

The Spire

June 2020

Trust God

The rainbow that I have put in the sky will be my sign to you and to every living creature on earth. It will remind you that I will keep this promise forever. Genesis 9: 12-13



A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR AND TEACHER



God Sent a Rainbow

On Memorial Day at about 7:30 pm, Kim and I drove to Aurora to grab an outdoor table that was on sale. As we turned east on Harvard Ave. from Northfield Rd., we immediately noticed a large rainbow in the sky. This rainbow, however, was not an ordinary rainbow. It seemed much wider than any I had ever seen before. Later in the week, one of our neighbors posted a picture on our community website, which clearly showed it was a double rainbow we had seen. Honestly, I did not even know such a thing existed, but it was indeed breathtaking to behold.

In the biblical story of Noah and the arc, there is a storm that lasted forty days and forty nights. God sent a rainbow to assure his promise that a storm would never again destroy God's people. In the text of the story is a word from the Lord, which says, God would keep the promise he had made to protect the world, and that reminder would be the rainbow in the sky.

Our nation has been in a storm for the last three and a half years as we have suffered from actions made by the worst elected leader of our lifetime. He is a man who has broadened the racial divide in our nation, neglected our environment over the profits of big business, destroyed our relations with our allies, and treated immigrants like animals to be caged. In January, the storm turned into a hurricane as the warnings from the World Health Organization and our national health experts reported that a pandemic was imminent. All of the warnings were ignored. Instead, our leadership called it a

"Democratic hoax." Now, the COVID-19 Pandemic has impacted all fifty states, infecting more than a million Americans, and causing more than 100,000 deaths.

The storm reached epic proportions this week when George Floyd, a helpless black man, was murdered while handcuffed face down on the ground by a white police officer who ignored his cries that he could not breathe. The eruption of protests in Minneapolis and across the country are manifested in the frustration and anger of a people whose cries for justice have been ignored. Martin Luther King said, "A riot is the language of the unheard." The cries for justice and deliverance from the senseless violence, at the hands of wicked police officers in this country, have been unheard. The protests and violence of the past week are its results.

So how do we, in the body of Christ, respond to the issues and challenges before us. First, we must remember, the rainbow is a sign of God's enduring promises. God promised to protect us and to deliver us from the deadly pestilence. COVID-19 is a pestilence. Likewise, the racism and bigotry running rampant in our nation is a pestilence. It is one that resides in the human heart. We must work to rid the heart of America of this pestilence. We must first put on the whole armor of God and prepare ourselves to fight injustice and evil wherever we see it. We must use our voices, and our vote, to remove from positions of leadership, those who continue to spread the pestilence of hatred across this land.

Finally, we must stand on an unassailable position of moral authority by being living examples of the love of Jesus Christ. Jesus had a love that cares for the sick, for the incarcerated, for the hungry, for the homeless, for the alien, and the oppressed.

This is the love of the Christ who was crucified on Calvary, the Christ who rose from the tomb, and the Christ who sent us the Holy Spirit to empower us to fight for justice and peace.

Encouraged by the rainbow,

Rev. Paul

In the know at Mt. Zion...

June 4 @ 4pm
BOUNTIFUL HARVEST
Drive Through Produce Giveaway
Mt. Zion Parking Lot

June 14 @ 1pm
SCHOLARSHIP SUNDAY
via Zoom

June 21
HAPPY FATHER'S DAY



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10723 Magnolia Drive
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216.791.5760
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Please email your materials to:
kimmiesadler@gmail.com

Rev. Paul Hobson Sadler, Sr.,
Senior Pastor and Publisher

Kim Martin Sadler,
Editor and Writer

Joyce Shinn & Donaldson Hill
Contributing Photographers

Is creative writing one of your talents?
If yes, email samples of your writing to
Lady Kim.
We welcome skilled writers to cover
Mt. Zion events.

June Cover Photo: Mimi Lam, Shaker Heights

Happy 100th Birthday

Ebraska

Ceasor

Written by Joyce Thornton



Ebraska Dalton Ceasor was born on June 15, 1920 in Hartsville, Tennessee. She moved to Cleveland at the age of three with her parents and five siblings. When she was nine years old, she often held “school” for younger children in her neighborhood. She also took them on “field trips” to the movies.

Ceasor was an honor student throughout her high school years at Central High School. A special category was established, “High Honors,” because her grades exceeded the norm for honor students. She could have been valedictorian of her class, however, she graduated in 1937, a year ahead of her class.

She decided to attend college when she was 30 years old. While attending Fenn College, now Cleveland State University, as a full time student, she raised two teenage children, Emery and Joyce. Her intention was to become a social worker. However, after working at the Day Nursery Association as head teacher of five year old children, her interests changed and she returned to college and received her Master of Education degree from Case Western Reserve University.

During her career as a kindergarten teacher at Chambers Elementary School, Ceasor was nominated by East Cleveland’s Superintendent for Ohio Teacher of the Year because of her dedication to her students and parents. She was creative and innovative and rewarded three Martha Holden Jennings grants. In 1974, Ceasor was named the Ohio Teacher of the Year and went to Columbus, Ohio to receive her award from Governor John Gilligan.

Ceasor has been a faithful, hard-working, innovative, and creative member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated® for 64 years. She is a member of Alpha Omega Chapter and presently the oldest living member of the chapter and revered by its members – many referring to her as ‘Mom,’ “Momma,” or “Mother!” She has served her sorority in many capacities as chapter officer and committee chairwoman. Her most prestigious role was when she served as president of her chapter. While serving as president, her proudest moment was when she participated in the initiation of her daughter, Joyce. She was also proud to be present at the initiation of her daughter, Sharon Reaves, and granddaughters, Camille Reaves and Candance Dancy. Ceasor has also served in many capacities in the Great

Lakes Region where she is very well respected and admired. She has served as Cluster Coordinator and Historian of the Great Lakes Region of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated®. When she has attended conferences, she is always sought out by members who just want to say “Hello” and to receive hugs and kisses.

Ceasor is an author. She has written several children’s books that were published by New Day Press, a self-publishing company. She has also written and self-published a series of books: My Family, My Church, My Sorority, Potpourri 1 and Potpourri 2.

When she married Frank Ceasor, Sr., she became the member of a blended family of seven children. Now, she had nine children. All of them were in the wedding as bridesmaids and groomsmen! She continues as the mother, grandma, great grandma and great great-grandma and is very much revered. Ceasor is also the matriarch of five generations of the Dalton/Valentine family.

Class of 2020

Congratulations Graduates



Saunchez Perry
graduated from Valley
Forge High School



Andreyon Malone will
study at Howard
University



Tyrese Eddings
graduated from
Whitney Young
Leadership Academy



Kelsea Brown will
study at Miami
University



Joy Wilson received her
Juris Doctorate degree
from the University of
Illinois College of Law



Madison Peebles will
study at Case Western
Reserve University



Jordan Shotwell
graduated from Garfield
Heights High School



Rana Brown received
her Executive Master of
Business Administration
degree from Bowling
Green State University



Julian Wilson will
graduate from Cleveland
State University with a
Bachelor of Business
Administration



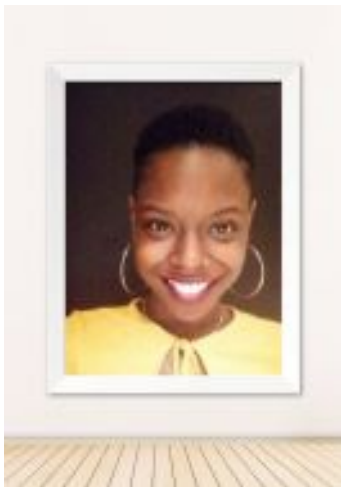
Sydney Berry graduated from
Kent State University with a
Bachelor of Science in Public Health



Saunchez Perry



Chamarro Caldwell



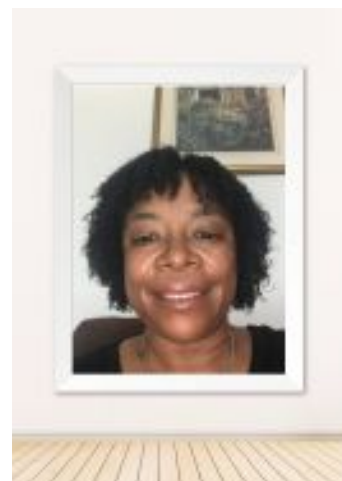
Iman Alexander



Darrell Steele



George Talbert



Carolina Burton

Job Opportunities Breakthrough Services Graduation Ceremony

On Sunday, May 17, Mt. Zion held its first virtual JOBS graduation ceremony. The COVID-19 virus made such a graduation inevitable. With the technological expertise of LyNette Cardaro, the graduation was held with music, visuals and speeches from students and staff.

Just as the first spring 2020 class was about to begin, the United States was literally shut down due to the coronavirus. Joyce Shinn, the program's director, elected to use conference calls to begin the sessions. As time went on, the classes were held via WebEx, a platform that allows face to face communication.

The success of the program depends upon a host of dedicated staff and volunteers. A heartfelt thank you to the following people: **Volunteer staff:** Rev. Paul, Joyce Shinn, Larry Saunders, LyNette Cardaro, Patsy Harris, Deacon Deneen Terrell, and Deacon Verona Gardner.

Volunteer Mentors: Jibreel Gould, Sharla Harris, Roberta Jones, Earle Kellon, Tamela Powell, Stephen Shinn, and Marquetta Spenser.

Volunteer Instructors: Rev. Paul, Rev. Heidi Barham, Clarence Bozeman, Dr. Melissa Burrows, LyNette Cardaro, Rev. Barbara Essex, Mike Fieseler, Duane Johnson, Nicole Johnson, Audra Jones, Rev. Dr. Cheryl Lindsay, Rev. Phyllis Richards, Rev. D. Calvin Wade, Rev. Jeremy Wanton, Rev. Kent Wise, and Eugene Williams. And lastly, Chuck Bonacci.

The fall JOBS program will begin on September 15. JOBS is a free, 10-week program. It provides students with job readiness skills and pairs them with a mentor. The program provides students with personal and professional success skills that will be valuable throughout their lives. More information about the fall session will be provided via *The Spire* and Mt. Zion's Weekly Updates.



Susie Rivers, Hospice Volunteer Featured in Career & Lifestyle Magazine

Excerpts from Profile of Treasured Hospice Volunteer
by Laurie Henrichsen



"Patient ambassador" may not be an official job title, but it's an accurate description of how Susie Rivers views her role as a Hospice of the Western Reserve volunteer. An ambassador serves as a diplomat, envoy, peacekeeper, go-between and emissary. At any given time, Susie is all of these things and more to the hospice patients and families she supports. one day every week, the Euclid

resident visits David Simpson Hospice House to provide a caring presence to patients and visiting loved ones. "I try not to let anything interrupt my days here - except my four granddaughters and two great-grandsons once in a while," she said with a smile.

A sociology major who earned her undergraduate degree from Alabama A & M University in Huntsville, Susie went on to earn a Master's degree in social services from Case Western Reserve University, and pursued a successful career as a social worker. When she retired, she knew right away she wanted to continue to give back to the community.

I just couldn't picture myself just sitting on the couch watching TV shows all day," she said. "I was in my early 70s and in good health. I wanted to find a meaningful way to use my professional skills and experience to help others."

As a member of Mt. Zion Congregational Church in University Circle, Susie got involved in a faith-based grief support program called GriefShare. However, she soon discovered people can be reluctant to seek help. "They were not exactly knocking down the doors," she said. "Not everybody is comfortable speaking about their experiences with death and dying. I thought, 'if I can make a connection earlier, that might be a good thing.'"

After completing volunteer training at Hospice of the Western Reserve, Susie made a commitment to volunteer at David Simpson Hospice House. Like many of the agency's volunteers, personal experiences were one of Susie's motivating factors. Her brother received care at David Simpson Hospice House in the final few days of his life, and her husband received hospice care in their own home.

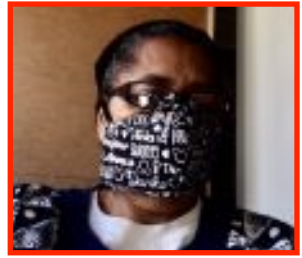
"There are so many ways to volunteer, but I knew the most meaningful role for me would be to work directly with patients and their families," she said. "I have a comfort level with death and dying, so I am able to use my talents to speak with the residents here and their family members."

When a loved one is dying, the swirl of intense emotions sometimes creates complex dynamics that can lead to family disagreements. Arguments and tension between family members can deeply affect a patient's peace and wellbeing.

To read more about Deacon Susie Rivers go to: https://issuu.com/gapcomm/docs/c_l_magazine_winter___spring_issue_2020_final?

Mt. Zion Members Help First Responders

Leslie Oliver and Deacon Verona Gardner are using their creative sewing skills to help first responders and start new business opportunities.



Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, Oliver has made over 100 masks which she donated to Cleveland Clinic and Southwest Hospitals through Pins and Needles Million Masks Challenge. She began by donating one mask for every mask sold. Her masks can be purchased at the Coit Road Farmer's Market in on Saturdays.



It's Time to Tend Your Mt. Zion Garden

As usual, the weather in the greater Cleveland area has been unpredictable. The month of May brought winter weather one week and summer weather the next week. Good news! June is here and sunny days are in the forecast.

So, if you have a garden around the church campus, please come to weed, plant, mulch and nourish your garden. There's nothing more attractive than Mt. Zion in bloom.

Thank you for your support in this effort as we continue to social distance and wait until it's safe to return to church.





BOUNTIFUL HARVEST DRIVE THROUGH PRODUCE GIVEAWAY

**Mt. Zion Parking Lot
@4pm**

**June 4
July 2
August 30
September 3
October 1**



The Strengthen the Church offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities.

As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Most congregations will receive the STC offering on Pentecost Sunday, May 31st, 2020.



Mission and Outreach

How can one person change the World? Sponsor a child...Plant a tree...Rebuild a home...Visit a prisoner...Be a mentor...Teach...Serve a meal...Bring water to the desert...Pray... Donate...the opportunities are endless. And they're all right here. What part of our world is waiting for you to make a difference? **Give a generous offering to the One Great Hour Of Sharing Offering.**

Your gifts may be given to the offering at any time.
Your Gift Helps to Support

Mission Trip Opportunities within the United States
Disaster Recovery Mission Trip Opportunities
within the United States or Globally
Foods Resource Bank

And much more they allow One Great Hour of Sharing to address hidden and forgotten emergencies around the world.



JUNE

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 7:30am Care Shep. Jeremy Caldwell Zena Broadnax	3 7am Prayer Call 10:30am Bible Study 1pm Staff Meeting 7pm Bible Study	4 4pm Bountiful Harvest Food Giveaway Min. Jeffrey Williams	5 7am Prayer Call 6:30pm Sisters in the Spirit via Zoom	6 12pm Deacon Bd 1:30pm Christian Stewardship
7 7am Worship Prayer Call 11am Facebook Live WORSHIP COMMUNION SUNDAY	8	9	10 7am Prayer Call 10:30am Bible Study 1pm Staff Meeting 7pm Bible Study	11	12 7am Prayer Call Juanita Robinson	13 Danielle Lurry
14 7am Worship Prayer Call 11am Facebook Live WORSHIP SCHOLARSHIP PRESENTATION 1pm via Zoom	15 HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY EBRASKA CEASOR Robert Lampley Lawrence Trotter	16 7:30am Care Shep. Jazzmine Frisco	17 7am Prayer Call 10:30am Bible Study Virtual Picnic 1pm Staff Meeting 7pm Bible Study Virtual Picnic	18	19 7am Prayer Call Shauniece Floyd	20 9am New Member Orientation via Zoom Lawrence Saunders N. Stephen Wilson Lafayette Watkins, Jr.
21 7am Worship Prayer Call 11am Facebook Live WORSHIP HAPPY FATHER'S DAY	22 Akeya Watson	23 7:30am Care Shep.	24 7am Prayer Call 1pm Staff Meeting	25	26 7am Prayer Call	27
28 7am Worship Prayer Call 11am Facebook Live WORSHIP Kevin Taylor	29 Traci Pinkney	30 7:30am Care Shep. Kevin Korey Steele, Jr.				