

Good News

Month

At-A-Glance

August 2 Called Congregational Meeting 12pm

August 3
MVS Teachers Return

August 4 Phone Devotional 2pm

August 9 CAC/LNP/Backpack Blessing 2-4pm

August 11 Phone Devotional 2pm MVS Begins

August 12 Taize 7pm

August 18 Phone Devotional 2pm

August 25 Phone Devotional 2pm

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic most activities have been canceled until further notice. See our virtual options.





Mount Vernon, 2030

About a month ago I read an article by columnist Ross Douthat titled Waking Up in 2030. He began by noting that the pandemic has in some ways made time standstill while it has sped up other parts of life. He went on to say that he thought the institutional church's long anticipated collapse— a decline that began before I was born and has continued ever since— will only accelerate due to "falling donations and shrunken attendance." Admittedly, I worry that the "performance" of online/TV worship services will entice some of you who would have never stayed home prior to the coronavirus, to look at your spouse or kid and say, "Let's just get our church in the recliner."

If you ask our Session, I am very much a proponent of staying online for the time being. I believe this is correct based on the science we have about this virus, what is happening right now in our city, state, and country, but also we as a church must be a leader in developing the habits we want society to embody. Right now, that means being socially distant. I believe this philosophy/ theology is the answer to what it means to love God and to love neighbor in this surreal season. Trying to return to normal is what has made this past July one we would just as soon forget but also one we must remember.

Thus, I have used many a brain wave and asked many a colleague and friend where they think we are going as a broader church, trying to read through their words so I can answer the question I am really asking, "Where will Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church be in 2030, and how can I lead or facilitate that journey?" Because this nightmare will end, we will find a way, but then what will be the path we take... The best thoughts I have found thus far have come from Presbyterian Pastor MaryAnn

Continued on next page 3...

McKibben Dana who recently talked about the concept of pulling up the anchor. The "anchor problem" as she writes "occurs when you frame a problem in a way that presupposes a particular solution...The past is a huge anchor- we can't imagine the future, so we default to what we know. It's why churches define success using markers of the past: full pews, hefty youth ministry, thriving Sunday School."

Dana's thoughts are- for me- quite challenging, but I believe she is correct. I believe the return from this pandemic will be much more difficult for the church than the sheltering-in-place. We will be grateful for the return to normalcy, but when we gather, we will be a different body tasked to respond to different needs. The pandemic will not be something we sweep under the rug- as an asterisk to our story- rather it should be a part of our story and it should inform where we ultimately re-anchor. I believe the church will emerge, but it will probably be leaner. I believe this will be the opportunity to journey into the unknown, and to create a new identity in Christ and new ministries for how we express the gospel. For there will be a great need to hear and share the Word of God, but it may look nothing like what we have done thus far. May you find rest in this season, for at some point we will wake up and begin the work of reimagining the church that the world needs.

Grace and Peace,

Barrett

Dial 701-802-5094 Access Code: 5154569

Tuesdays - 2 pm

PHONE DEVOTIONAL









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DRIVE THRU FOOD DRIVE & BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS





Food Donations for CAC: We will continue to collect nonperishable food for the Food Pantry at the Community Assistance Center for the foreseeable future. Donations can be dropped off at the church at any time using the bin at the entrance to the office wing. Please note: Plastic, paper, and reusable grocery bags are also needed and may be left in the bin also.

We invite you to take part in several things going on outside of Gailey Hall on August 9 from 2-4 pm!

- -Drop off gently used laptops/tablets in good working order to benefit Los Niños Primero (they will be scrubbed of all files before they are given to students.)
- -Drop off food to benefit CAC.
- -Students and parents come by for a Blessing of the Backpacks/ Prayer for the School Year.



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Chicken wing picnic & inspirational discussions outside Gailey Hall for one-on-one office hours.

If you would like to schedule a one-on-one with Pastor Barrett, give him a call or email!





Office Hours

Sundays 3-5 pm Thursdays 8-10 am

Appointment Only-Contact Pastor Barrett

Do you have a special talent for singing playing an instrument or even dancing? Send a video to our Director of Music. Matthias Young (matthias@mvpchurch.org) for the chance to be featured in an upcoming online worship service!

COVID 19 FUND UPDATE

The Mount Vernon congregation continues to generously support the COVID-19 Fund, contributing a total of \$42,027 as of July 27. The Task Force (Christy Hill, Jeanne Mielke, and Carol Beckman) is in constant contact with our ministry partners and meet virtually to prayerfully consider how our funds can help meet the sometimes overwhelming needs due to the pandemic. To date, a total of \$30,700 has been dispersed to the following:

Community Assistance Center to provide food and financial assistance to vulnerable families in our community Family Promise of North Fulton/DeKalb for additional expenses due to "sheltering in place" at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church Alliance for Children Everywhere to provide medical supplies, medicines, and food for medically fragile children in Zambia Los Niños Primero to purchase educational materials necessary for at-home learning due to the cancellation of their summer program at MVPC

Garden Presbyterian Church and School in Zambia to provide food and other assistance to vulnerable students and church members Stirred Up Ministries for assistance to at-risk youth and their families in the East Lake area of Atlanta

The Drake House (transitional housing) and International Women's House Shelter for food and other expenses due to "sheltering in place"

An additional \$4,700 is scheduled to be dispersed in early August. All the recipients of these funds are extremely grateful for the congregation's generosity and continue to express their heartfelt thanks. Together we are serving God by reaching out to "the least of these".

Click here or visit our Facebook page for the Mount Vernon Moment from July 7 showing a video from Garden Presbyterian Church in Zambia, thanking us for the recent contribution from the COVID-19 Fund to buy food for vulnerable families in their congregation.

July Session Meeting Recap

On Sunday, July 19, the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church Session gathered for its monthly meeting via Zoom.

The meeting opened with prayer and was called to order by Rev. Barrett Abernethy. Clerk of Session and Elder David Hill determined a quorum was present and shared a reminder that a Called Congregational Meeting to call an Associate Pastor on July 26th will take place via Zoom. Session members are encouraged to reach out to fellow church members to attend the meeting so we may have as much support as possible.

Clerk Hill then offered the devotional.

Clerk Hill shared sign-up information with the body for future Presbytery Meetings. Right now, all meetings at least until November will be virtual only. He then informed the Session of complementary communications received from the Atlanta Concert Band and Los Niños Primero as well as information from Greater Atlanta Presbytery regarding how churches can support clergy at this time.

Rev. Abernethy then offered the Affirmation of Faith from the Brief Statement of Faith.

Each ministry team then offered brief updates about their teams.

Elder Carrie Southard noted that children of the church were gathering via Zoom for a time of learning and fellowship. Sunday school continues and small groups are exploring options for an upcoming series.

Elder Joy Carden offered her report. She was thanked by the Moderator, Rev. Abernethy for her tireless efforts by keeping the church connected at this time.

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Elder Charlie Gray shared that stewardship remained strong for the first half of the year. He also noted that the church received a Paycheck Protection Program Loan from the U.S. government. These monies will be used to pay staff salaries and benefits for a period of 10 weeks. The body extended thanks to Elder Bruce Morine for his work in securing the PPP loan.

Elder Carol Beckman and Elder Brent Schweiger thanked the body and the larger church for their support of the COVID-19 Fund.

Elder Wendy Hagenau and Elder Dale Morine shared some of the work that their team and the staff had been doing in response to the pandemic (more on this topic below).

Elder Jon Barber and Elder Bryce Cumming shared that the youth mission trip had been cancelled. Elder Carden recognized Elder Barber and Elder Cumming for their leadership during the transition.

Elder David Barclift then shared more exhaustive plans regarding the Called Congregational Meeting. He shared more information about the candidate and Rev. Abernethy walked the body through how the vote will transpire virtually. They both noted that this meeting will begin on July 26 and conclude on August 2. Both meetings will begin at noon.

Rev. Abernethy then went through a thorough discussion of what a return to worship could look like at MVPC. He discussed several options including worshipping in the sanctuary or outdoors on the courtyard. Rev. Abernethy noted this presentation was a result of gleaning information from public health officials, church leaders, and individual conversations. He stated that at this time he believed remaining strictly online was the best option for the church at this time. He further discussed options regarding small groups returning to campus as well as a return to the workplace but admitted he

wanted to get more information to Session before they made any determination of these options. Elder Hagenau informed the body that the Worship Team, who has served as the advisory body regarding the church's response to the pandemic, will continue to work with the staff and monitor the situation on a month to month basis so we can determine the best course of action for the church at that particular time. At the end of the discussion, the Session reaffirmed their stance to continue a suspension of all in-person activities until deemed safe by public health officials.

Rev. Abernethy then shared that Los Niños Primero had contacted him to share they have decided to cancel all activities on the church campus for the 2020–21 school year and will hope to return to campus next summer. He also made mention of further conversations with the Mount Vernon School which plans to start the school year in August, and that the church is responding to inquiries from other 3rd party partners as they arise.

Rev. Abernethy shared gratitude for the church staff, noting they had all extended themselves far beyond their job descriptions. He also thanked the church for supporting him as he begins his Doctorate of Ministry starting in the fall at Columbia Seminary. Finally, he welcomed the entire Session to a virtual webinar on healthy financial practices for churches and clergy. This webinar will help Rev. Abernethy complete the Healthy Pastors/Healthy Congregations initiative, which is a program of the Board of Pensions of the PC(USA).

Rev. Abernethy then closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

2020 Session Members and Ministry Teams

<u>Christian Education</u> 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



It's not too late to join the Presbyterian 101 class! Contact Debbie@mvpchurch.org and Terri@mvpchurch.org to register.

Our next Online Taize Worship Experience will be August 12 at 7 pm via Zoom.





Celebrating our Legacy

This summer Los Niños Primero celebrated its 20 years offering the virtual learning experience to our students. For the first time in its history we did not see the children running and learning at the Mount Vernon Campus. We certainly missed the sound of their laughter and the excitement in their faces when they learned something new.

The COVID-19 brought many changes and LNP wrote a new chapter by offering the virtual experience to our 3 to 6 year old students. The new model of our

summer program required a virtual structure curriculum, greater parent participation, computers, internet access and backpacks for children with the materials to use at home for the learning assignments.

We registered around 300 children from Sandy Springs, Roswell and Hapeville. The child attendance dropped when parents returned to work and had limitations with allowing their children to use their cell phone to connect to classes.

Even with all the challenges they faced, the children had meaningful learning experiences that in one way opened new doors of how the distance learning can be fun. In addition to academics the children were able to do yoga, art, and music, enhancing their days.

We couldn't be more grateful to Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church for 20 year of continued support and commitment to our Latino community. Thank you to Rev. Barrett Abernethy for embracing Los Niños Primero with profound love. We hope to see all of you next summer when we turn 21!!

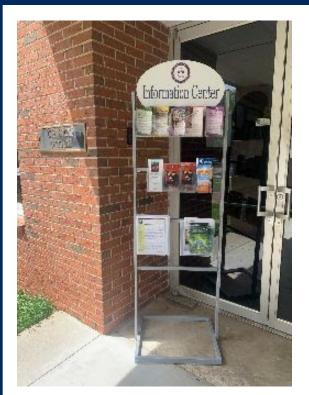
Maritza Morelli











The Information Center will be placed outside the Church office Mon –Fri 9–5 if you need Upper Room Devotionals, These Days Devotionals, Good News, Stephen Ministry, MVPC PW Summer Newsletter, or Care Notes.

New "These Days" and "Upper Room Devotionals" are now available.

PW has decided to postpone the retreat that was scheduled for Oct 4. We will announce a new date when we are able to meet again. We will install officers for next year using Zoom. We don't have a date for that yet, but we will keep you informed. A date for when we can present our Honorary Life Membership award is TBD. We hope to continue our last year's Bible study, Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments whenever we can meet again.

<u>here</u> as well as on the MVPC PW Newsletter can be viewed website and in the MV Good News. You can pick up a printed

version outside the church office at the information center.

View The Golden Rule here.



Please keep these individuals and their families in your prayers.

Prayers for the family of Shirley Smith, Joy Carden's Aunt. Shirley passed away on 7/25.

Prayers for strength and peace for Julie Chesnutt as she starts chemotherapy for breast cancer treatment.

Prayers for recovery and peace for Kirby Smith's son-in-law's father, Red Harmon, who is 86 with lung cancer in Greenville, South Carolina.

Prayers for Mount Vernon Village and MV Towers. Staff members at each community tested positive and we pray it does not spread or cause harm to those who are infected.

Prayers for healing and patience for Gail Williams following a bad break in her wrist.

Prayers for healing for Inez Cole, both for mending a broken hip and for perfect vision from an eye infection.

Prayers for freedom for Rob Southard.

Prayers for the use of his left hand and arm for Kirk Pumphrey. Prayers for strength and provision for the children, families and staff we support at schools and an orphanage in Zambia.

Prayers for the children and families of Family Promise.

Prayers for financial stability and recovery for those who have lost employment or whose revenue is drastically reduced, and business owners who are trying to stay afloat.

Prayers for the speedy containment, cure, and a 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.

Mount Vernon has been simply wonderful! We are really touched by your generosity.

Our moms are all working!

Our greatest need right now is gas and grocery gift cards, Clorox Wipes and hand sanitizer.

Andrea—Family Promise





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 "I CAN HELP?/I NEED HELP" links.

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









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, 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 <u>malinda128.holmes@gmail.com</u>, Clarice Elder <u>cpelder@bellsouth.net</u>, or Beppie Lever <u>beppielever@earthlink.net</u> if you are interested.

Ushers are needed when the 11:00 service resumes normal business hours. It does not take much time but it 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 picarden@bellsouth.net.



Watch for announcements over the summer for preschool and elementary Zoom get-togethers! Email Carrie Southard at tkscns@bellsouth.net if you are interested in joining us.

Discovery Class

We will be studying Isaiah 42 based on the lesson in "The Present Word" for April 5, for those who kept their books from last Spring. Pat Davis will be teaching. Anyone who wants to join us, we will be using the church's Zoom account at 10:00 am on Sunday, August 2.

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



<u>Virtual Days</u>

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

<u>Virtual Choir</u> <u>My Shepard Will Supply My Need</u>





Almost a year has passed since our commissioning as Stephen Ministers. Our beginning and continuing goal was and is to be here to serve our church members and the diverse, greater community around, and associated with our church. We even have a Stephen Minister who speaks Spanish fluently. In the past year, two thirds of our care receivers have been church members and one third has been comprised of community members. We continue to be available to any who could use a hand to hold as they deal with loss of any kind and life events that seem insurmountable. To be involved with a Stephen Minister, please call Barrett or Stephen Leader, Pat Bartee.



Have you recently moved, had an email address or phone number change? If so, please contact Debbie@mvpchurch.org to update your information for the new directory, coming soon.

If you are not receiving our weekly emails and would like to stay up to date on the latest MVPC news, please subscribe on the contact page of our website or here: https://mvpchurch.us7.list-manage.com/subscribe...



Please watch the video above and enjoy a glimpse of how MVPC directly, and through Alliance for Children Everywhere, substantially support the children of Zambia. Thanks be to the Lord for providing us this blessed opportunity to help these children.

Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.

Psalm 127:3

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.







View MVPC member, Vivien Rothwell in the premiere on YouTube "Sing Gently" virtual choir 6 worldwide (top right) where she took part with composer Eric Whitacre.

17,572 singers from 129 countries joined in during the coronavirus pandemic with a common purpose of supporting all people, separated but not alone.

This is Whitacre's largest virtual choir project that I am honored to be in. I sang in soprano section.

The design inspiration comes from ancient Japanese art form called **Kintsugi** – repairing broken pottery by mending the breaks using lacquer mixed with powdered gold. The repairs are wholly visible, and the object is almost more beautiful than before. A good reminder of mending broken communities/relationships ending in something more beautiful!

Vivien Rothwell



MVPC Staff Quarantine Adventures!

Meet **Solo**, the newest member of the Abernethy family!

Rev. Barrett Abernethy



The Ray's had a pretty low key quarantine experience as Shelly has worked from home the last 20+ years and Steve was keeping the church buildings alive. We do feel blessed that we got to spend great quality time with our teenagers, who in normal circumstances, would be here, there and everywhere, except near us!! We had an

awesome time teaching them to play the card game Euchre and giving Gailey Hall a much needed internal face lift! I know it meant more to Shelly and I at this point, but hopefully, when the boys are older, they will remember this crazy time in their lives.

Steve Ray

During the quarantine I finally had time to finish setting up my baking business. I now have a menu including 2 pies, 6 cookies, 4 cakes, and my freshly ground whole wheat bread. Baking has been a hobby of mine since I was a teenager. Wherever I have worked, I always baked birthday cakes and desserts for my coworkers. Check me out at www.homecookedusa.com.

Debbie Nysewander



Meet **Stella Rose** (**Rosie**), the newest member of the Clayton family!

Terri Clayton

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August August

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Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
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2 Online Sunday School 10am Online Service 11am Called Congregational Meeting 12pm	3 MVS Teachers Return	4 Phone Devotional 2pm	5	6	7	8
9 Online Sunday School 10am Online Service 11am CAC/LNP/ Backpack Blessing 2-4pm	10	Phone Devotional 2pm MVS Begins	12 Taize 7pm	13	14	15
I 6 Online Sunday School 10am Online Service 11am	17	I 8 Phone Devotional 2pm	19	20	21	22
23 Online Sunday School 10am Online Service 11am	24	25 Phone Devotional 2pm	26	27	28	29
30 Online Sunday School 10am Online Service 11am	31					

August Birthdays

Jeff	Chesnutt	Aug. 1	John Robert	Christian III	Aug. 16
John	Kapsaroff	Aug. 1	Brad	Hahn	Aug. 16
Susan	Sawyer	Aug. 1	David	Barclift	Aug. 18
Daniel	Schafer	Aug. 1	Nnaoke	Ufere	Aug. 18
Joanna	Mielke	Aug. 3	Pat	Bartee	Aug. 20
Julia	Northrop	Aug. 4	Duncan	Jackson	Aug. 21
Sarah	Northrop	Aug. 6	Tom	Rounds	Aug. 21
Moira	Speirs	Aug. 6	Linda	Bliss	Aug. 24
Wendy	Hagenau	Aug. 7	Kathryn	Wade	Aug. 25
Martha	Chambliss	Aug. 8	Pieter	Badenhorst	Aug. 27
Paul	Wade	Aug. 8	Cameron	Gray	Aug. 29
Britney	Bliss	Aug. 10	Kyle	Hagenau	Aug. 29
Bob	Boyer	Aug. 14	Ethan	Ray	Aug. 29
Alma	Dowdakin	Aug. 14	Nneka	Ufere	Aug. 30

July 24-29	Actual	Actual YTD	2020 Budget
Member Giving			
Pledge	\$3,190	\$257,133	\$439,217
Member Giving			
Non- Pledge	\$740	\$29,790	\$80,000
2020 Prepaid			
Pledges	\$0	\$21,983	\$21,983
Loose Offerings	\$0	\$12,793	\$15,000
Total for week	\$3,930	\$321,699	\$556,200
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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.



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



I HAVE LED A VERY LONG AND EVENTFUL LIFE ... YOU BETTER DIP ME AGAIN

www.mvpchurch.org
facebook.com/mountvernonpresbyterianchurch/
Instagram: mvp_church