



# The Messenger



## From the Pastor's Desk

January 1, 2024 will be my 67<sup>th</sup> New Year's Day. I know that I slept through the first of those. As I got older it became important for me to stay awake and watch the ball drop from Time Square in New York on television, and to spend money on fireworks. For many years I celebrated with my church family at New Years watch parties. We have planned to do that at Zion Hill this year. Starting at 6:00 with celebrate and praise in the auditorium. There will be a fellowship meal and games, and a movie I Heard the Bells In the Fellowship Hall. For those able to stay awake until Midnight, we will pray in the New Year. All are invited.

Many wise people have expressed their thoughts on the old and the new year.

Year's End is neither an end nor a beginning but a going on with all the wisdom that experience can instill in us, said Hal Borland

No one ever regarded the First of January with indifference. It is that from which all date their time and count upon what is left. It is the nativity of our common Adam, said Charles Lamb

Ring out the old ring in the new. Ring, happy bells, across the snow. The year is going let him go! Ring out the false, ring in the true. Wrote Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

The ancient Greeks first used a baby to represent the new year, and an old tired man to represent the old year. The Romans derived the name of January, the first month of the New Year, after their god Janus, a two-faced god, one face looking at the past, the other at the future. The Babylonians began the custom of making resolutions over 4,000 years ago.

"Auld Lang Syne" a Scottish ballad has become the

traditional song, to mark the passing of the old year. In my mind I will always hear Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians playing that sad tune. The translation of the name is, "old long since." The meaning is days gone by.

In Europe it is a custom to eat cabbage and that is believed to bring a good harvest. In Asia long noodles are eaten because they are believed to bring long life. In the Southern United States black-eyed peas are eaten to bring a whole year's worth of luck and prosperity.

The truth is the best thing we can do on New Years' Day or any day, is to put our trust in God and not traditions. To remember He has told us. "For I know the plans I have for you. Declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11

God bless you, and give you hope according to His wonderful plans in this brand-new year, of 2024!

**Terry Fortner**

## Inside this issue

- From the Pastor.....1
- New Year Devotional .....2
- Baby Shower .....3
- Upcoming Guest Speakers .....3
- Current Activities .....4
- Service Times.....4
- Scholarship Opportunity .....4
- Wednesday Night Meals .....4



### Stitching with Love Ministry

meets every 1st Thursday  
January 4 at 9am –12pm.

### Men's Prayer Breakfast

Every 2nd Saturday of each month  
January 13 at 8 am

### Home Extension Club

meets every 3rd Wednesday  
January 17 at 9:30am –12pm

### Sr. Saints Fellowship

meets every 3rd Tuesday  
January 16 at 11:00 am

## 7 New Year Prayers to Prepare for the Year Ahead

If you are like many people, this past year probably did not go as expected. Many people came into 2023 proclaiming it to be the year of vision. It has been a year of vision, I'm just not sure people have really liked what they have seen. If you are like many you are probably counting down the days until this year is over with the hope of next year being better than this year.

One of the beautiful things about a new year is that it offers new hope. People often think of it as a clean slate or a fresh start. Isn't that what new year's resolutions are about anyway? However, like any new year or any new day for that matter, no one knows (except God of course) what it will hold. 2024 will be no different. The good news is that you know the Lord, or better yet he knows you. Regardless how the rest of this year goes as we look ahead, I would like to offer seven prayers to consider for the new year.

**1. A New Year's Prayer for Peace** "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27). God has offered us his peace. The reality of peace is that it is not the absence of chaos but the presence of calm within the chaos. As you face the new year, remember God has promised you his peace. When you pray as Philippians 4 instructs you to do, then God promises his peace will guard your heart and mind. Prayer: Lord, in spite of what I see and everything happening, I pray for your complete peace. In my circumstances don't let me be anxious or troubled. Help me to pray about everything, leaving it all in your hands. As I do let your peace rest in my heart as I trust in you. In your name I pray, Amen.

**2. A New Year's Prayer for Hope** "Let us hold unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful" (Hebrews 10:23). To be without hope is a dangerous place to be because at that point life feels like it's not worth living. You may have felt like this, but you don't have to remain in that place. You can have hope in the one who saved you and has promised to bless you and keep you. Prayer: Lord, in this new year help me to remember your promises and who you are. It is because of you that I can have hope because you are faithful. Let your faithfulness be the thing I remember and rely on. Let that be the source of my hope and joy. In your name I pray, Amen.

**3. A Prayer for New Beginnings** "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland" (Isaiah 43:18-19). Let's face it, we all have probably done some things that we wish we could do over. As we face a new year and review, let it be a time of learning. Look at the mistakes. Repent if you must and pray for grace to move forward without repeating the errors of yesterday. Prayer: Lord it is so hard to pick up the pieces and keep moving forward. Help me to see that your plan is still in effect. Give me faith to know that regardless of what this past year has looked like I can start over. Help me not to run with my head looking backwards. Help me to run forward into the plan and purpose you have set before me. In your name I pray, Amen.

**4. A Prayer to Focus on Christ in the New Year** "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1-2). Let's face it, every day we are faced with a myriad of distractions. All of them are designed to get you to take your eyes off Jesus and what matters most. Let this new year be the year you lock in on what matters to God and his heart. After all that is what matters most. Prayer: Lord, help me to fix my eyes on you. There are so many distracting voices that clamor for my attention. Help me to shut those out to focus on your voice. Help me to make room for you and to make time with you a top priority in my life. In your name I pray, Amen.

**5. A Prayer for Reconciliation** "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone" (Romans 12:18). This past year has felt like it has been more divisive than ever. The divisions have spilled over from the world into the church. We need to heal those divides because the message of the Gospel is at stake. If this year was a year of division, we need to make the next a year of reconciliation. Prayer: Lord, this has been a year with many questions and very deep emotional feelings coming to the surface. Help me and the body of Christ to push past every divisive thing and move to a place of reconciliation. Let the fruit of the Spirit be evident in my life as I seek to be a healer of broken and angry hearts. In your name I pray, Amen.

**6. A Prayer of Blessing in the New Year** "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26). It is good to know that there is a God in heaven who delights and enjoys blessing his people. The blessings are not just for physical things but go way beyond that. More than the blessings we should be pursuing the blesser. Let this be the year you run after God, not for anything he can give you, but because you want him more than anything else. Prayer: Lord, in the midst of chaos, sometimes it's hard to see your blessing. Help me to seek your face in this new year. Help me to desire you more than anything you could ever do for me. Let Jesus be the object of my affection and the prize of my heart. In your name I pray, Amen.

**7. A Prayer of Hope after a Hard Year** "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart'" (Jeremiah 29:11-13). This year has been hard and historic in so many ways, and yet we still have to press on. As you do that remember that in spite of everything God's plan for your life is still in effect. If you will walk in obedience before him, he will accomplish everything that he desires to accomplish in your life. It doesn't matter what is happening around you. Prayer: Lord, after this hard year help me not to forget your plan for my life. There is hope in your plan, but Father, let it come with me calling upon your name and seeking after you with all my heart. Help me not to look around but look up and remember that my hope is not in what's around me, but my hope is in you. In your name I pray, Amen.

As you consider these prayers for the new year let them be an encouragement to do one thing: return to your first love. Let this be a year when Jesus and his desire for your life becomes the most important thing. Let his heart be the one that you key in on and let his love radiate and shine through your life. Here's to following God all the way in the new year.

## Youth, Children & Other Happenings

### Weekly Youth & Young Adult Gatherings

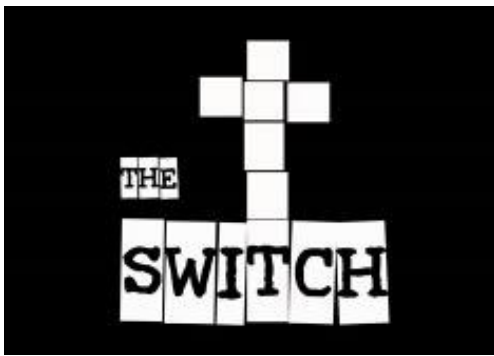
#### Wednesday Night *Switch* Services

Music and a devotion from 6:30-7:30pm

#### Sunday Night *Growth Group* at 5:30 pm

Food, fellowship & Bible Study

**Invite your friends and come join us!**



### Baby Shower

January 28, 2024

2-4 pm

Come help celebrate parents to be Brandon & Brooklyn Bridges

They are having a baby boy (Beau Ligon Bridges) due April 14, 2024 You can find their registry at <https://www.babylist.com/list/baby-reg-brooklyn-bridges>



Baby Shower hosted by: Renee Hand, Connie Skipper, Katelyn Bridges, Madison Gray and Cindy Gray

## Upcoming Guest Speakers



**Brian Arnold | King's Table Ministry**  
"America's Favorite One-Handed Pianist"

**BRIAN**  
**IS COMING**.COM

**February 18, 2024**

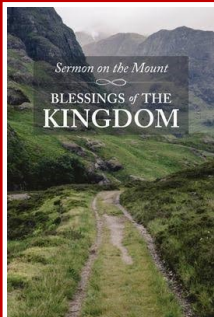
### SUNDAY NIGHTS AT 6:00 PM

#### Sermon on the Mount

#### Blessings of the Kingdom

Join us for a new Bible Study beginning  
January 7, 2024

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus invites His disciples to walk in His narrow way (Matthew 7:13-14).



Thanks to Ondrej Paska (See Matthew 14:24-33)

01-04-20

**PETER FINDS HIS FAITH TO BE MUCH STRONGER IN THE WINTER**

### Schools Out

- CABOT January 1-3, 15
- PCSSD January 1-2, 15
- JNP January 1-5, 15

## Zion Hill Baptist Church Service Times

### Sunday

9:45 am Sunday School  
 11:00 am Morning Worship  
 11:30 am Children's Worship (Fellowship Hall)  
 5:30 pm The Jumble Gathering (Fellowship Hall)  
 6:00 pm Growth Group (Sanctuary)  
 6:00 pm Youth Bible Study (Basement)

### Tuesday

10:00 am Tuesday Bible Study

### Wednesday

6:30 pm Mid-Week Services  
 Bible Study & Prayer Meeting  
 (3rd Wednesday is Business Meeting)  
 GA's, RA's, Mission Friends,  
 Youth *Switch* Service  
 7:00 pm Adult Choir Practice

## January Activities

1		New Year's Day
2	10:00 am	Tuesday Bible Study
3	5:45 pm	Wednesday Night Meal
3	6:30 pm	Wednesday Midweek Services
4	9:00 am	Stitching with Love Ministry
6	12:00 pm	New Year Deacon's Luncheon
7	8:00 am	Deacon's Meeting
7		Sunday Services—Brenda Rhoads Denney In Concert
9	10:00 am	Tuesday Bible Study
10	5:45 pm	Wednesday Night Meal
10	6:30 pm	Wednesday Midweek Services
13	8:00 am	Men's Prayer Breakfast
13	1:00 pm	Fellowship Hall—Private Use
14		Sunday Services—Deacon Nominations
14	12:00 pm	Finance Committee Meeting
15		Martin Luther King Day
16	10:00 am	Tuesday Bible Study - Sr. Saints Fellowship
17	9:30 am	Home Extension Club Meeting
17	5:45 pm	Wednesday Night Meal
17	6:30 pm	Wednesday Night Midweek Services—Business Meeting
21		Sunday Services—Sanctity of Life Sunday
21	2:00 pm	March for Life
23	10:00 am	Tuesday Bible Study
24	5:45 pm	Wednesday Night Meal
24	6:30 pm	Wednesday Night Midweek Services
28		Sunday Services—
28	2:00 pm	Brandon & Brooklyn Bridges Baby Shower
30		Tuesday Bible Study
31	5:45 pm	Wednesday Night Meal
31	6:30 pm	Wednesday Night Midweek Services



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Recent videos of Zion Hill's Sunday services can be viewed at [www.zionhillcabot.com/sermons](http://www.zionhillcabot.com/sermons)

Robbie and I want to thank you for your cards, calls, gift cards, cash, cookies, and candy at Christmas. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated. May God bless each of you. We wish you all a very happy and blessed New Year.

Terry & Robbie Fortner

*Thank you*



# HAPPY NEW YEAR!

### Scholarship Opportunity

Check out Arkansas Baptist Foundation for various types of scholarship opportunities. Most have a deadline of February 1, 2024. [www.abf.org/scholarships/](http://www.abf.org/scholarships/)

### Wednesday Night Meals



5:45—6:15 pm Cost is only \$4.00 per person to help cover food costs. Plan on joining us for this fellowship meal before Bible Study each Wednesday. You'll get fed in body and in spirit!