



PRAISE. LISTEN. LOVE. SERVE.

Good News

December 2017

Month At-A-Glance

- December 3
 - ◇ Hanging of the Greens
 - ◇ Dinner
- December 10
 - ◇ Youth Lead Worship
 - ◇ Christmas Cantata
- December 17
 - ◇ Atlanta Band Concert
- December 24
 - ◇ Christmas Eve Services
 - 11 am worship
 - 5 pm Live Nativity
 - 5:30 pm Family/Candlelight Service
- December 26
 - ◇ Office Closed
- December 30
 - ◇ Family Promise Begins

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- How We Love 3-6
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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Advent is a time of waiting and preparing for new arrivals. Each year, Christian congregations around the world remember, celebrate, and relive the first time that God arrived into the world in the Christ-child. We festively decorate our homes and sanctuaries. We read about Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem and John the Baptist crying out in the wilderness. We sing sacred carols about Emmanuel, Wisemen, and animals that may or may not actually have been there. At MVPC, we even parade some of those animals through the sanctuary before lighting candles to represent the Light of Christ coming into the world.

In our homes and with our families, we have other traditions that we enjoy—maybe giving gifts, eating special meals, or just being together. I feel deep sadness about leaving MPVC and all of the people I love here. I feel a bit of anxiety, too, about serving in another congregation with people I do not yet know. (You were pretty scary to me at first, too.) However, it has been 25 years since I was able to spend Christmas Eve with my mother, sister, and brother in my hometown and go to the candlelight service at my home church, which I suddenly realize means that Joseph and Ben never have. So this year, the whole of three generations of Martins (minus my father and waiting for a new nephew or niece in January) will gather in Charlotte for Christmas for the very first time. Half of us are vegetarians now, so I guess that the Christmas Eve meal will be a little different, but in this uncertain time of waiting and preparing for a new job it is comforting to me that I will be with my family as I miss my church family at Mount Vernon and look hopefully to whatever God has in store for me in the future.

MVPC will be waiting and preparing, too. You will light your candles on Christmas Eve as you always do and someone will have to clean up after the sheep as they usually have to do and you will remember how God came into the world to be with us. You also will be waiting and preparing for an interim pastor and then for the next person God calls to be your installed pastor. There will be some uncertainty and maybe even a little anxiety, but I know this for sure: whomever God's Spirit moves to be the next pastor at MVPC will be blessed. I speak from experience. Thank you for being our family. I will be thinking of you on Christmas Eve and wondering with excitement what God has in store for you next.

Praise. Listen. Love. Serve. To the glory of God.

Youth Ministry

We went to our usual spot downtown to feed the homeless on November 5 and were overrun with people. I'm not sure we've ever given out that much food to that many people in that short of a time frame. We met some people like Micah, who was going to celebrate his 8th birthday living in the car with his parents and brother Ezekiel. We met Jasmine, who had been in Atlanta two days, but had already been assaulted and had all of her stuff stolen. We prayed with John, who had just gotten out of jail, and traded jokes with Manny. These people touch and move us so deeply, and we can't thank you enough for all of the support you all give this ministry!



LISTEN

On a lighter note, we had a great time with our Mall Scavenger Hunt! It's great that our group can enjoy each other so much.

“As disciples of Jesus Christ, we listen to scripture, tradition, one another, and the world in order to understand God’s will for us as individuals and as a community”

Thanks for all you do!
Elo



Children's Ministry

We are looking forward to all the Advent Festivities. Please read this month's Good news for details. A few highlights of the holiday season are the Hanging of the Greens service and the Children's Advent service. I hope you will join us for the Hanging of the Greens Dec. 3rd and the Children's Advent worship service at 9:00 on December 10th. If you child would like to participate please contact Meg Christian at meg.christian@comcast.net

Parenting information sessions and a new Sunday school class will begin in January. We will have more information about these opportunities in the MVPC weekly email and the Happenings.



LOVE

Presbyterian Women



Save the date! The PW Christmas dinner and program are on Tuesday, December 12th at 6:30 pm. The dinner is in Fellowship Hall and the program will follow in the Sanctuary. Tickets are \$10 and reservations can be made after service on December 3rd. An offering will be collected during the program to be given to the Community Assistance Center.

“As members of a family of faith, we strive to love one another unconditionally, sharing our joys and standing beside one another in our struggles”





“As members of a family of faith, we strive to love one another unconditionally, sharing our joys and standing beside one another in our struggles”

What is missing from this Photo?



Congratulations!

Congratulations to Bruce Hagenau, President of Metcam Inc., for winning Forsyth County's, “Small Manufacturer of the Year” award.

Visitor’s Sunday

TJ, Ricardo and Joe B. celebrating the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther’s 95 Theses at the Visitor Brunch in November.





On December 10, the Sanctuary Choir will be presenting *Christmas Cantata* by Steve Dobrogosz. Dobrogosz is a contemporary composer and jazz pianist who grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina, studied at the Berklee College of Music, and now resides in Stockholm, Sweden. *Christmas Cantata* is a vibrant piece ranging from joyful, up-tempo melodies to lush, meditative harmonies. No matter your preference in music, you will find this work exciting and accessible. Please join us as we celebrate Christ's birth through this piece.



“As members of a family of faith, we strive to love one another unconditionally, sharing our joys and standing beside one another in our struggles”

Concerns of the Congregation

In extended care: Margaret Blackley, Frances Couch, Lela Griffin, Doyne Michie, Lorraine Moore and Jack Ward. Please keep all of these individuals and their families in your prayers.



Youth Group Reunion

We are planning a Reunion for any and all folks who were involved in the Youth Group at MVPC for February 25 and 26, 2018. We are putting together a small committee to oversee the details, and would only involve a few meetings.

If you are interested, please e-mail Elizabeth at elizabeth@mvpchurch.org.

New Member

Amy Kiley has been the soprano section leader at MVPC for three years and got involved more deeply with our congregation right away, including being one of our very first ESL teachers. Amy is WABE's afternoon host of All Things Considered.



“As members of a family of faith, we strive to love one another unconditionally, sharing our joys and standing beside one another in our struggles”

Senior Adult Outing

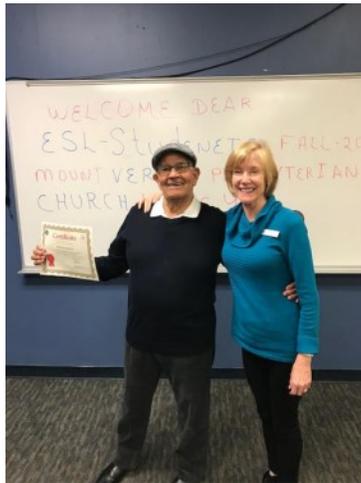


The Senior Adults are planning a visit to the Garden Lights – Holiday Nights exhibit at the Atlanta Botanical Garden on Tuesday, December 5. We will walk around and enjoy the various Holiday Lights displays and then have a bite to eat at the Longleaf Restaurant on the Garden grounds. Carpools will leave the church parking lot at 5:30 pm. If time permits, we will also visit the Gift Shop. Cost is \$10 per person plus the cost of your restaurant order. Please make your reservation with Pat Davis by Sunday, December 2. Telephone is 770-394-3254 or email at pdavisatlanta@aol.com.

Communion Offering

The Communion Offering for December is donations for the Santa Shop at the International Women's House, a shelter for abused refugee and immigrant women and their children. Most needed items are new, unwrapped toys and clothing for children of all ages from infants to teens. Target and Walmart gift cards are also appreciated by the teenagers. In addition, the shelter always has a need for household paper products, cleaning supplies, and grooming supplies (soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, hand lotion, etc.), Please place your donations in the baskets in the narthex on Sunday, December 3, or in the outreach bin near the church office at any time until December 13. Thank you for your generosity.

ESL Graduation



SERVE

“Moved by the Spirit, we serve our gracious God by taking that with which we have been blessed and turning it into blessings for others”

2017 First Cup Hospitality Needs You!

We are in need of a few great volunteers to help with the First Cup Hospitality Table on Sundays. The First Cup cart is kept loaded and ready in the Sacristy located behind the pulpit. Hospitality tables will already be set up in the Narthex. All that is needed is a simple set-up and clean up before the service. If you would be willing to help, you can sign up [online here](#) or email Christy Hill at christy.hill321@comcast.net Thank you!



We are blessed to ring in the new year with Family Promise guests this year. Our session begins on SATURDAY December 30 and runs through Sunday January 7. We need volunteers of all types: food, hosting, supplies, setting up and more. Please go to <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a054daba92ca20-december4> to see how you can help. What a great way to start the new year--by helping others. If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Hagenau.

Williams' Zambia Scholarship



SERVE

“Moved by the Spirit, we serve our gracious God by taking that with which we have been blessed and turning it into blessings for others”

As you know for the past 3 years MVPC has provided scholarships for outstanding graduates of Helen DeVos Christian School in Zambia who wanted to go to college; had the ability and preparation but did not have the funds. We started with one student 3 years ago (who graduated in the Summer of this year, 2017) and now have a total of 7 students enrolled in College in Zambia. Following is a recent letter from a student expressing their thanks and providing information about their progress. Ann and I thank you for your past support and hope you will continue that support this coming fall as we ramp up the effort to underwrite tuition for these students for year 2018.

If you would like additional information, please contact me at 404-245-6749 or aswilliams@bellsouth.net. One can determine by reading these letters that lives are being improved and dramatically changed. May God continue to bless this effort.

Thank you,

Stan Williams

Dear sponsor,

My very humble greetings, hoping and trust that you are well. It's an amazing opportunity to tell you on these wonderful and amazing times that am having at college.

The semester has been so great though too occupied with work, assignments and exams. Studies are getting tougher every semester but I am going to make it with my great enthusiasm. It's an amazing adventure next semester, I will be known as the senior most at the campus, I am so glad and have been doing my favorite courses which are gynecology, pediatrics, surgery and internal medicine. My end of semester final exams commences on 22nd May 2017 to 3rd June. Thereafter I will be going for my attachments, this time my job includes screening at the casualty I am really excited I can't wait to go for attachments .I will still get in touch for more updates on my attachment experience. I really love you. You have made my dream come true; I wish you could see me how grateful I am. May the Lord through Jesus Christ bless you indeed for touching many lives.

Thank you for your support and for shaping my future.

Yours Faithfully,
VANDETTA MULENGA,
V.M.

Garden Hill Scholarship

Last year, we sent 22 Zambian students to high school and this year we are trying to send even more. One of the students donations would benefit is 19 year-old Steven Miti. Steven is currently in 11th grade and plans to pursue a medical degree after high school.

“Growing up in a less privileged community has not only offered financial and academic challenges, on the contrary it has also helped me realize the value of education”, laments Steven Miti, a boy aged 19. He started his grade one to grade seven at Garden Presbyterian Community School, one of the Faith works Primary schools located in Garden Compound in Lusaka, Zambia.

Currently Steven is doing his eleventh grade at Garden Hill Secondary School. His favorite subject is Science. Steven’s plan is to go to a university to pursue a medical course. The teachers at his current school give him hope and inspire him a lot by persuading him to work hard in school. Other things that interest him are sporting activities, football in particular as he is a football player on the school team, and prayers which are offered.

Steven extends his gratitude to all individuals, stakeholders and other sponsors who contribute towards his education, not forgetting his parents for their tireless efforts. On his own he could not pay them but its only God who is ‘All Knowing’ to reward them.

“My future dream is to help other less privileged children in my community because I believe in myself and this is reality”, adds Steven.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the education of Steven and others. The new school year begins in January. If you would like to contribute to the fund for Garden Presbyterian School students attending high school at Garden Hill, you can do so through the church's pay pal account at <https://mvpchurch.org/give/> designating the Garden Hill fund.

Visit the Garden Hill website, <https://highschoolforzambia.wixsite.com/gardenhill> , to learn more.



2017 Session Members and Ministry Teams

Adult

Mary McClurg
Pat Davis
Donna Martin

Intergenerational

Daniel Schafer
Ann Williams

Outreach

Wendy Hagenau
Quinton Fisher
Gill Hutt

Children

Heidi Nelson
Hannah Hagenau

Finance/Administration

John Allen
Lisa McGuire

Youth

Brad Hahn

Congregational Care

Cathy Austin
Joy Carden
Ann Addison

Witness

Leigh Thompson

Stewardship

Wit Truitt

Strategic Planning

Barbara Hughes
Donna Neumann

Worship

Katherine Koops
Christy Hill

Clerk of Session

Malinda Holmes

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| | | | | | 1 Coffee Ministry 6:30 am | 2 Cantata Choir Rehearsal 9 am Admission Open House 12:30 pm |
| 3 Language Classes 2:45 pm Hanging of the Greens 5 pm Dinner 6 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7 pm | 4 Bible Study 10 am | 5 PW-CT 10 am Prayer Time 10 am | 6 Bible Study 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm | 7 | 8 Coffee Ministry 6:30 am PW Book Circle 10 am | 9 LNP: School 8 am Dance 12 pm Soccer 12 pm Girl Scouts 1:30pm |
| 10 Advent Celebration 9:00 am Advent Cantata 11 am PW Circle 12 pm Language Classes 2:45 pm Compassionate Friends 7 pm | 11 Finance Admin. 6:30 pm | 12 PW Christmas Dinner 5 pm <u>Good News Deadline</u> | 13 Bible Study 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm - | 14 | 15 Coffee Ministry 6:30 am | 16 LNP: School 8 am Dance 12 pm Soccer 12 pm Girl Scouts 1:30pm |
| 17 Language Classes 2:45 pm Atlanta Band Concert 4 pm Handbell Rehearsal 7 pm | 18 Magic Club 6 pm | 19 Worship Planning 7 pm | 20 Bible Study 6:30 pm Choir 7:30 pm <u>Good News Published</u> | 21 | 22 Coffee Ministry 6:30 am MVPS Break Begins | 23 |
| 24 Christmas Eve | 25 Christmas Day | 26 Church Office Closed | 27 Bible Study 6:30 pm | 28 LNP Board Meeting 6:30 pm | 29 Coffee Ministry 6:30 am | 30 Family Promise Begins |
| 31 Worship 11 am only | | | | | | |

December Birthdays

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------|-------|--------------------|--------|------------------|--------|--------------------|--------|
| Steve Ray | 1-Dec | Catherine Bathgate | 9-Dec | Callum Lever | 15-Dec | Charlie Grove | 24-Dec |
| Margo Gray | 2-Dec | Gerald Fudge | 9-Dec | Debbie Anderson | 17-Dec | Moira O'Hare | 26-Dec |
| Bob Martin | 3-Dec | Gil Hastings | 9-Dec | John Chesnutt | 17-Dec | Lela Griffin | 27-Dec |
| Angie Ponsell | 3-Dec | Dara Chesnutt | 10-Dec | Audra Kapsaraoff | 17-Dec | Patsy Plumly | 28-Dec |
| Linda Young | 6-Dec | Tom Hughes | 10-Dec | Celia Gray | 19-Dec | Bob Addison | 29-Dec |
| Wit Truitt III | 7-Dec | Ross Mielke | 10-Dec | Bryan McClintock | 19-Dec | Annabelle Carberry | 29-Dec |
| Beth Tyler | 7-Dec | Lisa Grove | 12-Dec | Matthew McAdam | 20-Dec | Peggy Dobbs | 29-Dec |
| Karl Hagenau | 8-Dec | Rachel Hudgins | 13-Dec | Heidi Anderson | 21-Dec | Ross Spain | 30-Dec |
| Malinda Holmes | 8-Dec | Madison Zang | 14-Dec | Nicholas Peji | 22-Dec | Ryan Sawyer | 31-Dec |

December 3 Advent I/Hanging of Greens

SCRIPTURE: Mark 13:24-37
 THEME: Get Woke

10:00 THISunday Activities

- Childcare:** (Sanctuary Building 120)
Children: (Sanctuary Building 104)
Youth: (Gailey Hall)
Adult:
1. **Feasting on the Word** (Chapel-David Hill)
Bible Study on the passage of the day.
 2. **Talking Back to the Preacher** (Joe B.'s Office)
Explore the theme of the day a little deeper, ask the preacher questions, or give feedback on any part of the worship service.
 3. **Estudios Bíblicos en Español** (Session Room)

December 10 Advent II Children lead (9:00)/Cantata (11:00)

SCRIPTURE: Various Nativity Readings
 THEME: Advent

10:00 THISunday Activities

- Adult:**
1. **Feasting on the Word** (Chapel-Pat Davis)
Bible Study on the passage of the day.
 2. **Estudios Bíblicos en Español** (Session Room)
 3. **Advent Celebration** (Fellowship Hall)
Children and Youth participating in the 9:00 Advent Service are invited to gather for refreshments and celebration.

December 17 Advent III

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
 THEME: The Reason for the Incarnation

10:00 THISunday Activities

- Childcare:** (Sanctuary Building 120)
Children: (Sanctuary Building 104)
Youth: (Gailey Hall)
Adult:
1. **What a Rabbi Has to Say About Isaiah 61** (Chapel)
The engaging Rabbi Ellen Nemhauser has a deep passion for interfaith discussions and will help us understand a Jewish perspective on this passage that Christians tend to associate with Advent.
 2. **Family Promise Volunteer Training** (Session Room)
If you have yet to be trained as a Family Promise volunteer or need a refresher, join our Family Promise leaders and learn how we serve homeless children and their families.

December 24 Advent IV/Christmas Eve 11:00 Service Only

SCRIPTURE: Various
 THEME: Lessons and Carols

10:00 THISunday Activities

None

December 31 (11:00 Only) Ricardo Preaching

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2:22-40
 THEME: Christmas Is Just the Beginning

10:00 THISunday Activities

None



“As children of God, we seek to praise God in worship and in all that we say and do”



471 Mt. Vernon Hwy, NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Return Service Requested

Got News? We'd love to hear from you! Send us your news so we can celebrate, laugh, and/or cry with you. After all, we are FAMILY. Deadline for news is the 15th of each month for the *next month's* newsletter. Send your submissions to lauren@mvpchurch.org. *If you'd no longer wish to receive the Good News monthly, please email Jill at jill@mvpchurch.org.*

+++
**Good
News!**

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church Staff

| | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Dr. Joe B. Martin, IV | <i>Pastor</i> | joeb@mvpchurch.org |
| Elizabeth Small | <i>Dir. of Youth Ministry</i> | elizabeth@mvpchurch.org |
| Rev. Jodi Martin | <i>Dir. of Children's Ministry</i> | jodi@mvpchurch.org |
| Rev. Ricardo Green | <i>Pastor of Spanish Ministry</i> | ricardo@mvpchurch.org |
| Steve Ray | <i>Business Administrator</i> | steve@mvpchurch.org |
| Jill Thompson | <i>Administrative Assistant</i> | jill@mvpchurch.org |
| Lauren McClintock | <i>Communications Coordinator</i> | lauren@mvpchurch.org |
| Yvonne White | <i>Financial Secretary</i> | yvonne@mvpchurch.org |
| TJ Shirley | <i>Minister of Worship & Arts</i> | tjs@mvpchurch.org |
| Nick Johns-Cooper | <i>Organist</i> | nicodemous@mac.com |
| Lilly Cook | <i>Handbell Choir Director</i> | lillynote@comcast.net |

