



Good News

June/July 2020

Month

At-A-Glance

June 7
Summer Sunday
School Begins

June 10
Taize Online
Service 7pm

June 21
Los Niños
Sunday

July 3
Church Office
Closed

July 5-19
Family Promise
hosted at St.
Luke's

July 8
Taize Worship
Experience

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



Our Summer Sunday School classes will kick off on June 7. If you would like to join, Pastor Barrett will be leading Presbyterian 101.

Contact Debbie@mvpchurch.org and Terri@mvpchurch.org to register.



Join us the 2nd Wednesday of each month for a Taize Online Worship Experience at 7 pm via Zoom.

Dear Mount Vernon Family,

Back in March when your Church Session made the difficult decision to suspend in-person worship, I began the letter by sharing a quote from Presbyterian Pastor William Sloane Coffin, “The world is too dangerous for anything but truth and too small for anything but love.” As much as life has changed since I first offered you those words, their meaning rings just as true as they did then.

Here is the truth: over the past several weeks, your Worship Ministry Team has thoughtfully and compassionately discerned what a process for reimagining worship in this new normal might look like. These discussions have been honest, raw, and laborious. We have asked difficult questions of what worship can and cannot look like and admittedly, at times, have lamented at some of the procedures we will strongly encourage you to adhere to in the worship setting. Through it all, however, we have enthusiastically shared our hopes for connecting and finding community in a myriad of ways for the present as well as going forward.

At this time, we don’t have any concrete processes in place. We believe to give you such a document would be futile because we are constantly gleaning new information about what a safe and socially responsible worship service would look like. Rest assured though that we are heeding the guidance of public health experts and the scientific community. We are pleased that the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta has come out with their suggestions to support faith communities. We will look to this document for inspiration when we formally compose our procedures. Please feel free to access that document here [\(link\)](#).

Here is the love: each of you are a child of God. As of this writing, I have reached out to more than 150 households within our faith community. That does not include the emails, text messages, and social media interactions I have had with you since this all began. Through these connections, I have listened to your voices as we have laughed, cried, expressed angst, and prayed together. I have heard your longing to gather, but also a desire to gather in a manner that values health and well-being first and foremost. Thank you for living the gospel truth in love to serve the least of these. For while the world wrestles with when to open as largely a question of economic viability, we in the church must examine this question from a moral perspective. That is why our answers must be based in love.

For the past several weeks we have had your previous pastors conclude on our online worship services with a few words of encouragement. It has been a joy to see each of these faithful people reconnect with you in the manner they once did. What has linked these messages has been the expression of gladness they each revealed. You could tell how their experiences at Mount Vernon molded the hearts of these clergy and the way that still influences them today. This pandemic will mark our collective ministry together. No matter how long this season lasts or how long I am here as your pastor, I believe this will define our relationship. As such, I want you to see the values I bring to this relationship are based in truth and love, and when the time comes for us to share more details about what our return to physical worship looks like, you will know that we stand together.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Benefits from the CARES Act for Charitable Giving, and an Update on the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Foundation Covid-19 Relief Fund

As you may already know, the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Foundation recently created a Covid-19 Relief Fund to provide an avenue for church members to give much needed charitable support to those in need as a result of the current Pandemic.

Whether you have already made a charitable contribution in 2020, are thinking about making additional contributions or are contributing for the first time, there is some positive tax benefit news to share. To encourage charitable giving during this extreme time of need, the CARES Act has made a tax deduction available to taxpayers who claim the standard deduction and otherwise do not get a tax benefit from their charitable giving. The deduction is for any qualifying contributions in 2020 up to \$300 per taxpayer or \$600 for a married couple filing a joint return. So, from a tax standpoint, 2020 can be a great time to give!

In addition to this special feature provided by the CARES Act, it is always a good time to point out a special tax provision that exists for persons 70 1/2 or older to give charitable contributions directly from their IRA. This can be a very income tax advantaged way to contribute that can also lead to Medicare premium savings in certain cases. If you think this may apply to you, we strongly encourage you to discuss this further with your tax advisor.

Of course, these tax advantages apply to both your regular contributions to Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church and to the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Foundation.

COVID 19 FUND UPDATE

Thanks to the generosity of the Mount Vernon congregation, a total of \$16,660 has been donated to the COVID 19 Fund as of May 19. Task Force members Christy Hill, Jeanne Mielke, and Carol Beckman have contacted leaders of our ministry partners and have prayerfully considered how we can help meet the sometimes overwhelming needs due to the pandemic.

In the past two weeks, the following funds have been distributed:

- \$4,000 to the Community Assistance Center (CAC) to provide food for vulnerable families in our community.
- \$3,000 to Family Promise of North Fulton/DeKalb for additional expenses due to “sheltering in place” since mid-March at St. Luke’s Presbyterian Church.
- \$1,500 to Alliance for Children Everywhere to purchase infrared thermometers and other medical supplies for the House of Moses and the Bill and Betty Bryant Home for at-risk children in Zambia.
- \$2,000 to Los Ninos Primero to purchase academic materials necessary for at-home learning due to the cancellation of the four-week summer program at MVPC.
- \$800 to Garden Presbyterian Church and School, Zambia, to provide assistance to teachers, students, and vulnerable families of our sister congregation.
- \$500 to Stirred Up Ministries for assistance to at-risk youth and their families in the East Lake area of Atlanta
- \$500 to International Women’s House for food and other supplies for abused women and children “sheltering in place”.

Continued on page 6...

The Task Force will continue to contact and evaluate needs of all our ministry partners, meet regularly for discussion and allocation of additional funds received, and always strive to be good stewards of the funds so generously given by members of our congregation.

For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you invited me in. (Matthew 25)



A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR BARRETT

From the pictures you can see, our “Drive-Thru Food Drive” benefitting the Community Assistance Center was a huge success. When I drove up and saw so many eager MVPC volunteers my heart overflowed. As we rolled down the window and talked through our masks it further revealed what the “new normal” would look like. After we left, however, I realized the donation I had just given was really a donation received. It was the opportunity to see the church in the flesh. It was the relief to know that the people were still eager to serve. It was the sadness that moments like this, for now, are few and far between. It was the collective conviction that we are the body of Christ, that there is still purpose, and that we will not quit. So thank you, Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, you made shared it with me who drove up with again, the Jesus Christ.



May Session Report

The Session of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church met virtually for their May monthly meeting on Sunday, May 17, 2020.

The meeting began at 12:30pm with an opening prayer by Rev. Barrett Abernethy, Moderator.

Clerk of Session, David Hill reported that all elders were in attendance.

Elder Dale Morine then offered the devotional inviting us to remember that God doesn't change, but God can change us.

Clerk Hill noted the dates and times of future Presbytery meetings for the rest of the calendar year. He also made the body aware of an acknowledgement of gratitude from the Atlanta Ministry with International Students (AMIS).

Session then approved the minutes of the previous meetings and Rev. Abernethy led everyone in an Affirmation of Faith by offering a Taize Song titled "Bless the Lord."

Ministry Team Reports

Elder Carrie Southard gave the Christian Education report and informed the body that Zoom calls for children are being set up, and that Rev. Abernethy will teach a class titled Presbyterian 101 beginning June 7th.

Elder Joy Carden shared the Congregational Care report and thanked elders and others for their diligent efforts in reaching out to church members and visitors to keep a sense of connection at this time.

Elder David Barclift offered the Fellowship report. He is working on potential ideas via Zoom due to the need to social distance.

Continued on page 8...

Elders Charlie Gray and Wit Truitt offered the Finance/Administration report. They also welcomed Glenn Grove from the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Foundation who updated us on needed by-laws changes. The Foundation was able to give \$35,000 this year to various entities. To date, stewardship is strong, and Elders Gray and Truitt were thankful for the generosity of church members. They also noted that to date, the COVID-19 fund established has raised around \$22,000.

Elders Brent Schweiger and Carol Beckman reported that the Outreach Team continues to respond to immediate needs caused by the pandemic. Please see elsewhere in the newsletter for a full accounting of how many has been dispersed by our COVID-19 Task Force.

Elder Mary Kilgore reported that Senior Adults are continuing to stay connected to one another during this time.

Elders John Hibbard and MacKenzie Truitt shared the Witness report. They noted we had 2 member deaths and received word that 2 members had joined Shallowford Presbyterian last fall. It was also mentioned from Elder Truitt that the Young Adults would be holding a Zoom gathering in the near future.

Elders Wendy Hagenau and Dale Morine gave the Worship report. They noted the hard work the team has been doing to consider the way in which we “reopen” for corporate worship. They stated that while several ideas have been considered that no dates or policies have been put in place. They have asked Rev. Abernethy to work on composing a letter that details where we are as a congregation and then later when we are closer to a formal date for returning to worship, send a second letter to the congregation detailing what worship could look like.

Elders Jon Barber and Bryce Cumming gave the Youth report. They updated the body on hopeful August mission trip plans as well as the recent basketball gathering that took place via Zoom.

Elder David Barclift updated the body of the Associate Pastor Search. He noted the Committee has interviewed candidates that they are excited about and are planning further interviews with candidates.

The Session then had a discussion regarding the reopening of Mount Vernon Presbyterian School for the fall semester. Rev. Abernethy, Clerk Hill, and Elder Gray reported they had met with School officials this past Thursday, May 14th and that the School is clearly trying to ensure the utmost safety and well-being of all who come onto the church campus for school related matters. The School has agreed to refrain from using the Sanctuary, Choir Room, Chapel, Session Room, and Gailey Hall for the time being. Both parties will continue to work with each other throughout this process due to the fluid nature of this situation. A motion to approve the School to return to the MVPC facilities was approved.

Rev. Abernethy then gave his report. He noted that since March 15th he has called 141 member households and had further contact with parishioners and known visitors via social media, emails, text messages, and handwritten notes. He further shared ideas for June worship services, other connectional/worship opportunities for the congregation, and updated the body on his pursuit to start a Doctor of Ministry at Columbia Seminary.

Elders Hill, Southard, and Barber then offered brief reflections of the May Presbytery Meeting that was held virtually.

Rev. Abernethy then closed the meeting in prayer.



Please keep these individuals and their families in your prayers.

Prayers for Bob & Ann Addison's daughter's surgery to go well.

Prayers for healing and regained strength for Mark Fifield.

Prayers for healing for Helen Johnson who fell on May 23rd and broke two bones.

Prayers for strength and peace for Janella Brand, who recently lost her sister. Also, her husband, Lee, is in a facility for dementia and is not allowed visitors.

Jane Schultz, a frequent visitor, asks for continued prayers for her daughter, Karla, who was hospitalized for a gall bladder infection.

Prayers for complete recovery of vision for Inez Cole.

Prayers for Tim Southard's brother, Rob.

Prayers for Minnie Robinson and her father, Lorenzo Small, who is in hospice care.

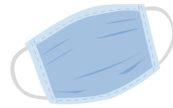
Prayers of strength and provision for the children we support through schools and an orphanage in Zambia.

Prayers for the use of his left arm and hand for Kirk Pumphrey.

Prayers for financial stability and recovery for those who have lost employment and those whose revenue is drastically reduced due to affects from the coronavirus.

Prayers for the containment, cure, and vaccine for the Coronavirus.

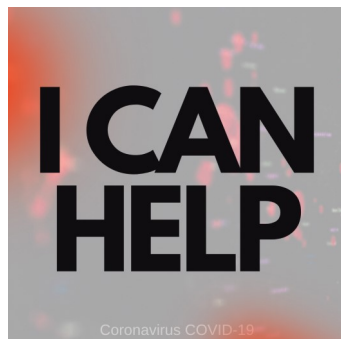
Prayers for a hedge of protection around family, friends, church members, our elderly, health care workers, first responders, grocery store workers, and those who are most vulnerable.



Need a Mask?

Christy Hill has generously offered to make a mask for anyone in need. If you are in need of a mask you can contact Christy at christy.hill321@comcast.net.

If you would like to know how you can help or if you need help during these unprecedented times please visit our website at mvpchurch.org. If viewing online, click on the links below.



Presbyterian Women

[The Spring Quarter of the MVPC PW Newsletter can be viewed here](#) as well as on the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church website and in the MV Good News. You can pick up a printed version outside the church office at the information center. The Summer Quarter issue of the MVP PW Newsletter will be available on the website and printed in early July.



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.

Volunteers Needed **Once Services Resume Normal Business Hours**

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.

Ushers are needed when the 11:00 service resumes normal business hours. 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.

ZOOM

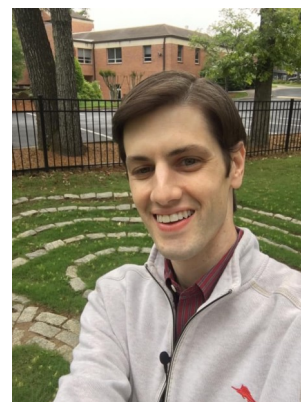


PRESCHOOL GATHERING

Watch for announcements over the summer for preschool and elementary Zoom get-togethers! Our next preschool Zoom get together will be Monday, June 1st at 10:30. Email Carrie Southard at tkscns@bellsouth.net if you are interested in joining us.



Anyone who is interested in hosting a Zoom meeting please contact Terri Clayton (terri@mvpchurch.org) and Steve Ray (steve@mvpchurch.org).



Virtual Days

Pastor Barrett brings a Mount Vernon Moment each weekday on Facebook (usually) at noon! Be sure to tune in!



The Discovery Sunday School Class is meeting via Zoom! Anyone interested in joining the class discussion, please reach out to Mary McClurg at marymcclurg@att.net.



Now, into the long, uncertain season of waiting for a vaccine, many who were stalwart during heavy quarantine find themselves feeling uneasy going out into society again. Some have had the double whammy of job loss or financial loss to add to their concern. How does one quell anxiety?

***If Returning To Work, Be Proactive**

Know the laws and rules and follow them. Wear a mask for every person to person interaction and hold others accountable, as well. Bring a lunch and find a peaceful outdoor spot to enjoy it. What you do now affects others at work and when you come home.

***Use Self-Calming Techniques**

Remember that it is hard for anxiety and calm to live together. Invite calm by Deep breathing (Inhale, with your stomach extended if possible, do a slow count of three, hold that breath for three, and slowly exhale for three. Repeat about five times.)

***Negate Unproductive Thoughts**

Make a list of your worries. Make a second list in two columns of what you can control and what you cannot control and put your worries in those columns. Release the ones you can't control.

*Avoid Overload Of News/Information

Fill your life with positivity. Plan a once a day news viewing and minimize online access. Concentrate on things you can do to improve your outlook.

*Declutter

Too much stuff and the procrastination to deal with it, creates anxiety. A cleaner, neater environment brings joy.

*Ask For Support

Call a parent or trusted friend and share your feelings. We all have feelings about what's happening. Keep a diary. Contact your minister, Stephen Ministry, or a counselor if things are spinning out of control.

*Move Your Body

Movement increases endorphins and raises spirits. If you move outdoors, your prospects are heightened by drinking in the natural world's gifts of joy, tranquility, and vitamin D.

*Seek Spiritual Guidance

Read scriptures that tell of God's promises and protection. Pray for others as well as yourself.

*Put The Focus On Others

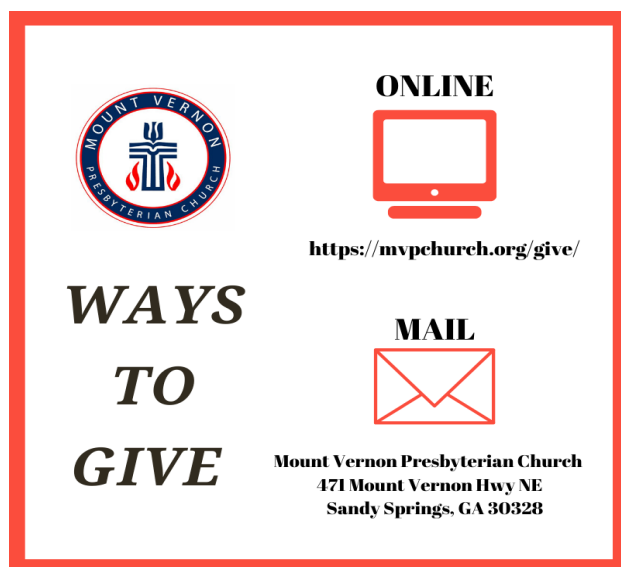
Join the church's efforts to help others by participating in online and drive-through events, give to our special offerings, bake and take brownies to a neighbor's doorstep, plan a Zoom or Skype meeting with family, neighbors, and friends, send an email to someone to let them know you are thinking of them.



Family Promise is staying in place at St Luke's until the end of July. We are responsible for overnight volunteers, snacks and gift cards for groceries. Our weeks are July 5th—July 19th.

[Click here for the June – July Signup!](#)

Visit mvpchurch.org for more details.



If you normally bring your tithe and offering to church, please consider giving online by clicking on the image or visiting our website at <https://mvpchurch.org/give/>.

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

Congratulations, Maritza Morelli for receiving the Latin American Association's 2020 Inspiration Award!

Proclamation



WHEREAS, Maritza Morelli earned her bachelor's degree in special education and her master's degree in child psychology in her native Venezuela and spent seven years there working for the Department of Education researching the ways in which children learn to read and write; and



WHEREAS, Maritza came to the United States 30 years ago and spent 2 years as a family interpreter for Northside Hospital and 15 years as the lead bilingual community liaison for Fulton County Schools where she met and assisted Latino families in understanding and navigating the public school system; and



WHEREAS, Maritza's steadfast work and determination was noticed by Pastor Rick Simmons at Mt. Vernon Presbyterian Church and she was recruited to head a new and inspirational project called Los Niños Primero; and



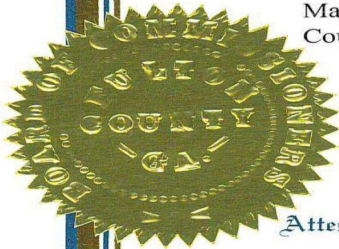
WHEREAS, Maritza has led the organization as executive director for the past twenty years and has cultivated its growth from a single location serving 17 children to six locations serving more than 800 children, youth and adults, and under her leadership has been awarded the following: the 2019 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award by the City of Sandy Springs, the 2017 Top Nonprofit Organization in Atlanta by Mundo Hispanico, and in 2013, Georgia Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) presented Maritza with the Public Service Award; and



WHEREAS, Maritza's leadership has established Los Niños Primero as a trusted resource to Atlanta's underserved Latino population and her visionary and compassionate leadership has fostered a trust in the Latino immigrant community that benefits and serves all Atlanta residents by inspiring a more civically engaged, healthy, stable and educated populace;



NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Fulton County Board of Commissioners commends the many contributions of Maritza Morelli to the Atlanta community and applauds her recognition as the recipient of the 2020 Inspiration Award at the 31st Annual Companeros Awards Luncheon, sponsored by Atlanta's Latin American Association, and does hereby proclaim Thursday, May 21, 2020, as "**MARITZA MORELLI APPRECIATION DAY**" in Fulton County, Georgia.



Fulton County Board of Commissioners


Commissioner

Attest:


Clerk to the Commission

F U L T O N C O U N T Y

CONGRATULATIONS MVPC SENIOR

*Devin
Wade*



Georgia Tech

*Erin
Jackson*



University of Arizona

*Grace
Rivord*



Columbus State University

*Jack
McGuire*



University of Georgia

GRADUATES

Julia
Northrop

Berry College



Katie
Sprung

University of South Carolina



Lindsay
Southard

Georgia Tech



McLaren
Christensen

Duke Kunshan University



Melinda
Lee Carden

Auburn University



June

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Summer Sunday School Begins	8	9	10 Taize Online Service	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Los Niños Sunday Father's Day	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

June Birthdays

Jack McGuire	3-Jun	Addison Baitcher	18-Jun
Amelia Simcox	3-Jun	Dee Bradford-Smith	18-Jun
Heidi Nelson	5-Jun	Chet Seiple Jr.	18-Jun
Jeff Schneider	6-Jun	Cole Truitt	18-Jun
Banks Bliss III	7-Jun	MacKenzie Truitt	18-Jun
Tracy Hahn	7-Jun	Ross Truitt	18-Jun
Megan Murphy	7-Jun	Amanda Badenhorst	20-Jun
Claire Thompson	7-Jun	Don McAdam	20-Jun
Arthur Dreger	8-Jun	Fred Ballard	21-Jun
Jack Allen Jr.	9-Jun	Mavis Boadi	21-Jun
Dale Morine	9-Jun	Beverly Northrop	23-Jun
Pierce Walker	10-Jun	Lou Baine	25-Jun
Robert Barclift	13-Jun	Julie Chesnutt	25-Jun
Allison Eustis	13-Jun	Denise Hunt	26-Jun
Melisha Gilreath	13-Jun	Lauren McClintock	28-Jun
Brent Schwieger	13-Jun	Joan Rownd	28-Jun
Carrie Southard	14-Jun		
Susan Simon	16-Jun		



*As a father has compassion for his children,
so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him.*

Psalm 103:13

July

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
			1	2	3 Office Closed	4 Happy Independence Day!
5 Family Promise	6	7	8 Taize Online Service	9	10	11
12 Family Promise	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 Family Promise	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another.

Galatians 5:13

July Birthdays

Mary Sanford	1-Jul	Debbie Barclift	15-Jul
Joy Carden	3-Jul	William Austin	16-Jul
Rebecca Simon	3-Jul	Aubrey Forlines	16-Jul
Lorry Clark	4-Jul	Carly Forlines	18-Jul
Susan Fields	5-Jul	Connor Hughes	18-Jul
Barbara Hughes	5-Jul	Andrew Sevcik	19-Jul
Robin Truitt	5-Jul	Elizabeth Wingate	23-Jul
Carol Beckman	7-Jul	Glenn Grove	24-Jul
Linda Bham	7-Jul	Gail Williams	24-Jul
Claire Eustis	8-Jul	Gill Christian	25-Jul
Peter Thomas	11-Jul	Warren Gray Jr.	26-Jul
Susan Wingate	11-Jul	Madeline Hazelwood	26-Jul
Allan Baitcher	12-Jul	Ellen Ballard	27-Jul
Martha Baitcher	12-Jul	Verne Bliss	30-Jul
Sally Williams	12-Jul	Kelton Southard	30-Jul
Chris Sprung	14-Jul		

May 21-27	Actual	Actual YTD	2020 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$2,435	\$175,971	\$439,217
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$20	\$21,815	\$80,000
2020 Prepaid Pledges	\$0	\$21,983	\$21,983
Loose Offerings	\$0	\$9,129	\$15,000
Total for week	\$2,455	\$228,898	\$556,200



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

Matthias Young

Steve Ray

Debbie Nysewander

Terri Clayton

Yvonne White

Pastor

Music Director

Church Finance and Operations

Administrative Assistant

Communications Coordinator

Financial Secretary

barrett@mvpchurch.org

matthias@mvpchurch.org

steve@mvpchurch.org

debbie@mvpchurch.org

terri@mvpchurch.org

yvonne@mvpchurch.org



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