "going to God" first, and asking for wisdom in using all the gifts, grace, time, and experience we have?

I want to thank you for your kind prayers for our daughter Jessica, in the possible recurrence of her liver disease. The outpouring of love, prayer, concern, and connection touches our hearts and steadies our souls. If any of you have had to go through a serious (or even not so serious) surgery or illness for a second (or more) time, you know how scary it can be. On the one hand, you have been through it before, so you know what to expect. On the other hand, you have been through it before, and you know what it will be like. Your prayers help us more than you know.

Jessica has been dealing with liver diseases since she was 12 (she will be 35 in May). Even then, we knew transplantation

was the endgame – there is no cure, just managing symptoms until the liver is too damaged to continue. Even at that young age, she made a conscious decision to not let her disease define her and to live her life, taking it all as it came. And that is what she did. But I remember how frightening and heavy all of this was, especially when she was being diagnosed. I remember reaching out to a dear friend who is a powerful "prayer warrior" and sharing with her all that was happening, all we didn't know, all we were learning. Although my friend is an experienced nurse, she knew that what I (we) needed wasn't her medical expertise, but her prayers. She got to work and activated her "prayer chain." I must tell you, even to this day, 22 years later, I can still remember what it felt like as the weight of my fear and worry slipped from my soul.

Friends, the same is true for us, whatever the circumstance we find ourselves in. Whether we are dealing with "big picture" issues (and Lord knows there are enough of them right now), family issues, or even the "dis-ease" in our soul, the same "solution" is what we need. The power of prayer connects us to the One who is constant and creative. The One who can soothe and satisfy your soul and pour wisdom into your mind and heart to help untangle whatever "knot" you find yourself in.

Thank you again for your continuing prayers for Jessica. No matter what lies ahead, I know we do not walk alone, and that it will "all be okay" – because God's got this. Friends, God's got you, too – and your families, your churches, your communities, and all of us. Lean into this... anchor yourself in prayer.... Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. Amen and Amen!

Blessings!

Denise Bates, Danville District Superintendent