

MENDOTA ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
COME, SHARE, GROW

# NEWS FROM ZION

September 2025

Volume 5 Issue 1



## **When all is said and done, it is better to leave it that way!**

This was the title of the sermon at Main Street United Methodist Church in Bay St. Louis, MS the Sunday before hurricane Katrina devastated areas along the Gulf Coast including New Orleans on August 29, 2005. Twenty years have passed, and several retrospectives and documentaries have made their way on-air the last few weeks. I have watched several and the images echo those that have imprinted in my memory to this day.

Our team of 17 arrived at the Main Street UMC of Bay St. Louis, MS late Saturday evening, October 8, 2005. Upon entering the town, it was an eerie sight. No streetlamps, working traffic lights, or even the light from the moon to help light our path. We drove by a location where we could see a single light bulb hanging in some sort of tent that would become apparent the next day when we drove past



it to our first worksite. It was Walmart, or what they were temporarily using to distribute cleaning supplies. Paul Nelson was driving the lead car of our entourage and had a primitive version of a GPS called Magellan. "Maggie", which we affectionately called the device, got us to the church. Maggie would

also get us to the many work sites we were to be at for the next 8 days.

We were told beforehand to be self-sufficient in food and water for the duration of our stay. The water there was approved to bath in, but not yet safe to drink.

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We were met by our Volunteer in Mission coordinator, Mavis and her husband who both looked as if they hadn't slept in days. They were from Kansas City and upon their arrival a couple of weeks prior, they had been busy coordinating the cleanup of the church, setting up intake procedures for the returning residents of the area, and coordinating the arriving volunteer groups from around the nation. Our first task in the morning would be to construct an outdoor shower at the church to be used by the teams coming.

Over 100 people were staying in various locations around the church, tent camping in the courtyard and camping trailers in and around the surrounding property. It wasn't only groups from United Methodist churches, but we had National Park Service "hotshot", the ones that fight forest fires, boy scouts, and even some loosely gathered people that came just to help.

We were told that the clothes we came dressed in would also

be the clothes that we would return home in. All other clothing would be left behind and burned because of the stench and the toxic substances that would be ground into them. Mavis, in her orientation the first night, told us of some of the things we would be doing. "Mostly listening", she said. Listening to the stories from the residents. "They need to talk, process, get it all out as many would be seeing what was left for the first time along with the teams. "Don't try to be a super team, get it all done in the week you're with us, there is so much to do.", she continued. She asked our team after sizing us up, "Do you know what MUCK is? I think you all are going to be our muckers this week?" MUCK has the looks and consistency of chocolate pudding, but it's not chocolate pudding! Muck is mud and yuck mixed. Much of our tasks at the work sites were to muck out their homes. Homes that had been under 10-15 feet of water that slowly went down in the days after the hurricane. She also encouraged us to catch a sun-

rise in the morning as the bay was about 2 blocks away.

Many of us took Mavis up on her suggestion of sunrise. About 40-50 gathered and sat on the rubble that scattered along what was possibly the shoreline. It was so quiet as I remember. I think we were all in shock at what we saw as the sun rose. Many of us prayed, sat quietly or took some pictures of what we were witnessing. A couple of observations of my experience of those 8 days in years since have been:

1. One can see God at work in the smelliest mess of MUCK!
2. That in the chaos of the aftermath of a hurricane, it is the ones who stop and listen to the stories of those that have experienced the disaster that are truly changed by God.
3. That sometimes people's good intentions to help, often are just as ridiculous and unhelpful in the situation.

4. Sometimes it takes a disaster such as Katrina for the church to be the church. Those 8 days, God changed me and has impacted my life, and ministry ever since. Pastor Jeff



# September

Scripture Writing Plan



## Fruits of the Spirit

- Day 1: Galatians 5:22-23
- Day 2: Zephaniah 3:17
- Day 3: John 3:16-17
- Day 4: John 15:9-10
- Day 5: John 15:12-13
- Day 6: Habakkuk 3:17-18
- Day 7: 1 Peter 1:8-9
- Day 8: Luke 15:7
- Day 9: Psalm 30:5
- Day 10: 1 Peter 3:11
- Day 11: James 3:18
- Day 12: Psalm 29:11
- Day 13: Romans 12:18
- Day 14: Exodus 34:6-7
- Day 15: James 1:2-4
- Day 16: Romans 5:1-2
- Day 17: Romans 5:3-4
- Day 18: Proverbs 31:20
- Day 19: Colossians 3:12
- Day 20: Titus 3:1-2
- Day 21: Ephesians 4:1-2
- Day 22: 2 Peter 1:5-6
- Day 23: 2 Peter 1:7-8
- Day 24: Hebrews 11:1-2
- Day 25: Hebrews 12:1-2
- Day 26: Romans 14:19
- Day 27: Proverbs 25:28
- Day 28: Proverbs 16:32
- Day 29: Titus 2:11-14
- Day 30: Philippians 4:8



The Scribe's Portion  
PRESERVING THE WORD OF GOD





### September Birthday's

9/11 Benoni Hernandez

9/13 Bev Westerman

9/16 Jamie Dooley

9/19 Payton Gagliardo

9/19 Samara Hernandez

9/19 Stephen Hart

9/26 Loralie Hart

9/28 Kendall Biers

9/29 Michelle Armstrong



## Zion United Methodist Church Calendar

# SEPTEMBER 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 	2 Prayer Group 6:30pm	3	4	5	6
7 Worship 9am Where Our Paths Meet: Journey's to Mendota screening Diaz Event Center 2pm	8 Prayer Group 6:30pm	9 Prayer Group 6:30pm	10	11 COA Mtg 6:30pm	12	13
14 Worship 9am	15	16 Prayer Group 6:30pm	17	18	19 Mendota Family Safe Night Out 4-8pm Mendota Civic Center	20
21 Worship 9am	22	23 Prayer Group 6:30 pm	24 Meet At The Pole Pray at the Schools 7am	25 10am Allure Worship Service 2pm Hymn Sing at Stone Croft	26 Articles for the August Newsletter Due	27
28 Cathy Burke guest preacher Worship 9am	29	30 Prayer Group 6:30 pm				



# *ZION'S SEPTEMBER MISSION...*

## **SAGER BROWN DEPOT**

In 1992, Hurricane Andrew hit the coast of south Louisiana causing major damage to the area around Baldwin. UMCOR came to the area with volunteers and supplies and used the old Sager Brown campus to stage their operations. After two years, UMCOR determined that the Sager Brown Campus would be an excellent location to build an UMCOR depot where disaster relief could be collected and provided to the world. The depot opened in 1996. Many see the hand of God prominent in the events that formed the history of the Orphan's Home Society. It was preserved through hardship and changes until it could again be a healing ministry to those in need. The road beside the UMCOR Sager Brown campus is still today called, "Orphan's Home Road"; the property continues to be owned by the Women's Division of the UMC and the site is a significant piece of Black History.



The campus today is a living, working monument to over a century of United Methodist mission. UMCOR is a leader in service for the UMC to those who are hungry, displaced, sick or in poverty because of natural or human-made disasters. UMCOR serves in 81 countries of the world. Each year more than 3,000 volunteers come to USB to work in the UMCOR Depot or in service to the community of Baldwin, La., to help make a difference for people who are suffering.



# **SAGER BROWN**

• **UMCOR** •

## **158 YEARS OF SERVICE**



# *ZION'S SEPTEMBER MISSION (CONT)...*

UMCOR Sager Brown has its origins in New Orleans. In 1867 a group of women in New Orleans formed the Orphan's Home Society Corporation. This was a means of raising money to provide a home for African American boys who had been orphaned by the Civil War. It was funded primarily by the Freedman's Aid Society, a predecessor to the Black College Fund of the United Methodist Church, and John Baldwin, a plantation owner in St. Mary Parish, La.

Very early in the life of the orphanage, a large monetary gift given by William Gilbert of Winsted, Conn., allowed a school for African Americans to be built with Dr. W. D. Godman as director. The institution was named the Orphans Home and the Gilbert Academy and Industrial School. Eventually, Gilbert Academy was moved to New Orleans near Dillard University and became a preparatory school. The school in Baldwin, grades one through eight, then became known as Godman Industrial School. Godman and his wife directed the school and the orphanage and were also responsible for building a Methodist Church on the property.

In the early 1900s, the Orphan's Home and Godman Industrial School were in dire financial straits. Dr. & Mrs. Godman took the student choir, the Jubilee Singers, on a tour of the northeastern United States to raise money. Mrs. Addie Sager and Mrs. C. W. Brown became familiar with the plights of

the organization through a concert given for the North Central New York Methodist Conference. Sager and Brown purchased the school and gave it to the Women's Home Mission Society, a forerunner of the Women's Division of the UMC, to operate. The institution was known as Sager Brown Home and Godman School until 1978. That year, the home and school closed, and the property was put up for sale. Twenty-eight acres and 10 brick buildings on beautiful Bayou Teche were for sale for \$100,000—but there were no buyers. The property sat vacant for fourteen years!



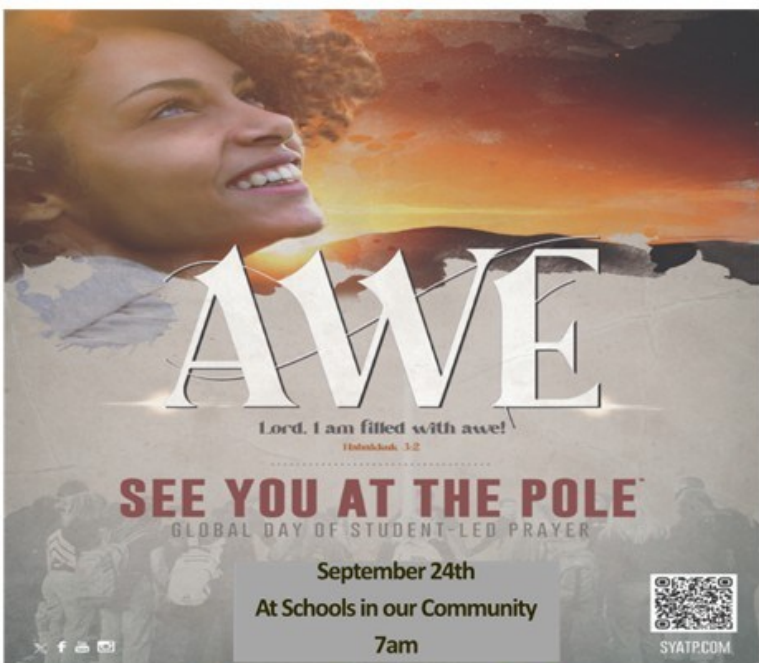


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September 2025



Join us along with Paw Paw United Methodist Church for a Hymn Sing at Stonecroft Village Thursday, September 25th at 2 pm. This will be ongoing through out the year on the last Thursday of the month. Pastor Dave and Pastor Jeff bring along their guitars and the pianist from Paw Paw play the residents favorite hymns. It is such a joy for all the residence there. Join in!

Miss one of Zion UMC Sunday Messages

Or Newsletters?

Check out our Website....

<https://zionchurchumc.com>



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### **Zion Wants to Pray for You!**

Zion family and anyone else with a prayer need are encouraged to request prayer from the newly activated prayer chain ministry. All that you have to do is reach out to those contacts listed below and share your concern. A private email will then be sent to the members of the prayer chain so that they can start to cover your concern with prayer as soon and as often as they are able. Prayer requests will be kept confidential within the prayer chain circle, but we ask that the people for whom you request prayer be ok with your sharing. If you are interested in being a prayer partner or to activate the team in prayer, please let us know:

Pastor Jeff Brace

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