



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Outdoor Order of Worship

Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20th, 2020

— GATHERING —

Welcome & Announcements

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Prayer of Invocation

Lighting of the Advent Candle

John, Meg, John Robert, Gill, & Kate Christian

Advent is a time when the story begins anew. While the song of Simeon comes after the birth of Jesus, the song is a great epiphany of love to the redemptive king. Upon seeing Jesus, Simeon declares he is witnessing “a light for revelation to the Gentiles,” and “a salvation prepared for all peoples.” This song is a reminder that the darkness of division holds no place in our story, only love.

We light this fourth and final candle in the spirit of love.

Hymn

“Good Christians Friends, Rejoice”

IN DULCI JUBILO

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;

Give ye heed to what we say:

Jesus Christ is born today;

Ox and ass before Him bow,

And He is in the manger now.

Christ is born today!

Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
With heart, and soul and voice;

Now ye hear of endless bliss:

Jesus Christ was born for this!

He hath opened heaven's door,

And we are blest forevermore.

Christ was born for this!

Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice,
With heart and soul and voice;

Now ye need not fear the grave:

Jesus Christ was born to save!

Calls you one and calls you all,

To gain the everlasting hall.

Christ was born to save!

Christ was born to save!

Prayer of Confession

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Merciful God, we are quick to separate ourselves into spaces we can control. We try harder and work later and focus more intently. Unfortunately, we separate from you as well. Forgive us when our ears fail to hear your invitation through the roar of our plans. Forgive us when our eyes fail to see injustice beyond the computer screen. Forgive us when our focus distracts us from your amazing love. Bless us with the hope that you bring new life. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

One: ...Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel.

All: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

Response**“Glory to God”***Gloria Patri*

Glory to God, Glory to God,
Glory in the highest.
Glory to God, Glory to God,
Alleluia, Alleluia.

— THE WORD —**Prayer for Illumination**

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Scripture

Luke 2:29-32

“Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace,
according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.”

Homily*Songs of Advent: The Song of Simeon***Hymn****“Away in a Manger”**

MUELLER

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.
The cattle are lowing, the poor Baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes.
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And fit us for heaven to live with Thee there.

— RESPONSE —

Affirmation of Faith (*The Apostles' Creed*)

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People

*After each petition, the Pastor will say, "...Lord, In Your Mercy,"
Respond with "Hear Our Prayer."*

The Lord's Prayer

Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

— SENDING —

Hymn

"Song of Simeon"

Nunc Dimittis

LAND OF REST

Lord, bid Your servant go in peace,
Your word is now fulfilled.
These eyes have seen salvation's dawn,
This child so long foretold.

This is the Savior of the world,
The Gentiles' promised light,
God's glory dwelling in our midst,
The joy of Israel.

Benediction & Offering

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Leading Today's Worship Service

Rev. Barrett Abernethy: Pastor & Head of Staff

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt: Associate Pastor of Faith Formation

Matthias Young: Director of Music

Ryan Sawyer: Organist Apprentice

Handbells: Katherine Koops, Bob Martin, & Joan Rownd

MVPC Happenings....



WELCOME BACK! We are excited to see you back on our campus. Please be assured we are taking all measures to follow the CDC guidelines and ask that you wear a mask. Reservations are required by Sat. evenings at 6:00 p.m. In case of inclement weather, we will cancel the outdoor service and record the service to post on our website. While here, please scan the QR codes using the camera on your smartphone to access the bulletin and also giving your tithes. Here are our next **outdoor** services:

December 24: Christmas Eve at 4:30 p.m., Luke 2:1-7, "Room in the Inn"
January 24: Ordination & Installation of Church Officers, John 1:43-51,
"Come and See"

Advent Sermon Series: "Celebrating the 4 Songs of Advent"

Stewardship: Thank you to everyone who has submitted your 2021 pledge cards. If you missed the chance to turn yours in at the service on Nov. 15, we encourage you to submit your pledge by filling out the form on our website, mail your pledge in the envelope provided, or email Yvonne@mvpchurch.org.

Family Promise: This is our week starting today thru December 27 to support the families at St. Luke's Presbyterian Church. We still need gas cards, grocery cards, and supplies. They can be dropped off at the church office before **Wednesday** clearly marked for Family Promise. Here is a link to sign up to bring cards or be a host: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044baea62ca6ff2-family1>

Longest Night Service: A service of hope in a time of lament led by Barrett, Isaac and Christiana Toney-Schmitt will stream starting tomorrow, **December 21** at 6:00 p.m. at mvpchurch.org

Taize Outdoor Service: Our next service is **January 13** at 5:00 p.m. at Gailey Hall. Reservations on our website are required and space is limited to 15.

Youth Group will start meeting again in person at Gailey Hall on Sunday, January 3 from 5-6:00 p.m. Masks required!

Fellowship by the Fire for all college students **today** from 5-6:00 p.m. Please let Isaac know if you plan on sitting around the fire!

Sunday School: The Discovery class meets Sundays at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom.

Weekly Ways to Connect: Tuesday Phone Devotional @ 2:00 p.m., Daily Mount Vernon Moments on Facebook, Children's Sunday School with Carrie Southard via Zoom on Mondays at 1 p.m..

Outreach Tree for the Homeless: We will still collect items until the end of December. Please bring warm winter clothing and grooming products to decorate the Outreach Tree in the hallway outside the office. Need gloves, hats, scarves, socks, coats/jackets, flannel shirts, sweatpants, hoodies, sturdy shoes, sneakers, rainwear, and blankets.

Office Hours with the Pastors are by appointment only. Contact Barrett for Sundays, 3-5:00 p.m. and Thursdays, 8-10:00 a.m. Contact Isaac for Tuesdays, 8-10:00 a.m. and Wednesdays, noon-2:00 p.m.

December 20, 2020

Presbyterian Women: The Book Club will meet on January 8, 2021 and review *The Island at the Center of the World* by Harold Smith. The Day Circle will meet on January 12, 2021, and the Sunday Circle will meet on January 10, 2021. They will study Lesson 6: *Seventh Word: Hold Your Marriage Sacred*, led by Sarah Chalpan. The newly formatted Winter Issue 2021 will be available in January.

Information Center is stocked with the current issues of the Upper Room, These Days, Good News, and much more!

Liturgists Needed: Please contact Barrett if you are willing to read scripture during our online services.

The Worship Ministry Team is looking for volunteers to serve as Funeral/Memorial Service Coordinators. For questions or more info, contact Malinda Holmes malinda128.holmes@gmail.com or Beppie Lever beppielever@earthlink.net if you are interested.

Worship Committee has been hard at work planning these outdoor services. Please thank them if you see any of them.

The MVPC Stephen Ministry: Advent season reminds us of preparedness, reflection, gratefulness, gifting, and compassion. It is a beautiful time of remembrance of God's great gift to us, His Son. If you need the loving attention of trained, caring people in our church as you maneuver dark times in this season when others are joyous, a Stephen Minister is just a phone call or email away. Please reach out to Barrett, Isaac, or Pat Barte, Stephen Leader.

2020-2021 Directory is now available. Please pick one up today at the check-in table or contact the office if you need one mailed to you.

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.

Prayer Concerns: Carol Beckman; Eleanor Brazell; Barbara Bruce; Julie Chesnutt; Barbara Hughes; Corny Laube; Kirk Pumphrey; Vivien Rothwell; Elizabeth Small; family of Brian and Sarah (daughter of John & Patricia Hibbard) and other friends and loved ones afflicted with the Coronavirus.

Attendance: 12/6 57 outdoor
12/13 81 online

Financial Update

| December 10-16 | Actual | Actual YTD | 2020 Budget |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Pledge Member Giving | \$13,015 | \$399,606 | \$439,217 |
| Non-Pledge Member Giving | \$1,796 | \$ 76,349 | \$80,000 |
| 2020 Prepaid Pledges | \$0 | \$ 21,983 | \$21,983 |
| Loose Offering | \$540 | \$ 17,929 | \$15,000 |
| Total | \$15,351 | \$ 515,867 | \$556,200 |

If you have any announcements that you would like to appear in the *Happenings*, weekly email, or Good News, please email them to Terri Clayton, terri@mvpchurch.org.