



PRESENTS OR PRESENCE

“How was your Christmas?” is a very common greeting during these days following Christmas. So, how was your Christmas? Do you get what you wanted? Did you just go purchase what you wanted, or did you wait to see if someone purchased that one thing that you really wanted? Perhaps you have reached that marker in your life where: You already have everything you need – and if you wanted it – possibly you have already purchased that too. Often our post-Christmas Day conversations are focused on the presents.

A recent advertisement was this: Stop focusing on the presents and start focusing on the presence. *“Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” Matthew 1:23* Because of the present which God sent us, Jesus – Emmanuel! We are forever in HIS presence! Our present lives in our presence forever. Our present will not become too small in a couple of weeks. Our present will not wear out either. Our present is an eternal present full of grace and truth. *“It is the LORD who goes before you. He will be with you; he will not fail you or forsake you.” Deuteronomy 31:8.* Our present is not a fad that will change this week or next month, but rather, *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” Hebrews 13:8*

God has given us the present of presence and what will we do with that present. The present which Isaiah writes about. *For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6.*

God’s present to us is also his presence in print. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament is God’s word for God’s people. During 2024, we will focus on His Word for us in the New Testament. During Sunday morning worship, we will center our thoughts on a passage from the prior week’s readings. If you did not receive a gift from Mt. Hermon, please call the church office and we will see that you get a copy of Reading through the New Testament in One Year. A portion of that schedule is printed on a following page. We will seek to hear God’s presence in our daily lives and why His word matters each day. Join us as we read.

Sister in Christ,

Pastor Gina

#3011LeaphartRoad

#WeAreMtHermon

AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

Welcome to **Denise Wolfe**. Denise will begin on January 8th. She and her husband, John, live in this community and look forward to getting to know you too. Stop by and welcome her to Mt. Hermon.



Reading through the New Testament in one year:

1/1	Matthew 1	2/1	Matthew 21:1-22	3/1	Mark 8:1-21
1/2	Matthew 2	2/2	Matthew 21:23-46	3/2	Mark 8:22-9:1
1/3	Matthew 3	2/3	Matthew 22:1-22	3/3	Mark 9:2-29
1/4	Matthew 4	2/4	Matthew 22:23-46	3/4	Mark 9:30-50
1/5	Matthew 5:1-26	2/5	Matthew 23:1-22	3/5	Mark 10:1-31
1/6	Matthew 5:27-48	2/6	Matthew 23:23-39	3/6	Mark 10:32-52
1/7	Matthew 6:1-18	2/7	Matthew 24:1-28	3/7	Mark 11:1-14
1/8	Matthew 6:19-34	2/8	Matthew 24:29-51	3/8	Mark 11:15-33
1/9	Matthew 7	2/9	Matthew 25:1-30	3/9	Mark 12:1-27
1/10	Matthew 8:1-17	2/10	Matthew 25:31-46	3/10	Mark 12:28-44
1/11	Matthew 8:18-34	2/11	Matthew 26:1-46	3/11	Mark 13:1-23
1/12	Matthew 9:1-17	2/12	Matthew 26:47-75	3/12	Mark 13:24-37
1/13	Matthew 9:18-38	2/13	Matthew 27:1-31	3/13	Mark 14:1-31
1/14	Matthew 10:1-25	2/14	Matthew 27:32-66	3/14	Mark 14:32-72
1/15	Matthew 10:26-11:1	2/15	Matthew 28	3/15	Mark 15:1-20
1/16	Matthew 11:2-30	2/16	Mark 1:1-20	3/16	Mark 15:21-47
1/17	Matthew 12:1-21	2/17	Mark 1: 21-45	3/17	Mark 16
1/18	Matthew 12:22-50	2/18	Mark 2	3/18	Luke 1:1-38
1/19	Matthew 13:1-32	2/19	Mark 3: 1-19	3/19	Luke 1:39-80
1/20	Matthew 13:33-58	2/20	Mark 3: 20-35	3/20	Luke 2:1-24
1/21	Matthew 14:1-21	2/21	Mark 4: 1:20	3/21	Luke 2:25-52
1/22	Matthew 14:22-36	2/22	Mark 4: 21-41	3/22	Luke 3:1-22
1/23	Matthew 15:1-20	2/23	Mark 5 1:20	3/23	Luke 3:23-38
1/24	Matthew 15:21-39	2/24	Mark 5: 21-43	3/24	Luke 4:1-30
1/25	Matthew 16	2/25	Mark 6: 1-29	3/25	Luke 4:31-44
1/26	Matthew 17	2/26	Mark 6: 30-56	3/26	Luke 5:1-16
1/27	Matthew 18:1-14	2/27	Mark 7: 1-23	3/27	Luke 5:17-39
1/28	Matthew 18:15-35	2/28	Mark 7: 24-37	3/28	Luke 6:1-16
1/29	Matthew 19			3/29	Luke 6:17-49
1/30	Matthew 20:1-16			3/30	Luke 7:1-35
1/31	Matthew 20:17-34			3/31	Luke 7:36-50

AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

NEW MINISTRIES

and new opportunities for Community



WeAreMtHermon

Care Team

The Care Team focuses on those disciples who are already connected to this community. Porch visits, holy casserolly, and HeBrews dinners are part of this team. Would you like to serve on this team?

Outreach Team

The Outreach Team focuses on those who are outside of the community of Mt. Hermon. The food pantry, community meals, Harvest Festival, blood drives, angel tree, free garage sale, etc. are part of the Outreach Team's focus. Would you like to serve on this team?



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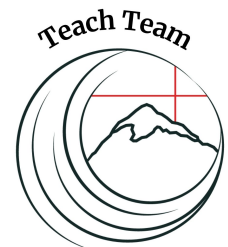
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Support Team

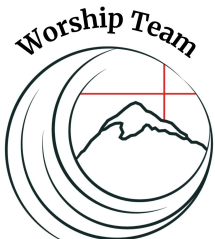
The Support Team's focus is both the staff and the physical buildings of the Mt. Hermon campus. The cemetery, finance and building maintenance teams is part of the Support Team. Would you like to serve on this team?

Teach Team

The Teach Team is all about learning and teaching. We offer Sunday School and VBS for ALL ages. Would you like to serve on this team?



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Worship and Music Team

This Team is all things Worship and Music. This team coordinates Advent and Lenten meals and oversees the Funds for the Arts funds. Sanctuary preparations for Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter are part of this team. Would you like to serve on this team?

AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

CHURCH COUNCIL HAPPENINGS

Motion from the Council meeting

November Council motions:

Support: Written report submitted. The Support Team recommends that we use Taylor Rentals (Neal Taylor, owner) to remove existing boxwoods and all roots from this removal and the prior shrubbery removal in front of the church and Education Building, haul away all roots, boxwoods, and the concrete cylinders used for edging. The cost is estimated to be \$3,300 with \$2,000 to come from loan proceeds and \$1,300 from the landscaping donation. **PASSED** unanimously. The Support Team recommends that we use One 12 Landscaping to place cloth weed barrier and plants, and place pine straw in front of the church and Education Building. The cost is not to exceed \$8,700 with funds coming from the landscaping donation. The total for both recommendations is not to exceed \$12,000. **PASSED** unanimously.

**CHURCH COUNCIL
HIGHLIGHTS**

Congregational Council Minutes November 2023

ATTENDANCE: Absent – None

CARES AND CONCERNS: Gene Sexton and Eldon Eargle are at National Healthcare; pray for the family of Andy King at his passing; pray for Sheila Starkey's step-grandchildren at the loss of their father.

MEMBER CARE:

ADOPTION OF AGENDA: Accepted with the following addition: add a recommendation from Personnel under Support Team.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES: Minutes for October 2023 were accepted as presented.

REPORTS:

- Pastor Gina: Report for November 2023 was submitted.
- Treasurer: Budget Report for October 2023 and Treasurer's Report for October 2023 were submitted.
- Financial Secretary: Funds Report for October 2023 was submitted.
- Executive Committee:

Team Reports/Recommendations:

Team for Ministry: The National Choir will be singing at St. Stephen's Lutheran, and we were asked by the choir for a donation. We decided not to give, but we asked the choir to come make an appeal to the congregation and have not heard back from them.

Care: Written report submitted.

Outreach: Written report submitted. The Fall Festival was a success and there were an estimated 1,000 visitors in attendance.

Support: Written report submitted. The Personnel Team recommends the hiring of Denise Wolfe as parish administrator. She is currently a parish administrator at another church and requests (and we honor) her recommendation to begin in January. She will work 15 hours a week at \$16 an hour and she will move towards working 20 hours a week once she takes on additional responsibilities such as live streaming. **PASSED** unanimously.

Finance: No report submitted.

Teach: No written report submitted. Sunday School classes are encouraged to take attendance each week.

Worship: Written report submitted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. None

AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 2024 Council Nominations – Those on the ballot are Frank Bouknight, Diane Boulware, Wayne Corley, Sherwood Garrett, Jennifer Miller, Jerry Price, Wynne Price, and Terry Swygert and youth nominees Connor Eargle and Quentin Kinard.
2. Council Installation – Sunday, December 17, 2023, at 11:30am
3. Next Meeting: Sunday, December 10, 2023, at 11:30am. Newly elected Council members will be in attendance, and we will elect officers at this meeting.
4. Next Month’s Devotions and Lock Up – Allison Swygert

Sheila Eargle, Council Secretary

ATTENDANCE REPORT

	<u>In-person</u>	<u>Live Streaming</u>	<u>Total</u>
December 03	116	81	197
December 10	96	78	174
December 17	120	82	202
December 24 9:00	93	92	185
December 24 7:00	97	109	206

Advent Evenings

December 6	66
December 13	68
December 20	52

TREASURER REPORT

YTD November 2023	Income	Expense	Over (Short)
Current Mission Plan	206,932.94	215,200.30	(8,267.36)
Building Fund	59,890.02	57,172.66	2,717.36
Bldg Improvement	20,527.65	17,805.51	2,722.14



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AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

TEACH TEAM HAPPENINGS

The outreach team meets on the third Thursday at 6:00 in the education building. If you would like to serve on this team, please contact Cyndi Leaphart and attend the next meeting!

We are currently seeking a leader/facilitator for the Teach Team events. If you are interested, please contact Cyndi Leaphart or Mary Koon.

Lil Lutherans –

- Lil Lutherans have a Group Me Account. If you want to join, see Katie Donaldson or Elyse Kinard to be added.



Youth –

- The youth have a Group Me Account. If you want to join, see DJ Plummer to be added.
- Youth will provide Advent meals in December as a fundraiser for their upcoming ministries.



Adult Education –

- **LIFE – Living in Faith Experience** – will continue in the new year. Look for learning opportunities for 2024!
- YOU are invited to participate in Small Group Ministry!
- Have you ever wanted to be more connected with your fellow believers? To study Scripture together? To have some of your faith questions discussed and answered? To join with other believers in prayer, fellowship, and outreach? And to rejoice with one another in the good times as well as support each other during the challenges that we all face as we walk through life?



AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

WORSHIP TEAM

The teach team meets on the fourth Mondays at 6:30 in the conference room. If you would like to serve on this team, please contact Wynne Price and attend the next meeting!

Audio Ministry: The Worship Team needs your help! We would like to have a dedicated team to help with the set up and breakdowns before and after our outdoor worship services. If you are interested in learning about sound and logistics for this ministry, you will be trained and taught how to become an active part of the music ministry! Please see Pastor Gina to sign up and become engaged in this ministry.

The Community Epiphany Worship will be on Saturday, January 6th. This service will be held at 5:00 and a reception to follow the worship.



Community Epiphany Service
5:00pm
Saturday, January 6th

AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

SERVING IN WORSHIP

January 2024

	1/7/2024	1/14/2024	1/21/2024	1/28/2024
Ushers:	Herb Bucknam	Randy Clark	Ricky Bouknight	Danny Scott
	Frank Bouknight	Teddy Koon	Fran Bouknight	Jenny Scott
Crucifer:	Tanner Addy	Jake Dungan	Brayden Rutherford	Josh Koon
Acolyte:	Cameron Bucknam	Quentin Kinard	Dylan Whitaker	Sam Koon
Lector:	Joel Price, Sr	Joey Koon	Ricky Bouknight	Danny Scott
Communion Assts:	Tanner Addy	Joey Koon	Ricky Bouknight	Danny Scott
	Cameron Bucknam	Mary Koon	Fran Bouknight	Jenny Scott
	Joel Price, Sr	Jake Dungan	Lynn Bouknight	Josh Koon
	Emily Morris	Quentin Kinard	Brayden Rutherford	Sam Koon
	Kathy Cooper	Daryl Leigh Anthony	Dylan Whitaker	Debbie Fulmer
Nursery:				
Flowers:	Stevens	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN

SERVING IN JANUARY

ALTAR GUILD: Jennifer Price, Angie Hydrick

TABULATORS: Larry Amick, Angie Hydrick

USHERS: Marion Leaphart, Susan Busby, Dennis Thurman

AUDIO/VIDEO TEAM: Mike Rawl, Leah Rawl

** If you are unable to serve, please ask someone to serve in your absence.
Please also notify the church office of the change.*

AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES



JANUARY

Jan 05	Karly Addy, Alyssa Stevens
Jan 06	Robin Ellisor
Jan 08	Bryan Addy
Jan 09	Danni Martin
Jan 10	Bobby Carver
Jan 11	Rebekah Boatwright
Jan 13	Sheila Starkey
Jan 14	Francis Eargle
	♥ Jan 15 James Hallman & Jean Shealy
Jan 17	Shirley Cooper
	♥ Jan 17 Keith & Emily Morris
Jan 21	Barbara Corley, Will Plummer, Cindy Price
Jan 22	Andy Jordan, Joel Price, Sr.
Jan 23	Cindy Kleckley
Jan 26	Jordan Thompson
Jan 28	Braydon Johnson
Jan 31	Ruth Card

*Please let the office know if your information is not printed in this listing.
office@WeAreMtHermon.com or 803.794.6430*

AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

MT HERMON PRAYS

Continual Prayers

Patricia Bachman, *Generations*
Alberta Berry, *home*
Lauvenia Butts, *Lakeside Place*
Bobby & Doris Carver, *Presby Home*
Eldon Eargle, *National Healthcare*
James Hallman, *Lakeside Place*
Marie Kleckley, *Lex Ext Care*
Gene Sexton, *National Healthcare*
Gloria Mathis, *home*
Jean Shealy, *Lakeside Place*
Tom Roof, *home*
Cyndi Thurman, *home*
Linda Waters-Hamilton, *home*

Members in Special Need of Prayer

Bonnie Bouknight Chris Carroll Easton Donaldson Georgianna Gray
Dot Mathias Gene Schofield Jane Sexton Jim Whitaker

Family and Friends Who Have Requested Prayers

Paul Garner, *friend of Robert Haygood*
Debbie Browning, *Sister of Donna Kirkpatrick*
Mrs. William L. Coleman Jr (Carolyn), *friends of Marion & Cyndi Leaphart*
Jaimie Womack, *friend of Ryan & Jennifer Price*
Dale Miller, *son-in-law Wynne and Mary Price*
Iris Wellborn, *sister of Earl Sease*
John Catoe, *family of Ellisors*
Dawn McIlwain-Merck, *friend of Robin Ellisor*
Mike Ondera, *friend of Sherwood Garrett*
Molly Kate Shealy, *friend of Jean Shealy*
Chuck Bachman, *nephew of Jean Shealy*
Jeff Tarlton, *friend of Michelle Gantt*
Carleton Morse, *father of Cyndi Leaphart*
Martha Williamson, *sister of Frank Bouknight*
Jay Sox, *Papa of Brayden Rutherford and Dylan Whitaker*
Ann Piercy, *friend of Kathy and Jim Whitaker*
Jeff Reid, *friend of Jan Schofield*
Stephanie Alewine Hopper, *friend of David & Scottie Marsh*
Vicki Boozer, *friend of David & Scottie Marsh*
Stetson Cooper, *grandson of Shirley & Dan Cooper*
Cindy Maples, *mother of Jennifer Miller*
Lewis Turner, *friend of Jo Leach*
Dr. Kay Moore, *friend, and co-worker of Cyndi Leaphart*
Josh Jackson, *friend of Joel Price, Jr.*
Brannon Yonce, *friend of Michelle Gantt*
Katy Madigan, *friend of Marie Carroll*
Billy Huckabee, *friend of Danny Scott*
Ken Brock, *friend of Kathy Cooper*
Jamie Spell, *friend of David Marsh*
Logan Wittwer, *friend of Jessica Goodwin & Cameron Blakely*
Kamryn and Naveah, *friends of Sheila Starkey*

Please note that this prayer list will be updated soon and those who you wish to remain on the list, please send an email to office@WeAreMtHermon.com

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 9:00am Lessons & Carols 10:30am No Sunday School	1 New Year's Day Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3 Office Closed 9:00am Food Pantry (Fran Bouknight, Angie Hydrick, Sherwood Garrett) 10:00am Meals on Wheels 6:30pm Choir	4 6:00pm GR: Grief Support	5	6 Epiphany 9:00am Food Pantry (Youth) 5:00pm Community Epiphany Worship
7 9:00am Worship 10:15am MR: Childrens Choir 10:30am Sunday School 11:30am CR: Worship Team 3:00pm Confirmation	8 2:00pm CR: Dot Mathias 5:30pm CR: Care Team 6:30pm Lutheran Men & Women	9	10 9:00am Food Pantry (Ann Addy, Ann Bouknight, Sharon Keefe) 10:00am Meals on Wheels 12:05pm OneBody Worship 6:30pm Choir	11 6:00pm GR: Grief Support	12 Youth at Lutheridge	13 Youth at Lutheridge 9:00am Food Pantry (Lynn Bouknight, Karen Nicholson)
14 Youth at Lutheridge 9:00am Worship 10:15am MR: Childrens Choir 10:30am Sunday School	15 Martin L. King, Jr. Day	16 6:00pm CR: Finance Team	17 9:00am Food Pantry (Diane Bouliware, Mary Frances Sease, Mary Price) 10:00am Meals on Wheels 6:30pm Choir	18 6:00pm GR: Grief Support 6:00pm Teach Team	19 Council Retreat IOP	20 Council Retreat IOP 9:00am Food Pantry (Swygets & Carrolls)
21 Council Retreat IOP 9:00am Worship 10:15am MR: Childrens Choir 10:30am Sunday School 3:00pm Confirmation - cancelled 6:00pm Community Worship	22	23 6:30pm CR: Support Team	24 9:00am Food Pantry (Dave & Debra Butts Andrea Bowers) 10:00am Meals on Wheels 12:05pm OneBody Worship 6:30pm Choir	25 6:00pm GR: Grief Support	26	27 9:00am Food Pantry (Wayne & Charlene Corley)
28 9:00am Worship 10:15am MR: Childrens Choir 10:30am Sunday School	29	30	31 9:00am Food Pantry (Diane & Parker Bouliware, Mary Price) 10:00am Meals on Wheels 6:30pm Choir	1 6:00pm GR: Grief Support	2	3 9:00am Food Pantry

Please see "calendar of events" at WeAreMtHermon.com for updates.



Mt Hermon Lutheran Church
 3011 Leaphart Road
 West Columbia, SC 29169

WeAreMtHermon

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Rev. Gina D. Metze, *Pastor*
 Svetlana Royal, *Director of Music*
 Denise Wolfe, *Parish Administrator*

803.951.3784

 803.794.6430

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