



October 2020

Good News

Month At-A-Glance

October 4
Outdoor Worship Service
Begins 11am

October 6
Phone Devotional 2pm

October 11
Pastor Appreciation
Online Only Service 11am

October 13
Phone Devotional 2pm

October 14
Taize 7pm

October 18
Outdoor Worship Service
11am

October 20
Phone Devotional 2pm

October 25
Online Only Service 11am

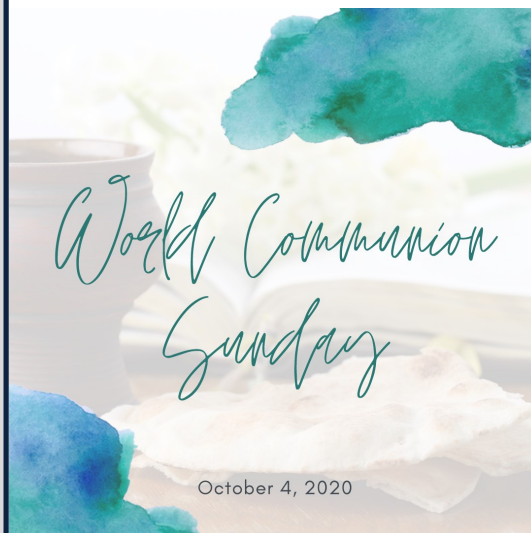
October 27
Phone Devotional 2pm

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

BRINGING THE CHURCH HOME!



Join us for [Outdoor Live Worship](#) beginning **October 4** (World Communion Sunday), as we continue our “Living the Questions” series! [If viewing online, click here](#) to access the outdoor worship details or visit our [website](#). Reservations are required and space is limited to 75. Click on the photo above to reserve your spot.



MVPC Covid Fund Something to think about.....

Here are 3 things you probably did not spend money on this summer:



Going to the movies 2 times this summer =
Saving \$18 - \$24 per person



Family of two, dining out in a nice restaurant just once = Saving \$50 - \$200



Family of 4 attending a Braves game =
Saving \$125 - \$350

Please consider donating any money you saved to the COVID Fund for our neighbors who are struggling to feed their families, pay rent, get healthcare, buy school supplies or other essentials during this pandemic.

To date we have dispersed \$53,327.
As of October 1, our balance is currently less than \$2,300.



STAY CONNECTED!

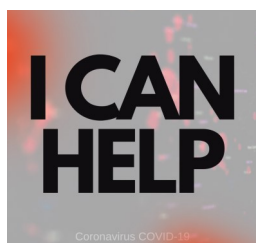





Welcome Pounding for Isaac & Christina

If you would like to participate in the Welcome Pounding, please drop off your offerings clearly marked “Isaac & Christina” in the bin at the office entrance door marked “Isaac & Christina” or ring the bell for someone in the office. If you have items for “around the house” please email Isaac for coordination on pick-up/delivery. isaac@mvpchurch.org


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 “Ways to Give” image or visiting our website at <https://mvpchurch.org/give/>.




ONLINE



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

**WAYS
TO
GIVE**

MAIL



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

This morning, I woke up before the coffee pot. It typically brews on an automatic timer and waits ready for me when I come downstairs. I must have forgotten to turn the timer on. This could have put me fifteen minutes behind schedule on a pre-pandemic day that would have been jammed full with places to be and people to see. But, for now, there is little to rush toward. For now, we wait and we listen.

I read a devotional while the coffee brewed and smiled at one intercession in particular: *Oh God, guide your Church along the way of the Gospel; may your Holy spirit keep her welcoming.* I've used the word "welcome" more than I can count since I arrived at MVPC last month. You all have extended welcome to Christina and I through recipes, restaurant suggestions, gift cards, art, and even furniture. In a time where we don't get to see many of you, we still feel your presence and your kindness through the notes and gifts we receive. Thank you so much! Look out for a card of appreciation from Christina and I as we receive your blessings, settle in, and organize our home.

I benefit from the welcoming spirit at MVPC, but it also ignites my calling in ministry to welcome those on the edges. Our world has many edges, spaces where some are "in" and others are "out." Some of these edges have been revealed on a national scale during 2020, and some appear and disappear in classrooms and offices every single day. I believe that a willingness to extend welcome is one of the best tools we have to address the many edges in our world. A willingness to see, listen, and to invite. I have seen this welcome at work at MVPC, and it makes my spirit glad!

New beginnings abound at MVPC, especially among the youth! With a fall schedule that is not nearly as jam-packed as previous years, there will be more room to listen. It is my prayer that this season of listening will transform into a season of connected and compassionate ministry. I'm sure there will be many memories made along the way.

Grace and peace,

Isaac

Sundays 3-5 pm

Thursdays 8-10 am

Appointment Only-Contact Barrett

Office Hours

Tuesdays 8-10 am

Wednesdays 12-2 pm

Appointment Only-Contact Isaac

The Information Center is outside the Church office Mon.-Fri. from 9-5 if you need Upper Room Devotionals, These Days Devotionals, the Good News, Stephen Ministry information, the MVPC PW Fall Newsletter, or Care Notes.



Fall 2020 Small Group Sign-ups!

Small groups begin Sunday, September 27th and continue for 6 weeks with the last meeting being on November 1st. Here is what you need to know:

What if I was not in a group in the spring and want to sign-up for a group? Please contact David Hill by phone or email (678-274-8878 or david.hill321@comcast.net). David will give you information about the groups and put you in touch with the group leader of your choice.

What if I was in a group in the spring? You will remain in the same group – contact that group's leader and let them know you will be participating since group size is limited.

What if I want to change groups? Contact David Hill who will put you in touch with another group leader. Group size is limited to 15.

What will we study during this fall session? The Christian Education Committee has discussed curricula options; the committee and small group leaders all want to explore the issues surrounding social justice that we are currently grappling with as a nation. PCUSA has developed curriculum materials on this subject that are available on the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta website. This means there will be no charge for books. Participants will be able to download their own materials or stop by the church to pick-up printed copies. We will announce details on how to do this.

Where will groups meet? Each group will make its own decision regarding meeting locations. There are two options:



Hold ZOOM meetings

Groups of 15 or less to meet at a location on the church campus outside of school hours (one single group could meet in a designated location during school hours). Groups that choose the church campus option will follow strict guidelines approved by Session that include wearing masks and maintaining a safe distance from one another.

At this time small groups will not meet in homes.

Are there any other days when groups will meet besides Sundays? Groups can change when they meet as long as they adhere to the following:

Groups desiring to meet on a different day of the week using ZOOM meetings will simply need to notify David Hill of the change and will need to schedule the appropriate meeting times with the church office.

Groups desiring to meet on a different day of the week on the church campus (outside of school hours) would need to notify David Hill AND schedule the time and location with the church office.

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

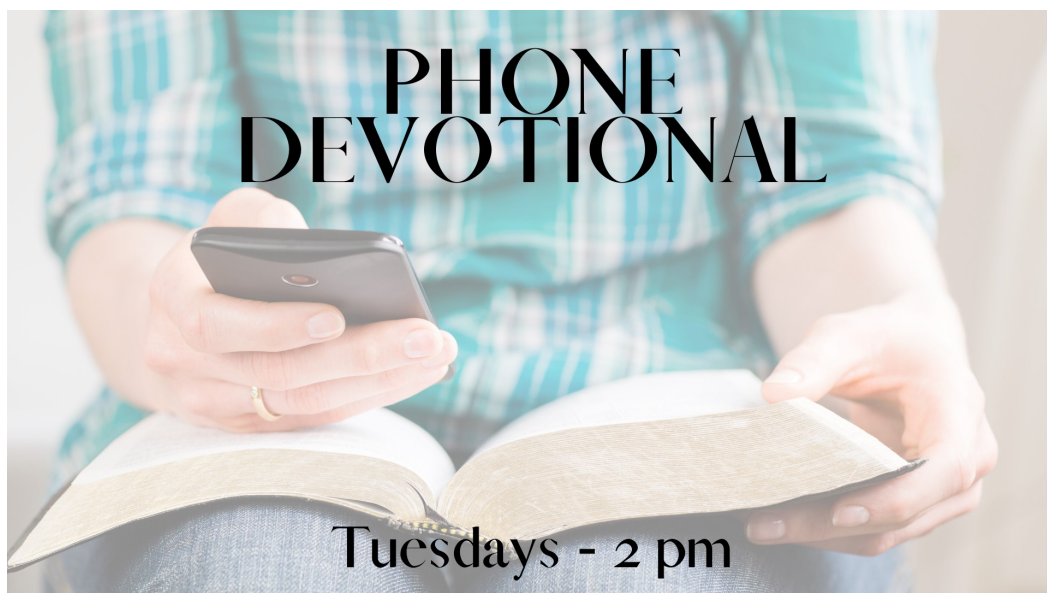
Congregational Care
 Joy Carden

Witness
 John Hibbard
 Mackenzie Truitt

Worship
 Wendy Hagenau
 Dale Morine

Clerk of Session
 David Hill

Moderator
 Rev. Barrett Abernethy



Dial 701-802-5094
 Access Code: 5154569



Our next Online Taize Worship Experience will be
 October 14 at 7 pm via Zoom.



The Discovery class meets Sundays at 10 am via Zoom.



Our very own Director of Music and Worship Production guru, Matthias Young, along with his colleague, Scott Plato have released a new album of instrumental guitar music! Vivaldi's *Concerto in D Major* by Duo Catanza is available on Apple Music and will be arriving soon elsewhere. CDs will also be available soon, but you can listen now: <https://music.apple.com/us/album/vivaldi-concerto-in-d-major-rv-93-arranged-for-guitar/1529987969>

MVPC kids had fun making shrinky dink crosses.



Celebrating the Stuff

Earlier this month as I was helping my parents move into their new home in Sandy Springs, my mother and I had the following exchange amid the towers of boxes that made their living room look like Lower Manhattan;

“What are you all going to do with this stuff?”

“I guess your generation doesn’t collect like we did.”

After pondering it, I told my mother that I agreed, to an extent. While we don’t amass the volume of stuff, we are very materialistic. We just have collapsed our materialism into our phones.

Boxes of photos... on our phone.

Old letters... in our email.

Books... on our tablets.

Yet, on the other hand, I believe my question to my mother was a bit harsh. After all, that “stuff” is a cue and in this season where we are isolated and under stimulated because we are staring at the same screen day after day, the stuff can be what reminds us of that which is comforting, reliable, and hopeful. The trinket from our travels, the photo that used to sit on grandfather’s mantle, the frayed puzzle that suddenly has value once again.

Stuff can remind us of the times we intentionally came together to make a memory, to celebrate time, to acknowledge new life. The stuff itself is not spiritual, but it can point us to the spiritual. In this season of alienation and frayed mental states, we at Mount Vernon have tried to celebrate the visual cues we find in worship, which is ironic, because the reformers explicitly denounced iconography when they broke from Rome 500 years. I do wonder what Calvin and Zwingli would have thought of Zoom worship.

You see we need the stuff right now. We need the cameras to catch different angles. We need the words to be said in different places. Because while the church is the people, the people find solace in the church. It has the stuff– the font, the table, the pulpit, the cross, the stained glass, the architecture– that comes together to celebrate the grandeur, the wonder, the small, and the visible signs of an invisible love. And when we're apart we need to see those cues, for that is what will stimulate that Word and embody that sacrament.

I told my Mom I am not sure what I am going to do with all that stuff when the time comes, but I told her not to get rid of it, yet. Because right now, we need the cues that constantly reorient us to the rhythm of Christ.

Grace and Peace,
Barrett

Dear Mount Vernon Family,

Thank you so much for humoring our 4-year-old this past Sunday. She absolutely loved the parade! Braegan and I are thankful, to borrow from the Frozen theme, that we can travel “Into the Unknown” with such a loving group of saints like you all!

Grace and Peace,
Barrett



Zambia College Program

Seven years ago we established the Zambia College Scholarship fund for deserving students. These students must have successfully completed high school, be very bright, motivated, and demonstrate extreme financial need. Since its inception, the fund has provided college scholarships which enabled 6 students to graduate in '17, '18, '19. Currently, 9 students are enrolled with an additional student beginning in January 2021. The fields of study include Health Sciences, Clinical Medical Sciences, Pharmacy, Education, Teaching & Apparel Design. We strive to keep 8 to 9 students enrolled in college at all times.

This effort requires that \$10,000 be raised each year. We provide the initial \$5,000 in seed money and seek contributions from the congregation and friends of MVPC to reach the goal. You have supported this mission faithfully for 7 years and we ask that you do so again. This mission *has, is, and will* change the lives of the students, their families, and their communities.

We thank you for your loyal support.

ALLELUIA!!

Stan and Ann Williams

To make a contribution please make a check payable to MVPC, write "For Zambia scholarship fund "in the memo line and mail to Yvonne White, 471 Mt Vernon Highway, NE, Sandy Springs, Ga 30328, or for online donations go to the church website, GIVE section, donate, then scroll to Stan's Zambia Scholarship fund.

Please note these funds need to be available by the end of November to pay student tuition for the year 2021.

For more info or to discuss a contribution, please contact Stan Williams at aswilliams@bellsouth.net , 404-245-6749

[If viewing online you can access the 2021 College Scholarship Brochure here.](#)



The photo above is a painting by Donna Martin titled,
"I Can Do All Things In Him."

*I can do all things through him who strengthens me.
Philippians 4:13*



During this Pandemic period, we are all feeling lonely in some way. We were built for connection, but, right now, connection is literally sickening and killing us. Maybe you have lost or been unable to memorialize a loved one, maybe you have lost a job or a business, maybe you have received diagnosis of a chronic health condition, maybe you are recently divorced and these issues increase your unease. If you would survive it better with someone to talk to who would listen, comfort, and encourage you, Mount Vernon Presbyterian has a trained, skilled, caring team of Stephen Ministers waiting to start a weekly one-on-one, confidential relationship with you. We are employing phone calls, text, email, Skype, Zoom, and meeting on campus outdoors in masks. To refer yourself or make us aware of someone who needs us, please contact Barrett, Isaac, or Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader. We serve our church school community as well and the areas our church serves. We have one Spanish-speaking minister.



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.



Please keep these individuals and their families in your prayers.

Prayers for Clarice Elder recovering from back surgery.

Prayers following hip replacement surgery for Sarah Chalpan.

Prayers for the Carden family who are quarantined with Covid-19.

Prayers for Elizabeth Small who was diagnosed with Covid-19.

Prayers for strength and peace for Julie Chesnutt as she continues chemotherapy.

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 vulnerable children, families and staff we support at schools and an orphanage in Zambia, with Los Niño's Primero, and with Family Promise.

Prayers for health and peace for our children, parents, and teachers as they return to school or college and for those who opt for homeschooling or a gap year navigating education during a pandemic.

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, elderly, health care workers, first responders, grocery store workers, and those who are most vulnerable.

Prayers for peace in our country and an end to riots, violence and vandalism that destroy property and kill innocent people.

Family Promise continues the work with homeless families. This month we saw three of our families, two who are in the program (pictured above) and one who graduated a few months ago, but is still being supported by our alumni program. Those in the photo received the cars through the same program as Brian, who you will all remember from the times he stayed with us. The cars were donated by Charity Cars. Midas Alpharetta is the garage who did all the work to get the cars ready for our families.

The third family was doing quite well in their own apartment despite the mom having to undergo emergency surgery. After recovering from that and returning to work, her car failed and was unrepairable. Needless to say, the family needed a car to get to work, school activities and church. Our coordinator, Andrea shared with me that she was praying about the situation as she was at a loss as to how we would be able to help. The next morning Andrea received an email from one of our partner congregations to ask if Family Promise could accept a car donation, perhaps to sell for funding? The car was in rather good shape and the donor was overjoyed to have it given to the family in need.

Working with Family Promise as a volunteer is a mixture of emotions, the sadness we feel when we hear about families who are homeless, the satisfaction when we are able to provide a roof over their head and support to move on, and then the joy of finding that sometimes everything falls in to place to prevent a challenging situation from getting worse.



Anyone who is interested in hosting a Zoom meeting, please contact Terri Clayton at terri@mvpchurch.org.



[The Fall Quarter of the MVPC PW Newsletter can be viewed here](#), as well as on the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church website. You can pick up a printed version outside the church office at the information center.

The Day Circle and the Sunday Circle met in September using Zoom. Linda Bhame taught Lesson 4: *Fifth Word: Honor the Life Givers* from the Bible study, *Love Carved in Stone: A Fresh Look at the Ten Commandments*. In October Pat Davis will teach Lesson 5: *Sixth Word: Don't Kill Each Other*. The Book Circle also met in September using videoconferencing and reviewed *Plain and Simple* by Sue Bender. In October they will review *A Fire Sparkling* by Julianne Maclean.

It is time for members to make their yearly pledge. These funds are used to support missions and programs here and throughout the world. Last year we donated to Stirred Up Ministries, Drake Closet, Family Promise, the Community Action Center, and the Covid-19 fund, and we donated meals to the Clifton Ministry. Checks can be designated for Presbyterian Women and mailed to the church.

MVPC September 20, 2020, Session Meeting Summary

The Session continues to meet each month in ZOOM meetings. Rev. Abernethy opened the meeting with prayer; the clerk noted that all members were present. Rev. Abernethy welcomed visitors to the meeting who included the Confirmation Class, their parents, and confirmation coordinators and mentors.

Announcements/Reminders

1. Small groups (with the exception of the Towers group) will begin on September 27th and run for six weeks. Announcements about group opportunities are running in the weekly email, the church bulletin, and the Good News. All the groups will be using the PCUSA curriculum, "Facing Racism."

Offered by The Center for Lifelong Learning at Columbia Theological Seminary, an online program to address civic and political issues during the national election season will run from September 25–October 9, 2020. The program, "Talking Politics During Turbulent Times," is co-sponsored by Faith in Public Life, Georgia Interfaith Power and Light, Presbyterians for a Better Georgia, The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta and the Presbyterian Mission Agency Office of Public Witness of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. A single registration fee of \$30 provides access to the full range of resources offered as a part of this conference. The program is aimed at pastors and church leaders.

The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta is offering for a second time a virtual town hall on racism. The date is Saturday, October 3rd from 10:00–11:30. Information regarding participation comes through church pastors.

The devotional was given by Carrie Southard. External communications were received from the Atlanta Ministry with International Students (AMIS) thanking MVPC for a donation from our Outreach Ministry team; in addition, at the recent Presbytery of Greater Atlanta meeting, MVPC was recognized for our contribution from the COVID-19 fund to the New Church Development Commission which supports the needs of refugees and recent immigrants in the Atlanta area.

Rev. Abernethy led the Session in affirming our faith as stated in A Brief Statement of Faith. Following the affirmation of faith, Rev. Abernethy and Mr. Toney-Schmitt prepared the Session for examination of this year's Confirmands who include Sage Allen, Anna Barber, Sam Nelson, and Nathan Peji. Each Confirmand discussed the most meaningful experience in the confirmation process and then gave their statements of faith. Session members asked questions, made comments, and congratulated the group on the work they have done during the confirmation classes. Martha Baitcher and Beppie Lever coordinated the confirmation classes; confirmation mentors were Bruce Hagenau, Gloria Gillespie, Meg Christian, and David Barclift. The Session voted unanimously to recommend the Confirmands for membership in MVPC.

Ministry teams submitted written reports summarizing their work for the month. The Finance/Administration team noted that we are right on schedule with giving at this point in the church year. The team will work with Rev. Abernethy to plan a stewardship campaign this fall. The Outreach team announced the COVID-19 fund has received about \$55,000 and has disbursed most of these funds. The team is urging that we continue to give to the fund since the needs are great in the Sandy Springs and greater Atlanta communities because of job losses during the pandemic.

Old Business

The Session continues to address use of the church campus during the pandemic. The Worship Committee has worked hard to find ways the congregation can resume on-campus worship and presented two proposals for Session consideration. The first proposal allows for use of the sanctuary for prayer. Members who want to do this will be able to schedule prayer time as an individual or family unit following safeguards outlined in the proposal. Scheduling will be done through the church office. The Session approved this proposal.

The second proposal from the Worship Ministry team creates an outdoor worship service on four Sundays (two in October and two in November). The services will be in the courtyard area between the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall and will be limited to 75 seated participants who have made reservations to attend along with a few cars parked in some spaces beside the courtyard. Safety measures must be followed by participants. Online services will still be available for those who don't attend the outdoor services. Services will be at 11:00 am. The Session approved this proposal.

Find the detailed link on the front page.

New Business

MVPC Commissioners (David Barclift, David Hill, MacKenzie Truitt) who attended the September 15th Presbytery Meeting reported to Session the business conducted at the meeting.

Session approved one additional Commissioner for the November 10th Presbytery Meeting. Commissioners for this meeting will be Dale Morine, Joy Carden, and Wit Truitt. Presbytery meetings will continue to be conducted as ZOOM meetings for the foreseeable future.

Session approved the transfer of membership of T.J. and Maggie Shirley to Sardis Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC.

Pastors' Report Rev. Abernethy and Mr. Toney-Schmitt

Rev. Abernethy reported that a broken pipe in the church office is being repaired. Currently there is a little inconvenience and noise from the equipment used to dry out the carpet. Rev. Abernethy has started classes in his doctoral program. The Abernethy's (Rev. Abernethy's parents) have moved from Texas and are settling into their home in the North Springs area. Rev. Abernethy will be visiting with and carrying food to Corny, the last living founding member of MVPC.

Mr. Toney-Schmitt is now onboard and has met with several ministry teams that he will work with. He has had an opportunity to meet with some of the youth and is excited about the work he will be doing here at MVPC.

Rev. Abernethy closed the meeting with prayer.

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 [click here](#).

October

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
				1	2	3
4 Outdoor Worship Begins 11am Online Worship 11am	5	6 Phone Devotional 2pm CT 10am CE 7pm	7	8	9	10
11 Pastor Appreciation Online Worship 11am	12 Finance Admin. 6:30pm	13 Phone Devotional 2pm Day Circle Worship Committee 4pm	14 Taize 7pm	15	16	17
18 Outdoor Worship 11 am Online Worship 11am Session 12:30pm	19	20 Phone Devotional 2pm Good News Deadline	21	22 Officer Training 12:15pm	23	24
25 Online Worship 11am	26	27 Phone Devotional 2pm	28	29 Good News Published	30	31
30 Online Worship 11am	31			Check out our Facebook page where we bring a Mount Vernon Moment each weekday!		

October Birthdays

Todd Simon	10/2
Christopher Ufere	10/3
Tara Allen	10/5
Madison Hahn	10/5
Rita Sheffey	10/5
Pearl Attaway	10/6
Sarah Chalpan	10/6
Ellen McCormick	10/6
Paula Fisher	10/6
Carlton Carden	10/7
Ann Williams	10/9
Marion Satterfield	10/10
Ian Hughes	10/11
Susan Hasell	10/11
Eleanor Brazell	10/13
Lisa Cumming	10/13
Lucy Hibbard	10/14

Marguerite Nelson	10/14
Leah Reid	10/15
Wright Hardy	10/17
Barbara Bruce	10/18
Charlie Bryson	10/20
Lisa Gray	10/20
Charley Plumly III	10/22
Ann Young	10/22
Bryce Cumming	10/23
Derek Spain	10/24
Bryan Jackson	10/28
Kwaku Boadi	10/28
Hannah Hagenau	10/29
Barrett Abernethy	10/30
Ann Addison	10/31
Jack Sims	10/31
Amy Kiley	10/31



Find the “Prayer in the Sanctuary” details in the outdoor worship link on our first page or on our website at <https://mvpchurch.org/>.

[Click here to signup for Prayer in the Sanctuary.](#)



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

Isaac Toney-Schmitt

Matthias Young

Steve Ray

Debbie Nysewander

Terri Clayton

Yvonne White

Pastor

Associate Pastor of Faith Formation

Music Director

Church Finance and Operations

Administrative Assistant

Communications Coordinator

Financial Secretary

barrett@mvpchurch.org

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HE HAD NO IDEA THAT HIS JESUS COSTUME
WAS SO REALISTIC

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