



Good News

April 2020

Month At-A-Glance

April 5
Palm Sunday
Online Worship
Service 11am

April 9
Maundy Thursday
Online Worship
Service 7pm

April 10
Good Friday Online
Worship Service 7pm

April 12
Easter Sunday Online
Worship Services
Sunrise 7am
11am

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic all activities have been canceled until further notice.

Taize and Stewardship

Friends, as we live into this new reality, I want to invite you to seek peace amid the stresses we face. To that end, what you find below is a sample *Taize* practice. This is a spiritual practice based in the mountain community of Taize, France. It is a service rooted in healing and wholeness, seeking solace and centering oneself with God. If you choose to do this, I invite you to do it in a dimly lit room, perhaps with candles. If you have a computer, I suggest typing the titles of the songs into YouTube followed by "Taize" where you can learn the melodies. If you do not have a computer, no worries, just say them aloud intentionally. The songs are meant to be chanted multiple times, over and over, in a calm, soothing fashion. This practice can be alone or with family. God's peace be upon you.

Prepare yourself by sitting, focus on your breath, allow the Holy Spirit to dwell.

Song: Bless the Lord

*Bless the Lord my soul, and bless God's holy name.
Bless the Lord my soul, who leads me into life.*

Read a Psalm (121, 46, 23, 24, 118 are really good)

Read from the Gospel (or a Favorite Passage; Matthew 5: 1-11, Luke 9: 28-36, John 1: 1-14)

Song: In the Lord I'll Be Ever Thankful

Continued on page 2....

In the Lord, I'll be ever thankful, in the Lord I will rejoice.

Look to God, do not be afraid.

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

Lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

Silence (Start with a minute, try to work your way up to 10 minutes)

Prayer of Intercession (Offer to God your petitions aloud, if you are with people, let each person offer in turn), and conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

Song: Jesus, Remember Me

Jesus, remember me. When you come into your kingdom.

Jesus, remember me. When you come into your kingdom.

Amen.

The practice usually takes 20-30 minutes. Other songs are:

O Lord, Hear My Prayer

O Lord, hear my prayer.

O Lord, hear my prayer.

When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer.

O Lord, hear my prayer.

Come, and listen to me.

Give Peace

Give peace to every heart.

Give peace to every heart.

Give peace, Lord

Give peace

Give peace, Lord

Stay With Me

Stay with me, remain with me.

Watch and pray,

Watch and pray.

Finally, I hesitate to write this because of the uncertainty that faces all of us, but I hope you will continue to give to the best of your ability. If you are comfortable giving online, you can go to our church's website, mvpchurch.org, and click on the "Giving" tab at the top. Or you can send checks to the church via postal mail. If you have any questions, please contact our financial secretary, Yvonne White, at yvonne@mvpchurch.org. We are thankful for whatever you can provide and give thanks to God for your stewardship that comes in forms far beyond treasure.

Blessings to you, your family, our nation, and our world.

Peace,

Barrett

WAYS TO GIVE

ONLINE



<https://mvpchurch.org/give/>

MAIL



**Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church
471 Mount Vernon Hwy NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328**

We will start with praise!! Pamela Wall has gratitude for finally being released from oncology care after 12 years of chemotherapy, 13 surgeries, and oral medication!!! So happy for Pamela! God is very good.

Linda Bhame—Recovering from back surgery

Kirk Pumphrey—296 Jack Thomas Dr.

Manchester, TN 37355

Inez Cole—Recovering at home following surgery

Family of Karl Hagenau—Karl passed away on 2/20. His service is TBD.

Family of Evelyn Allen—Evelyn passed away on 3/13. Her service is TBD.

Family of former member, Barbara Harms. Barbara passed away on 2/23.

Family of Mount Vernon School teacher and coach, Ron Hill. Ron passed away on 3/24.

Prayers for the containment, cure, and proper protocol for the Coronavirus.

Please keep these individuals and their families in your prayers.



Session Report

March 22, 2020

The Session held a called meeting on Sunday, March 22 at 12:30pm. The meeting took place virtually so the Session could formulate and implement the church's response to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Rev. Barrett Abernethy opened the meeting with prayer and inquired with the Session how they and their families were doing. All Session members informed that they and their families were doing well.

Rev. Abernethy then offered a brief devotional inspired by former MVPC Parish Associate Doyne Michie.

Then Rev. Abernethy invited the Session to decide what the church schedule would be going forward. The Session voted to not allow in-person church activities until public health officials determined it is safe for groups to congregate.

Pastoral Care: Elder Joy Carden reported that she and Rev. Abernethy had developed a plan to divide the church directory and maintain contact with our church members throughout the duration of this crisis. Top priority would be given to the elderly members, but each member family would be reached out to every 1-2 weeks.

Worship: Rev. Abernethy and Matthias Young, will continue to coordinate online worship. Elders Dale Morine and Wendy Hagenau offered ideas for how we can continue to improve the online worship experience.

Finance/Administration: Elders Charlie Gray and Wit Truitt reviewed the balance sheet with the Session, and emphasized that we ask our members to continue giving within their means via online or postal mail since we cannot meet physically for corporate worship.

Outreach: Elder Carol Beckman informed the body that outreach is concentrating on what we can do right now. She stated a food collection bin is set up outside the office door at the church for people to assist the food bank. She also stated due to the church's support, the Clifton sanctuary has enough food to last through the middle of the next week.

Christian Education: Elder Carrie Southard is exploring ideas about how we can support our children during Easter. The church is also sending out free materials through Illustrated Children's Ministry. This resource can be found in our weekly email.

Youth: Elders Bryce Cumming and Jon Barber agreed to work with Rev. Abernethy to hold a video conference with the Youth to discuss how we can support them and talk about where God is in this pandemic.

Personnel: Elder Donna Neumann and Rev. Barrett Abernethy updated the Session on how church employees are working from home and commuting in only on an as needed basis.

Witness: Elders John Hibbard and MacKenzie Truitt are reaching out to our frequent visitors for the duration of the pandemic.

Elder David Barclift gave a brief report on the progress made by the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee.

Session members then gave a few prayer requests and Rev. Abernethy closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

March 15-25	Actual	Actual YTD	2020 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$15,740	\$104,562	\$439,217
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$435	\$7,365	\$80,000
2020 Prepaid Pledges	\$0	\$21,983	\$21,983
Loose Offerings	\$0	\$1,929	\$15,000
Total for week	\$16,175	\$135,839	\$556,200

On March 1-3, Hannah Hagenau and Kate Christian were fortunate to be part of a group of Mount Vernon students to visit Zambia and particularly Garden Presbyterian School and Church and Garden Hill School. Hannah and her friend, Katieann Peterson had planned the trip last year while Hannah was still a student. The trip was a very condensed version of the trip Hannah took with the church in 2017. The school approved it and allowed Hannah to go as an alumni chaperone. Kate Christian has wanted to go to Zambia since she was a little girl and heard Barbara's stories of the Zambian children.



Kate Christian & Friend

Hannah and Kids

**Hannah and Kate
with Pastor Jane**



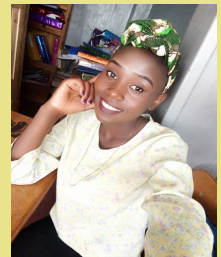
As many of you know, Hannah has been running the Garden Hill Scholarship program for five years with the help of Katieanne. During their time in Zambia the group spent a day playing games and hanging out with the Garden Presbyterian School seventh graders. This was Kate Christian's first visit to Zambia, and she loved playing with the kids. The kids braided her hair and they did each other's nails. Seventh grade is the final year of primary school and secondary school starts in eighth grade. Because of this we expect several of the kids we met to be on scholarship in the upcoming years. We were pleasantly surprised when several current and former students on scholarship showed up to participate in games and get to meet us. One of these students was Steven Miti, who was our first graduate of the program. He is currently in his final year of studying fashion in college (sponsored by Stan Williams' fund) and runs his own clothing and accessory line. He was very excited to show off several bags that he had handmade and to tell us that he is applying to schools outside of Zambia to further his education and career. We also had the opportunity to attend church on Sunday at Garden Pres. led by Rev. Jane Nyirongo. It was a beautiful service. The music was great, and the people are so friendly. On Monday, we were given the opportunity to visit Garden Hill High School and meet several more students currently on scholarship, including two seniors: Gift Kaoma and Freddie Musonda. Gift wants to pursue a degree in business and eventually wants to be a business owner here in the U.S. Freddie wants to pursue a degree in engineering. These students were amazing to get to talk to and we could not be more proud of them. You should know the kids are SO appreciative of everything we do for the church and school—from bathrooms to scholarships!

Submitted by,

Wendy Hagenau



LETTERS FROM TWO RECENT COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP GRADUATES



Dear Sponsor,

Greetings to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am Victoria Mwansa a former student at Helen Devos Christian School but also a proud partaker of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church college sponsorship.

First and foremost, I would like to thank God for his never-ending love and protection that he has for me and my family. To my sponsor, it is with great joy I write to you about the impact of your support; if not for your help I wouldn't have managed my course. It has been a great journey since 2017 when I started my course until now, 2020, when I am about to hold a graduation ceremony. My last examinations in 2019 went smoothly. Early childhood education is an interesting course and challenging too, but with your huge and heartily support everything went well because I was learning freely without any debt in terms of tuition fees. This motivated me to study hard. Thank you for shaping my life, only God can reward you. May the Lord enlarge your territory for putting a smile on my face when I completely had no hope of where my help would come from, but God brought you in my life and made the way for me that can never be closed, thank you once again. The year 2019 was a great year because I learnt a lot during my teaching practice from my mentors.

Thank you for your great generosity through Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church. I greatly appreciate your love and sacrifice, this indeed is true love. Your help won't be in vain because through this knowledge obtained, I will be able to help so many people in my community and country at large.

Your support is invaluable to me, thank you once more, may God richly bless you and also touch your life in His own special way, just like you did to me.

[The Zambian College Scholarship Program](#) gives priority for enrollment to orphans and children from low-income households. If you wish to contribute please make the check payable to MVPC for "Zambia college scholarships" in the memo line and send to Yvonne White, church treasurer, or drop in the collection plate. Thank you for your generosity. For more info. please call Stan Williams at 404-245-6749 or email aswilliams@bellsouth.net.



TANANGACHI – HDCS GRADUATE

Tanangachi Mvula is one of the privileged students under the Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church college sponsorship program. He graduated last year 2019 as the best graduating student with a Distinction in the faculty of Social Sciences, studied Development Studies. Tanangachi started out from faith works community schools at True Gospel from grade one through grade seven.

Tanangachi was accepted into Grade 8 at the Helen Devos Christian School where he was from Grade 8 through 12. His educational journey did not end with the grade 12 National Examinations, in which he performed extremely well, but he never ceased to seek sponsorship to further his studies. He knew he could never manage on his own. After graduating from HDCS, it took two years before he was identified to be part of the college sponsorship program.

During the time he was waiting for sponsorship to college, he discovered his inbuilt potential for carpentry and developed it. Even during his four years at the Cavendish University, he always took time to practice carpentry until he became quite skilled at it. People now give him orders for TV Stands, coffee tables, bookshelves, kitchen units etc. So, even as he is looking for a stable and formal job, he is also establishing himself into the business world using what he has learnt in his developmental studies at the university.

As a Carpenter he is planning to establish a business and probably employ other youths who have qualifications in the field in the future when he will have enough resources to support the initiative. The carpentry business is inconsistent because of less machinery and resources, but of course it is helpful in making him busy and gives him something to do while he is looking for a stable job. He is hopeful it would translate into something tangible and beneficial to a lot of people if it had sufficient resources which he hopes to invest in once he gets a stable source of income.

Tanangachi reminisces much about his time with True Gospel in Grade 1 through to his time at HDCS in Grade 12. He is very grateful for the affordable yet high quality education which he received from these institutions and which led to him having a university degree. He knows for sure that he could never have come this far without the support of Mt. Vernon Presbyterian. Now the future looks better and brighter!





The Stephen Ministry offers a few suggestions for keeping calm in a crisis:

1. Be prepared. Having the necessary staples and paper products makes one feel survival is possible. Share with neighbors by drop off at door.
2. Be positive. As Christians, we have a loving, protecting, healing God. Re-read and depend on His promises and pray for safety. Share your confidence with those you talk to who are despairing and pessimistic.
3. Be proactive. Follow the guidelines of public health and government officials. Stay hydrated and healthy. Do light exercise in your home each day. Get a full night's sleep. Practice social distancing and shelter at home policies when recommended. Employ deep breathing when anxious thoughts invade to quickly send them off.
4. Be productive with your time. If working at home, do it with the same dedication as at the office. If at home alone or with family, set a healthy routine. Daily projects like shredding, cleaning the garage and closets, getting a box of clothes together for charity and finishing taxes are worthy goals. End each day by yourself or with your family in a prayer of gratitude.
5. Be present for others. Each day pray for, call, send a text, make a grocery trip for others. Use this time as a friend and family bonding time. Practice really listening to each other. Pray for our world and our leaders. We are in this together.
6. Make it possible for all to be safe and to succeed. Pay your house cleaner Not to come. Give donations to organizations. Order items and take-out from small businesses to help them survive. When this is over, redouble those efforts to help them recoup.

In April, several Stephen Ministers will again be available to help church and community with companionship and comfort during a time of conflict. Please call our pastor, the church office, or Stephen Leader, Pat Barte.

If you are interested in returning to this ministry or becoming a new Stephen Minister, we welcome you. We especially would like having another male minister available. Please contact Pat Barte for an application and to set up an interview. If we have at least four people apply, we will have classes in the fall.

In June and July, Stephen Ministers plan to be available after the combined service to answer any questions and to hand out applications.

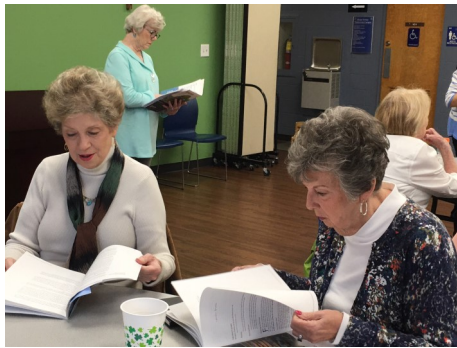


Thank you to all of our volunteers that helped out in March!

We are hopeful that the current health crisis will have run its course by the time we are scheduled to have our next session. Please be assured our families who are in the program at the moment are being well cared for and best practices are in place to keep them as safe as possible during this very stressful period in their lives.

Our next session will be two weeks long. Our four families will be with us from July 5, 2020 to July 19, 2020.

If you have any questions or would like to add your name to our email list please email: familypromisatlanta@gmail.com or see Moira Speirs .



Presbyterian Women

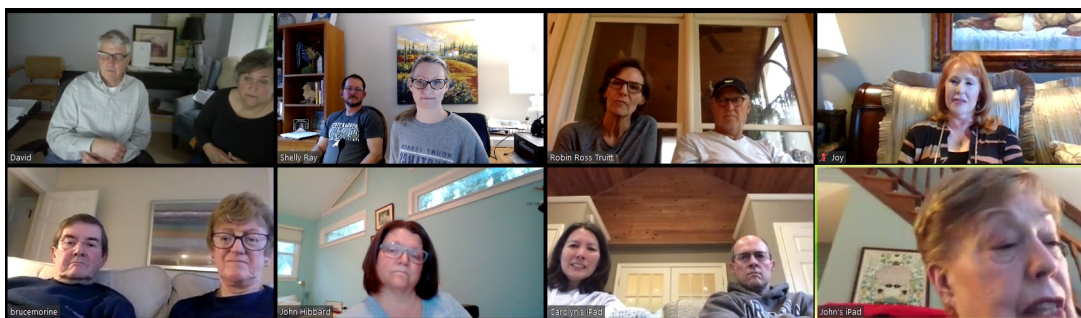
The Day Circle and the Sunday Circle met in March and studied, *Eighth Word: Do Not Steal*, in our Bible study, *Loved Carved in Stone*. The Book Circle met on March 13 and reviewed *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens.

We also said a fond farewell for Sylvia McAdam. She will be missed!

[If viewing online, download a pdf copy of the PW Spring 2020 Newsletter here.](#)

Virtual Days

Pastor Barrett (and sometimes Evie) now brings a Mount Vernon Moment each weekday on Facebook at noon, live from his home. Be sure to tune in!



Be on the lookout for more information on Virtual days.



ONLINE HOLY WEEK

April 5 - Palm Sunday Service
11:00 a.m.

April 9 - Maundy Thursday
Service 7:00 p.m.

April 10 - Good Friday
Service 7:00 p.m.



EASTER
ONLINE
HE IS RISEN

While these times call for social distancing, we can still worship together. Join us for our online Holy Week worship times. If viewing online, [click here](#).

We will have TWO online Easter worship services! Gather the family, share with a friend and join us online this Easter at <https://mvpchurch.org/livestream-worship/> or on our Facebook page. Let's not let the social distancing stop us from worshipping Our Risen Savior!

To my Mount Vernon Family:

Every day, I see this beautiful blue banner signed by many members of MVPC. Each time Every time I look at what you all have written, I am comforted and cheered beyond measure.

When I read the greetings, I can actually envision the person who wrote them. Kind of like going on a visit back to the church and seeing everyone in person. It is definitely like a big hug from the church.

It is so nice to know Sam and Mary are saving my place on the pew. I don't know what I would do if I had to find another place in the sanctuary. We all know the 'Frozen Chosen' don't like change.

I can't thank everyone enough for all the cards and thoughts and prayers you all sent. Your good wishes cheer me up immensely. I also want to thank those who took time to visit me at Emory and Manor Care in Marietta. Maneuvering around Emory and Briarcliff and battling Johnson Ferry / Cobb county traffic was above and beyond the call of duty.

I have come a long way since the stroke in September. Transitioning from a walker to a cane, now I can walk unaided a little less than 1/4 mile. I sometimes feel like I am walking like Chester on Gunsmoke... but at least I am walking. I only wonder how I will manage the slope in the sanctuary floor as I go down for communion. I may need to hold on to a pew or two on the way down. I would hate to tumble, as that would be most embarrassing; on the other hand, the church would then be able to use a new slogan 'Come to Mount Vernon - you'll fall for our communion'. Sorry, that was bad. Like my brother Brian says "too bad the stroke did not impact your sense of humor".

Thank you Joy, Elizabeth, Barrett and everyone else for continually reaching out to keep in touch.

With love,

Kirk

What a joy to have guest preacher, Rev. Aisha Brooks-Lytle bring the message "Don't Grow Weary" on March 1, here at Mount Vernon.





2020 Session Members and Ministry Teams

Christian Education
Carrie Southard

Senior Adults
Mary Kilgore

Fellowship
David Barclift

Outreach
Carol Beckman
Brent Schwieger

Finance/Administration
Charlie Gray

Stewardship
Wit Truitt

Youth
Jon Barber
Bryce Cumming

Congregational Care
Joy Carden

Witness
John Hibbard
Mackenzie Truitt

Worship
Wendy Hagenau
Dale Morine

Clerk of Session
David Hill

Moderator
Rev. Barrett Abernethy



Do you feel a need for prayer?
Have our Prayer Vine pray for you!
Email your requests to
prayerrequests@mvpchurch.org
or call the church office at
404-255-2211.



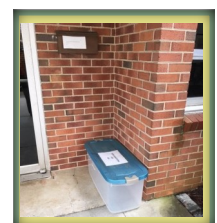
The April Communion Offering will be for Clifton Homeless Shelter, a Presbyterian affiliated ministry for which MVPC provides financial support, volunteers, and meals. For more than 40 years, Clifton has provided housing, food, and supportive care to men seeking to overcome homelessness with priority given to men over the age of 35 with underlying health conditions such as diabetes and hypertension. For more information about Clifton, go online to cliftonsanctuary.com. Most needed items include laundry and dish detergent, paper towels, bathroom tissue, household cleaning supplies, and items for sack lunches (paper bags, ziplock sandwich bags, granola bars, chips, and cookies). Grocery store gift cards are also welcome. Please place your donations in the outreach bin near the church office any time during the month of April. Thank you for your generosity.



The One Great Hour of Sharing Offering, one of four annual special offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA), will be received on Easter Sunday, April 12. Proceeds from this offering go to General Assembly of the PC(USA) to fund programs such as Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (relief to those affected by natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, tornados, and hurricanes), Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self Development of People.

The food pantry at the **Community Assistance Center** has an urgent need for non-perishable foods to distribute to needy families in our area. In the past two weeks, requests for assistance have increased dramatically while donations are down. "There is a donation bin outside the entrance door to the office wing of the church building." If you are able, please drop off a bag of canned goods at any time.

For more information and the latest list of "most needed" items, please check CAC's website at ourcac.org.



Volunteers Needed

The Worship Ministry Team is looking for volunteers to serve as Funeral/Memorial Service Coordinators. These Coordinators will work with the church staff, contact ushers and arrive before the family and stay after on the day of the service. Full responsibilities are available by e-mail. Please consider volunteering for this position that will be a gift to families who have lost a loved one by making the day of remembrance run smoothly.

Contact Malinda Holmes malinda128.holmes@gmail.com, Clarice Elder cpelder@bellsouth.net, or Beppie Lever beppielever@earthlink.net if you are interested.

Do you attend the 11:00 service? If so, then you can help usher! The 11:00 service is in need of additional ushers. It does not take much time but is really important to the worship experience. Ushers are divided into teams and each team ushers four months of the year. It is a really easy way to be involved in the life of the church. For more information or to volunteer please contact Wendy Hagenau or Clarice Elder.

Drivers will be needed for the 11:00 service when church resumes normal business hours. They would pick up attendees from Mount Vernon Towers and take them back after church. Contact Joy Carden at pjcarden@bellsouth.net.

April

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3	4
5 Holy Week Begins Palm Sunday Online Service 11am	6	7 PW CT Meeting 10am-SR CE Meeting 7pm-SR	8	9 Maundy Thursday Online Service 7pm	10 Good Friday Online Service 7pm	11
12 Easter Sunrise Online Service 7am Online Worship Service 11am	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Online Worship 11am	20	21 Newsletter Deadline	22	23	24	25
26 Online Worship 11am	27	28	29	30 Newsletter Published		

April Birthdays

David Earhart	2-Apr	Elizabeth Earhart	13-Apr
Jeanne Gilliland	2-Apr	Iva Corbin	15-Apr
Melinda Carden	3-Apr	Linda Thomas	15-Apr
Mary Minotto	3-Apr	Lisa McGuire	17-Apr
Trent Ballard	4-Apr	Gene Elder	18-Apr
James McGuire	8-Apr	Margaret Blackley	19-Apr
Marie Packer	9-Apr	Thomas W. Hughes	19-Apr
Wyatt Simcox	9-Apr	Tami Lewis	20-Apr
Meg Smith	9-Apr	Halle Hagenau	20-Apr
Sharon Murphy	11-Apr	Evelyn Ufere	21-Apr
Mary Smith	11-Apr	Brooke Bliss	23-Apr
Mary Frances Walker	11-Apr	Clarice Elder	26-Apr
Walt Walker	11-Apr	Patricia Hibbard	29-Apr
Ty McCormick	12-Apr	Claire Shepherd	29-Apr
Stan Williams	12-Apr	Nancy Nutter	30-Apr
Herb Young	12-Apr		



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

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

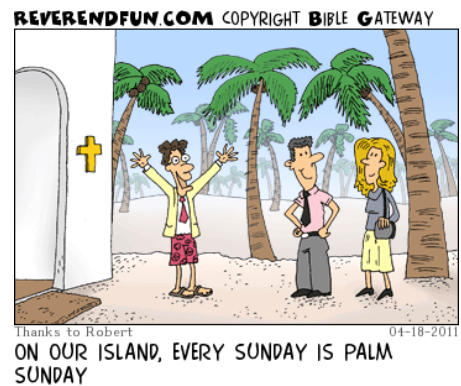
Return Service Requested

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 third Tuesday of each month for the *next month's* newsletter. Send your submissions to terri@mvpchurch.org. *If you'd no longer wish to receive the Good News monthly, please email Debbie at debbie@mvpchurch.org.*

Good News!

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church Staff

Rev. Barrett Abernethy	Pastor	barrett@mvpchurch.org
Matthias Young	Music Director	matthias@mvpchurch.org
Steve Ray	Church Finance and Operations	steve@mvpchurch.org
Debbie Nysewander	Administrative Assistant	debbie@mvpchurch.org
Terri Clayton	Communications Coordinator	terri@mvpchurch.org
Yvonne White	Financial Secretary	yvonne@mvpchurch.org



www.mvpchurch.org
facebook.com/mountvernonpresbyterianchurch/
Instagram: [mvp_church](https://instagram.com/mvp_church)