

**"The Zionette" December, 2013 Edition**  
**Zion Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)**  
16158 Beaverdam School Road  
Post Office Box 55, Beaverdam, Virginia 23015  
**Church Office 449-6669**  
**Web-site: [www.Zionchurchdoc.org](http://www.Zionchurchdoc.org)**  
**Minister – Mr. Tommy Willcockson**

**Zion Christian Church Congregational Meeting – November 10, 2013**

Board Moderator, David Koogler, opened the congregational meeting with a prayer. He shared the work efforts of the pastor search committee, the progression of our faithful interim ministers (Dan Stevens, Greg Ott and Tommy Willcockson), the section of the by-laws related to calling a minister, and Tommy's background/biography. David also reiterated the board resolution that thanked each member of the pastor search committee for their hard work on behalf of Zion.

A congregational vote was held to approve/not approve the full time minister contract/calling for Tommy Willcockson. Zion's members present today (31) voted unanimously to approve the contract. Note: Absentee ballots (8) also unanimously approved our resolution to call Tommy Willcockson.

To celebrate and formally welcome Tommy and Vonna Willcockson to Zion, we will have a special Christmas Homecoming program and luncheon on December 15<sup>th</sup>.

The meeting was closed with a prayer and many smiles and encouraging, welcoming words for Tommy and Vonna.

We joyfully welcome our new minister, Pastor Tommy Willcockson, who was formally and officially "called" to serve at Zion by the Congregation on Sunday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, after serving as our interim minister since June of this year. Pastor Tommy and his wonderful partner and wife Vonna transferred their membership to Zion on November 17<sup>th</sup>. We asked Pastor Tommy and Vonna to each share a brief bio with us so we can better appreciate their life and faith journey that brought them to Zion.

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## *From the Pastor's Desk*

### **Minister Rev. Tommy Willcockson**

I was born in northeast Arkansas, about 65 miles west of Memphis, Tennessee. Coincidentally (or not?) I was born in the same hospital as Vonna—only 6 days apart—but we didn't meet until we were teenagers. We have two "only" children. Andrea, a senior in the VCU Theatre Performance program, is 21. She was born while we were in seminary. Tom lives in Raleigh, NC and is 37. I have lived in Arkansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Mississippi, Wyoming, North Carolina, and Virginia. We moved to Virginia almost 10 years ago and to Beaverdam about 8 years ago.

I studied commercial/advertising art, printing, and commercial photography in the early 1970's but took a job in the art business before receiving a degree. At age 33, I returned to school and received a liberal arts degree with a focus in studio arts, psychology, fiction writing/English, and philosophy. In the early 1990's I received a Masters of Divinity degree with an emphasis in pastoral care, counseling, and Old Testament studies. I have 4 units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) from Eastern Carolina University hospital and University of North Carolina hospital—including CPE residency at UNC Medical Center, where I was ER, ICU, and burn center chaplain.

My earliest jobs included picking cotton, sorting Coke bottles at the Coca-Cola plant, and running a forklift—all part time while in school. At age 19, I took a position as art director for KAIT-TV, an ABC affiliate in Jonesboro, Arkansas. I've been a security policeman in the US Air Force—providing security for nuclear missiles/facilities, as well as being a range officer and member of the helicopter response team. For 12 years, I worked as a field-tech for the planning and research division of the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department—gathering data for roadway improvement projects. While studying at UALR, I co-managed a restaurant in Little Rock. During seminary, I repaired equipment for a landscaping company. After graduation, I pastored Smyrna Missionary Baptist church for almost 8 years. After my residency at UNC, I came to Virginia to be a night/weekend chaplain in the MCV ER and ICU's—with a focus on working with the families of potential organ donors. For eight years, I've worked for LifeNet Health, the Organ Procurement Organization for Virginia, doing crisis intervention/consenting donors, post-donation care, and I now manage the Family Support Coordinators.

Past and present hobbies include flying, archery, shooting, hunting, fishing, scuba diving, drawing/painting, sculpting, racing, motorcycling, carving, scrimshaw, music/playing guitar, camping, water skiing, canoeing, and kayaking. I've built one custom car and one custom motorcycle.

I've been in church all my life, with a few lapses along the way. I've always loved theology and trying to understand how to clarify God's word and to apply it to my own life and experiences. I felt a vague "sense of calling" when I was a teenager, but it was never clear or certain until I was about 33 years old—at which time I began preparing for ministry. My favorite part of the Bible is actually the Old Testament. I take the "whole of scripture" seriously and my idea of scriptural context is to understand a passage based on what is found in all the rest of the Bible. We joined the Christian Church (DoC) 9 years ago when we became members of Ashland Christian Church.

*Tommy*

As Tommy indicated, I was also born in northeast Arkansas—in the same hospital, 6 days apart. Interesting!! My earliest years were also spent on a small farm—until we moved to “town” in the mid 1960’s.

When we got married, I worked while Tommy went to school. Tom was born in Wyoming, while Tommy was in the Air force, and I was a stay at home mom until he started to school. In 1980, I went back to work part-time and began what turned out to be a full-time working career. I worked as a church secretary for 8 years and during that time earned a church secretary certification. In 1989 I spent a year working as the accounts receivable manager/bookkeeper for the Arkansas Billy Graham Crusade. After that year, I went to work for Dennis Rainey at Family Life Ministry. Family Life Ministry focuses on marriage and families through national seminars and workshops. While there, I went back to school part-time, seeking a bachelor’s degree with a focus in psychology.

When it was time for Tommy to pursue his seminary degree, we visited the school at Wake forest, North Caroling during the Spring before Fall semester. While we were visiting, I met with the business office director and he offered me a job as accounts receivable manager on the spot. That meant I actually moved to North Carolina while Tommy was still in school at UALR. Andrea was born while we were at seminary. That was a life changer for sure! It was interesting turning 40 years of age with a 2 year old and an 18 year old!

After seminary, I began a career with Sprint that spanned several years in multiple offices. I had an opportunity to transfer and continue my work with them when we moved to take leadership of Smyrna Baptist Church in 1995. In order to stay with Sprint, I commuted a 100 mile round-trip five days a week. After two years, when Andrea was 5, I decided that the family sacrifice was too great and took a job locally—with Hospice of Carteret County—sacrificing a great salary but gaining a life in the process.

When we moved to Chapel Hill, I took a position at Duke Medical Center, working for a healthcare agency that provided temporary medical personnel to the hospital. Upon moving to Virginia, I began a career in the world of organ donation—working for LifeNet Health for 5 years before moving to United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS) working with medical records of transplant centers throughout the US, later being promoted to Quality Records Management Coordinator in the Department of Evaluation and Quality.

My hobbies include reading and needlework. I love to sing and while we lived in Arkansas, I was in a band with Tommy and some of our friends. I once performed with the Good Time Singers, who were the back-up singers for the Andy Williams Show.

I’m excited about being at Zion Christian Church and I look forward to working alongside you and getting to know each of you better.

Vonna

## **Membership/Missions**

I am excited about the holiday season! Our committee has managed to do a Thanksgiving meal and breakfast the day after for a family of 6. I am also looking forward to the Christmas Luncheon that we are hosting along with Christmas Carols at the Ashland Nursing Home at 2:30PM. If you are joining us please let one of my committee members know so I know how many caroling books I need to print, we will also pass out candy canes to all the residents as we sing. We meet at the nursing home at 2:15 so we can enter the building together. If you are planning on coming to the Christmas Luncheon please remember to bring a side dish and a dessert to share. We will be having Ham that day.

Through Beaverdam Elementary School we have agreed to do a family for Christmas with 3 of the children that attend there and they have a brother who attends Liberty Middle School. I am praying that this will be a small blessing to this family as they face the holiday season with little to offer their children but Love and the teaching of Jesus Christ, which is more than a lot of children in the world have. Thanks for all your support and prayers as we enter this wondrous season of the birth of our Savior!!!

The Membership & Missions Committee, as follows: Pamela Steele, Chairperson, Joan Gammon, Elsa Stanley, Ethel Moss, Nancy Nichols and Doris Walker.

Thank you ladies for all you do to support this ministry and our church!

Membership and Missions Committee,  
*Pamela Steele*

## ***Disciples' Women***

We will be meeting on December 3<sup>rd</sup> so "Ladies" come out and be with us.

We have adopted a family for Christmas which includes a single "Man" with 4 children, 2 girls & 2 boys. We would appreciate any help from our "Church Family".

Wishing everyone a "Happy Holidays" and the best of every-thing in the News Year.

Thanks again & God Bless  
*Patsy Corker*, Treasurer

## ***Disciples' Men***

The Disciples Men of Zion have been busy lately; we wish to thank everyone who supported our Baked Potato Supper. We were able to raise over \$300.00 to donate to WHEAT, Western Hanover Emergency Action Team. We are planning our Christmas visit to Beaumont Correctional Center. We support a

group there who we call Our Oakridge Boys, after the facility they were at before moving to Beaumont. If you have never been, join us for a very heart-warming visit.

We will be having our Dec. meeting a bit differently this year, we usually cook for the spouses of our group and invite them to join us. This year we will be having our meeting on Sat. Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> at Debbie's Kitchen on Rt. 33 at 8am.

Please join us if you are a regular and if not it will be a great first time to join our group.

Hope to see everyone there.

*David Benckert*, Secretary

**"The Happy Beavers"** The "Happy Beavers" will meet at 10:30am on Tuesday Dec. 17<sup>th</sup> at the church. We will go to Islamorada Fish Co. at the Bass Pro Shop. Please come out with us and enjoy good food and a good time. **Please note change of date. Thanks.**

*Joan B. Sasser* (804)883-5260

### *Worship/Education Committee*

We will be ordering live Poinsettias to be placed in the Church in honor or memory of a loved one. Orders need to be in by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>. I am working with Stranges and they will deliver. Pots 7" with foil and bow is \$19.00.  
8" with foil and bow is \$24.50.

The children will be singing on Sunday Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> to go along with our Church Family Reunion. Brandy Hall will be working with the children in practice. Please let's have all of our children participate.

Also Community sing is Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> @ Beaverdam United Methodist Church.

Dec. 3<sup>d</sup> - Beau & Cailyn Woody

Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> - Ryan & Wyatt Hall

Dec.15<sup>th</sup> - Dylan & McKenzie Holloway

Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> - William & Leah Hartley

Dec. 29<sup>th</sup> - Beau & Cailyn Woody

Thanks Acolytes & greeters for doing a great job for our Worship Service

God Bless,

*Karen Cathrell*, Chairperson, Worship Committee

## *EVANGELISM/OUTREACH EVENT*

### **Let's All Go to Bethlehem to Celebrate Jesus' Birth this Christmas Season**

*We are extending an open invitation to everyone in our Zion Church family to join us and attend the Bethlehem Walk on Sunday, December 8. We have been going for several years and each year it's at the top of our list of things we MUST do during the Christmas season. The program is only presented for five evenings each year, and last year 13,000 people attended. If you have not been, the Bethlehem Walk is an interactive outdoor drama where you will experience the sights, sounds and smells from Bethlehem on the night of Jesus' birth. Many families will take their children to see Santa Claus at the mall this year. Bethlehem Walk is a way to experience the true meaning of Christmas.*

*The Walk is held at Salem Baptist Church's Broad Street Campus, 465 Broad Street Road in Manakin. This is about 10 minutes from I-64 Oilville interchange. Volunteers from Salem Baptist and 11 other area churches present the program. The walk is scheduled from 3 – 8 pm on that Sunday, December 8, which is the last day of the event this year. We're planning to arrive around 5 pm, just as it gets dark because the drama is more impressive and realistic at night. There will be a wait, maybe up to 2 hrs, and the Walk lasts for approximately 45 minutes. So we will likely be there until about 8 pm. It is worth it! Dress appropriately for the weather – it is usually cold. At the end of the Walk, hot coffee, hot chocolate and homemade cookies are served.*

*We would also like to invite everyone to stop by our house that afternoon from 3:00 – 4:30 on the way to Bethlehem for refreshments and fellowship. We hope everyone can make it!! Please let us know if you plan to attend the Bethlehem Walk and our Open House. Just leave us a phone message (883-7460), or send an email ([mdkooqler@gmail.com](mailto:mdkooqler@gmail.com)) or text (804-350-6237) if you plan to attend one or both*

*Margie Koogler, Chair*

I encourage you to continue to give Linda Holt articles and information for the website which is [www.Zionchurchdoc.org](http://www.Zionchurchdoc.org).

**WHEAT NEWS & NEEDS:** From Cathy Williams:

Wanted to pass along a request. Hotline calls for help from our neighbors with their bills have been heavy and the fund to provide monetary assistance has become very low. Without some additional funds, WHEAT may have to turn away some of these requests. Please pass the word to your congregation and consider monetary donations yourself so WHEAT can continue this important ministry.

WHEAT pantry inventory: We believe we are okay for the pantry next week at this point, but we have seen a big spike in attendance in the food giveaways. The pantry will likely be bare again for December food giveaways. Times are hard right now for folks and there are less people receiving SNAP assistance. Please join us in praying for the ministry and spreading the word to your neighbors for food donations.

Side note, we should be staffed up for the rest of the year but the volunteer needs don't stop as we flip the calendar page to 2014, so feel free to let me know if you can commit to pantry dates in the new year.

I inventoried the PANTRY THIS AFTERNOON AND WE NEED FOR THE NEXT Open Pantry the following items:

29 packages of spaghetti noodles

46 containers of sauce

10 cans of vegetables

76 containers of jam or jelly

We also need more pouches of dried milk

Yours In Him, Cathy Williams

*From the Publishers Desk*

Please let me know if you don't want to continue getting this publication by mail or email.

**E-Mail address:** [sassyrn1940@embarqmail.com](mailto:sassyrn1940@embarqmail.com)

**Phone:** **(804)883-58260** leave a message on the answering machine.

Joan B. Sasser

**MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING**

The official Board meeting of ion Christian Church was held on Tuesday November 12, 2013 at 7pm. The following board members were present: David Koogler, Pam Steele, Karen Cuthrell, Nancy Nichols, David Benckert, Sam Moss, Margie Koogler, Rickie Smith, George Poffenberger, and Tommy Willcockson. David Koogler opened the meeting with devotional, a poem entitled "A Thank You' Will Do" and prayer. Minutes from the prior board meetings (both Sept 10 & Oct. 20.2013) and the agenda for 10/12/13 were approved.

**Secretary's report:** Rickie Smith reported that there are currently 176 on the church roll.

**Minister's report:** Tommy reports that he had been averaging 4 phone calls and 2 visits per week. He advised that he would be ordering business cards when final determination is made regarding a possible phone number change.

**Treasurer's report:** David Benckert reported that giving has averaged \$1,340 per week for the current church year (budget is \$1,365). As of 11/12/2013 reserve account is \$11,017.61, checking/operating account is \$36,896.68 and the Raymond James endowment account is \$81,238.29. The Funkhouser account is currently \$2,782.88. David also noted that as usual our expenses will be increasing over the next few months as we go through the winter heating season.

**Worship & Education Committee:** Karen Cuthrell reported that the fall festival was a success and due to financial donations there was an overage of \$137 after expenses. Forms to order poinsettias for the sanctuary will be distributed soon. Karen reported for Jane that Sunday School classes are using Cokesbury, Fruits of the Spirit.

**Outreach & evangelism Committee:** Margie Koogler gave an update of the upcoming events. Men's Group sponsored Baked Potato Dinner on 11/15. Old Firehouse Concert featuring Good Natured Riot on Sat. Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>. On Dec 7<sup>th</sup> the Men's group and others will visit the young men of Oak Ridge unit at Beaumont Juvenile Correctional Center. Their Christmas bags will be delivered a couple of days prior to Christmas. The Women's group will sponsor a family for Thanksgiving. The December Men's group meeting, the annual Christmas breakfast including wives, will be held at Debbie's Kitchen.

**Membership & Missions Committee:** Pam Steele reported her committee will sponsor a family (2 adults, 4 children) for a Thanksgiving meal and next day breakfast fixings. On Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> membership committee will be coordinating the Christmas luncheon (ham and rolls provided by church, members to bring sides and desserts). We will also have a special guest in a red suit for the children. Also on Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>. Zion will take candy canes to Ashland Rehabilitation Center for Christmas Caroling. In December a combined effort from the Men's and Women's group will adopt a family for Christmas.

**Property & Stewardship committee:** George Poffenberger reported that the parsonage should be ready to rent as early as Dec. 2013. A new ceiling in the kitchen, wall repair and painting are almost complete. George will start advertising and will serve point regarding references/credit check/contract for the rental agreement.

**Elder & Deacon Updates:** Nancy Nichols reported there will be no deacons meeting until January. Deacons and Elders will re-communicate the timing of moving forward for communion. We discussed a review of the current communion responses for change to more meaningful dialogue.

**Unfinished Business:**

- The ByLaws committee (Paul Dickerson, David Koogler, Kathy Benckert, Mac Childress and Shirley Moss) will reconvene in January 2014 to begin the process of incorporating the revisions adopted by the congregation in 25012 into the ByLaws document.
- The pilot of "One Call", a company that provides a communication service to churches that sends important updates to members using e-mail, phone and text, will be tested with the Board in the first half of 2014 so we can determine if this would be useful and helpful for the entire congregation.

**New Business:**

- We are planning an "Old Fashioned Christmas Homecoming" service on Sunday Dec. 15<sup>th</sup> to welcome Tommy and Vonna to Zion. A committee of Tommy Willcockson, Karen Cuthrell, Margie Koogler, and Rickie Smith will plan the order of service and special music. Personal



notes of invitation will be sent to members that haven't met Tommy and Vonna yet. We will also include a full page notice of the day's events in the December newsletter. This is the day of our planned Christmas luncheon and Missions committee Christmas caroling to Ashland Rehabilitation Center.

Tommy Willcockson closed our meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,  
*Rickie Hall Smith*

### ***CHILDRENS CHURCH-***

During worship

(3-10 yrs of age) Come join us for some  
Learning and fun!

In Jesus Name, Kim Hall, Leader

### **NURSING/REHABILITATION FACILITIES**

Elsie Waller – NH – in Fredericksburg  
Betty Hall – Crump Manor, Room C-11  
Mary "Grandma" Fencher – Crump Manor,  
Room C-11  
Susie Hall – Ashland Convalescent Center  
Ellen Harris – Henrico Rehab Center  
Dorothy Steel – Papp House  
Josephine Goodman – Alpha House

### ***Shut In's***

Emily Bishop  
Nelson Carter  
Louise Lowman

### **Prayer CONCERNS**

#### **The Families of:**

Coleman L. Baughan  
Cecile Ann Clemons  
James Ryland Clements, Jr  
Rufus Hancock.  
Howard family (husband of Patsy Tate Howard)  
Catherine Gray Willis

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| Hank Bagby                                   | Nancy Hackney                            |
| Chris Beasley                                | Carolyn Jones                            |
| Jude Bernett                                 | Vernell Jones                            |
| Donna Bond                                   | Annabell Koogler                         |
| James Bowline                                | Diana Koff                               |
| Shirley Byers                                | Edna Lauterbach                          |
| Mary Carter                                  | P. A. Lewis, Jr.                         |
| Victoria Carter                              | Buddy Lutton                             |
| Brandon (lineman for REC)                    | Samantha McDougall                       |
| Mack Childress                               | Ray Martin, Jr.                          |
| Robert Coates                                | Peggy Mae Hall Morris                    |
| Patsy Corker                                 | Ruby Ethel Moss                          |
| Randy Corker                                 | Doris Mills                              |
| Mike Chrouthamel                             | Don & Marie Newman                       |
| Johnny Estes                                 | Peggy Orchid                             |
| John Wayne Dickerson                         | Wife of David Oaks                       |
| Barbara Duke Jones                           | Frank M. Sasser, Jr.                     |
| Peggy Fortune                                | Linwood Slayton                          |
| Lewis Geyton                                 | Mike Sumski                              |
| Jennifer & Michael Grzunkowski & unborn baby | Wayland (Jack) Stanley                   |
| Audrey Gray                                  | John Smith                               |
| Mary Ann Hall                                | Pam Steele                               |
| Tinky & Linda Hall & family                  | Carley Taylor                            |
|  | Gloria Thom                              |
|  | Edward Tuttle                            |
|  | Carol Umbel                              |
|  | Patty West                               |
|  | John Williams                            |
|  | Francis Yost                             |
|  | Zion Christian Church                    |
|  | All unspoken concerns                    |
|  | All of our Armed Forces & their families |
|  | Our President, Nation, & World           |

I have taken a number of names off of the Prayer list as they have been there for several months. If you think that they should be left on or taken off, **Please let me know.** A lot of these folks I do not know. I do need your help. Thanks.

Joan B. [sassyrn1940@embarqmail.com](mailto:sassyrn1940@embarqmail.com) or 804-883-5260

<<<<<<< SINGING – CHILDREN – MORE >>>>>>>>>

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SINGERS</u>	<u>Children’s Sermon</u>
Dec. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Voices of Zion	
Dec. 8 <sup>th</sup>		
Dec. 15 <sup>th</sup>	Children of Zion	
Dec. 22 <sup>nd</sup>		
Dec. 29 <sup>th</sup>		

### **Discovering More About My Church**

The Yearbook & Directory of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ is a little like a phone book or a dictionary. No one sits down and reads it straight through, but it contains a lot of good information. The Yearbook is a collection of data about our denomination, and it includes reports of all the Disciples congregations—including yours. With the help of you friends, see if you can find the answers to these questions.

- My congregation is in what region?
- Where is the regional office?
- What’s the official name of my congregation?
- How many members does it have?
- How many come on an average Sunday?
- How many come to Sunday school?
- How much did my congregation give to Week of Compassion?
- How much did my congregation give in outreach to Disciples causes?

## Good News!

Did you ever wonder why they call the Gospels *gospels*, and not *stories, or biographies*? The word *gospel* is from an Old English word *Godspell*, and it means “good story,” or “good news.” The gospels are good stories, aren’t they

The story doesn’t stop there. The Old English word translated a Greek word, *euaggelion*. It also means “good news.” There’s an angel hidden in that Greek word. The word we translate as *angel* literally means “messenger”--one who brings a message from God. And our words *evangelist* and *evangelism* are from the same word, too. When you hear the word *evangelist*, don’t think of television preachers. Think of people like you who tell their friends the good news of God’s love in Jesus Christ.

So the Gospels were written to spread the good news of Jesus Christ! What do the Gospels themselves say about why they were written?

Look up Luke 1:1-13. This Gospel was written when many of the original apostles, the people who followed Jesus during his ministry, were getting old or dying (v.2). Luke wanted to put the record on paper so people could keep on hearing the story. The Gospel is addressed to Theophilus. That name means *friend of God*. Was that the name of a real person? We don’t know. What do you think Luke wanted us to know about his reason for writing?

Now turn to John 20:30-31, and 21:24-25. Why did John want to tell us his story of Jesus?