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**Mizpah United Methodist Church on
K&Q Holiday Historic Church Tour**

The King and Queen Community Development Corporation (KQCD) has organized a holiday church tour featuring some of the oldest and most historic churches in King and Queen County. KQCD is presenting its first King and Queen Holiday Historic Church Tour on Saturday, December 6 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. This first tour focuses on churches in the Walkerton, St. Stephens Church and Bruington areas of the County including: Bethlehem Baptist (Bruington), Bruington Baptist (Bruington), Mizpah United Methodist (Walkerton), New Mount Zion Baptist (Walkerton) and Shepherds United Methodist (St. Stephens Church.) In future years KQCD would like to feature churches from different areas of the County.

For the past 126 years, Mizpah United Methodist Church, located at 6062 Canterbury Road, has served the Walkerton community. In 1882, Rev. Benjamin C. Spiller, pastor of the King and Queen Circuit, was invited to preach at the "Sunday School House." Preaching services were held on the first Sunday of the month and interest grew in building a church, encouraged by the Methodists. In the fall of 1882 Rev. Spiller organized a Sunday class and services were held in the Orange Grove Chapel. By 1884, a site in the Village of Walkerton became available and was purchased from Captain George P. Hudson and building began around September 1, 1884. The following year Rev. John W. Shackford selected Mizpah as the new name.

In 1964, a new education building was dedicated and by 1968, the Methodist Church joined the United Evangelical Brethren, and the local congregation became known as Mizpah United Methodist Church. The migration of church members to Richmond and death of members in the 1990s brought on a decline in membership and activities. The church gathered and continued to keep its doors open by finding ways to reduce its expenses. With the appointment of a part time pastor, Rev. Betty Jo Sims, in June 2005, enthusiasm began to grow. Not only has she led the congregation to make much needed improvements to the church's site such as sidewalks and lighting, together they continue to provide many needed items and services to the local community and beyond such as backpacks with school supplies for area children, Operation Christmas Child and medical mission trips to countries such as Belize and Nicaragua. Recently reaching its 125th anniversary, Mizpah is a community and mission minded church rich in history despite its small membership whose roots run strong and deep with dedication.

Tour tickets are \$10 per person and include admittance to all five churches on the tour. Children ages six and under are free. Tickets will become available for sale in October. For an additional fee, box lunches will be available at Bruington Baptist Church; however, the lunches must be pre-ordered through KQCD. The church tour will benefit KQCD and the Marriott School Restoration Project which is

the planned renovation of the Marriott School into a community/cultural arts center for residents of King and Queen County and the Middle Peninsula. Business sponsorships are available in support of the church tour. KQCD is pleased that the King and Queen County Historical Society is a sponsor for the church tour.

If you would like more information or would like to participate in or volunteer with KQCD and the historic church tour, please contact the KQCD office at 804-769-9656 or email info@kqcd.org. For more information about KQCD and the Marriott School Restoration Project, please visit www.kqcd.org.

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