



May 2021

Good News

Month At-A-Glance

May 2

Senior Sunday Outdoor
Worship 11am

May 9

Mother's Day Outdoor
Worship 11am

May 12

Taizé 7:30pm

May 15

PW May Day Circle
Meeting/Lunch/Officer
Installation 11:30pm

May 16

Ascension of the Lord
Sunday Outdoor Worship
11am

May 23

Pentecost Sunday Service
11 am / location TBD

Food Drive & Fur Babies
2 pm

May 30

Trinity Sunday Service 10
am / location TBD

May 31

Memorial Day

Office Closed



We look forward to worshipping with you
outdoors on May 2, 9 & 16 at 11 am!
Signup [here](#) or on our website.



Tune-in each Wednesday on our website,
Facebook, or Instagram for Midweek Manna! This
new series is designed to be a primer for Sunday
and to hopefully help you in the present moment
in which you find yourself. In these videos, the
worship staff here at Mount Vernon Presbyterian
Church will lead you on a journey through
scripture, music, and prayer.



He is





Risen





EASTER



SERVICE



FELLOWSHIP Zoom



May 9, 2021 12:30PM

In partnership with LNP, CORE, and MVPC, a Covid 19 Vaccine drive-thru will be on campus for Dose 1 on May 8-9, Dose 2 on May 29-30. CORE and LNP have opened this up to our members who may have not been vaccinated yet. If you are interested, please use this link to set up an appointment: ninosvax.coreresponse.org. Go to the specific day you want and sign up.

COVID-19 Vaccines

Los Niños Primero

471 Mount Vernon Hwy NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328

1st Dose: May 8
2nd Dose: May 29
11 AM - 5 PM

Scan to register for an
appointment or visit:
ninosvax.coreresponse.org



Pfizer will be administered and requires 2 doses. Second dose scheduled on-site. For 16+ years old.



COVID-19 Vaccines

Los Niños Primero

471 Mount Vernon Hwy NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328

1st Dose: May 9
2nd Dose: May 30
2 PM - 7 PM

Scan to register for an
appointment or visit:
ninosvax.coreresponse.org



Pfizer will be administered and requires 2 doses. Second dose scheduled on-site. For 16+ years old.



From 30,000 Feet to 471 Mount Vernon

Recently I came across the highlights of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) [2020 statistical report](#). Each year this is sent out, it is the 30,000 foot barometer for how the denomination is doing. This year was largely no different from every other year that I have been alive. The PCUSA lost 4.3% of its membership and currently the denomination has 1.24 million members. As a denomination, we have not experienced numerical growth since our membership peaked at 4.25 million people in 1965.

I think this is why I don't get too worried when I read this news each year. People have been telling me the church is dying since I was a kid, and each year later, we look back and come to the conclusion that the good things took place and good news was shared. If you were at our annual meeting in late March, I believe you once again sensed that truth as you departed our courtyard. Are the days where masses of people joined the church each year largely gone? Yes. On one of my first Sundays in the late summer of 2019 we had 7 people join one morning. Not counting confirmation classes, I suspect I will never see that again. Maybe, but I am not counting on it. We are in an era where growth will take place 1-2 people at a time. I don't expect us to gain young families with children just because their child starts attending the Mount Vernon School. Nor do I expect a visitor to join just because they came to worship with us 3-4 times and took one of our welcome bags home (Though I think I would join based on the bags alone! Who doesn't need a tasty jam in their life!). In this time of mistrust toward institutions, people demand a relationship to form before a commitment will take place. I welcome that. It means they will likely remain involved and active once they do formally join.

People of Mount Vernon you are a very self-motivated congregation. You amaze and inspire your staff and I with your resilience, determination, and belief that your church has so much to offer whoever walks onto the courtyard and hopefully, in the near future, into the sanctuary. That's why during the pandemic, your statistical report at 471 Mount Vernon did not match the 30,000 foot view of the PCUSA. Your membership stayed stable. Depending upon how you breakdown "views" of our online worship services, we might have actually seen a bump in attendance.

Recently, I saw where church pastors asked one another if they received a second Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan. We didn't. Why? Because we didn't qualify. Your giving, not just to our church, but beyond, to our Covid-19 fund, ensured that. That tells me you believe the work we are doing is necessary. It tells me you too do not put much stock in the narrative. It tells me that for all the sadness and angst that we see swirling around and that, yes, is within our communal body, we believe God will provide.

Keep sharing our story. Invite a friend, better yet, invite two. We have a good story to tell. One that people, I believe and I think you believe, long for. Let's share that story of 471 Mount Vernon. Otherwise, they will only see the 30,000 foot view.

Grace and Peace,

Barrett



**STAY
CONNECTED!**



YOU CAN NOW



FOLLOW

US ON TWITTER

—
@MVPRESBCHURCH



New member, Minnie Robinson, out with friends for after church lunch. Attending from left to right: Minnie Robinson, Dee Bradford-Smith, Christy Hill and Sybil Washington.

Small groups are gathering now. If you were considering joining a group, it's not too late to contact David Hill at david.hill321@comcast.net for details.



Presbyterian Women

Please Join Us for a



Picnic on the Patio

**Saturday, May 15
11:30am**

All women of the church are invited. Please RSVP to Ann Williams at as97williams@gmail.com by May 11. Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt will also install new officers. Lunch will be provided. However, we will gratefully accept any donations to be given to the Community Assistance Center.

*Let us know of any dietary restrictions.

The Spring-Summer Issue of THE MVPC MEMBERS' GIFT OF WISDOM is available at the Entry Table at our Outdoor Services, online, or by [clicking here!](#)

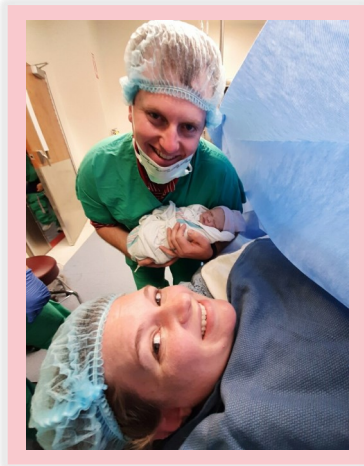
Monday - Friday
8 am - 12 pm
Appointment Only-Contact Barrett

Pastor Office Hours

Tuesday - Thursday
10 am - 2 pm
Appointment Only-Contact Isaac

Please keep these individuals and their families in your prayers.

Praise the Lord! John and Patricia Hibbard are proud grandparents of Emma Kate, born to Sarah 4/27/21! Baby Emma Kate is off oxygen and breathing on her own now! Let's do keep Emma Kate in our prayers until she is perfectly healthy and back home with her parents. They thank you for all of your prayers for this precious little girl.



Ann Baynham had knee replacement surgery – prayers for a perfect recovery and healing!!

Prayers for complete healing and skilled doctors for Bruce Hagenau for two conditions: aggressive prostate cancer and asynchronous heartbeat caused by atrial fibrillation and atrial flutter.

Prayers for Rylynn to walk independently.

Prayers for Kirk Pumphrey to gain strength and movement in his left hand and arm.

Prayers for complete healing for Jane Schultz after surgery for carpal tunnel in her hand.

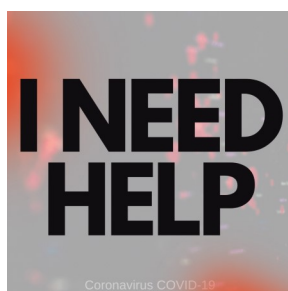
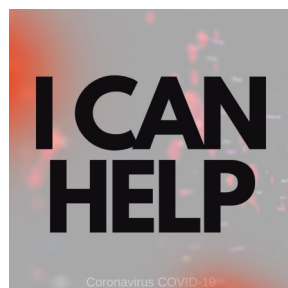
Prayers for Julie Chesnutt; she has started infusions every three weeks until July as the final round of treatment.

Prayers for continued healing and relief from back pain and surgery for Bill Norman.

Prayers for recovery and improvement for Corny Laube.

Prayers for freedom from addiction for Rob Southard.

Prayers for strength and provision for vulnerable children, families, and staff we support at schools and an orphanage in Zambia, with Los Niño's Primero, Community Assistance Center, and with Family Promise. Prayers for health and peace for our children, parents, and teachers at school and for those who opt for homeschooling or a gap year navigating education during a pandemic. A new group of seniors are getting ready to graduate, and college students will return home soon with an education away from home during a pandemic. God is good!





ONLINE



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

MAIL



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

**WAYS
TO
GIVE**

QR CODE



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 above.

2021 Session Members and Ministry Teams

Christian Education
Carrie Southard

Clerk of Session
David Hill

Congregational Care
Joy Carden

Fellowship
David Barclift

Finance/
Administration/
Stewardship
Charlie Gray
John Hibbard

Moderators
Rev. Barrett Abernethy
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

Outreach
Carol Beckman
Brent Schwieger

Personnel
Vacant (merged with
FAMT for 2021 only)

Senior Adults
Mary Kilgore

Stewardship
Wit Truitt

Witness
Angie Hawthorne

Worship
Wendy Hagenau
Dale Morine
Amy Kiley

Youth
Jon Barber
Ben Barber



Summary of the Stated Meeting of the Session Sunday, April 18, 2021

Rev. Abernethy called the meeting to order and opened with prayer at 1:00 pm. The Session continues to meet using Zoom video conferencing. All elders were present along with both pastors.

Announcements/Reminders:

The Worship Ministry Team is planning three outdoor worship services for May the 2nd, 9th, and 16th.

Committee Reports:

Various ministry teams gave reports including Christian Education which announced that Small Groups are off to a good start. This spring we have five groups meeting, one of which is for young adults. Vacation Bible School will not be held; instead, children will have planned outings as well as opportunities to work on service projects. More information will be announced at a later date.

The Finance/Administration ministry team announced that member giving is still on track to address budget needs. The ministry team did point out that in the near future the church will need to replace the HVAC system in the sanctuary building. This system is well beyond its life expectancy. Replacement will be costly, but the expense will be shared between the church and Mount Vernon School.

The Outreach ministry team reminded the Session that the COVID Pandemic Fund, administered through the MVPC Foundation was created one year ago this month. We did not know how successful the effort to help our community during this unprecedented time would be, but as always, the MVPC family has come through with generous contributions. To date, about \$81,000 has been contributed and used to support the work of a variety of outreach partners. The need continues to be great so the COVID Task Force encourages everyone's continued generosity.

The Witness Ministry Team's hard work is paying off. The Easter Sunday outdoor worship service had eight visitors. More events are in the works to help the community know about our church community.

Church Rolls Update

New Members – In the Sunday service we welcomed Minnie Robinson, a longtime attendee as a new member. Minnie joins Mount Vernon through reaffirmation of faith.

Baptisms – Jacqueline Penelope Nix, daughter of member Anmadri Badenhorst and Ethan Nix, was baptized on Palm Sunday.

Removal from Active Rolls – none

Deaths – none

Current Membership – 394

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.



Old and New Business

Several actions were taken by the Session related to use of the church campus. Over the past year the pandemic forced major changes and implementation of CDC guidelines to protect against COVID-19. As conditions improve, we are able to loosen some of the restrictions.

Beginning with the new school year in August, Mount Vernon School will be able to resume using those parts of the building that were unavailable to the school this year including use of the sanctuary for chapel and the choir room for performing arts.

The Atlanta Concert Band has been approved to use the church courtyard for rehearsals following safety protocols and at times the campus is not in use by church groups.

The Youth Ministry Team was approved to serve cupcakes following the outdoor worship service on May 2nd. This service is Senior Sunday when we recognize those who will be graduating from high schools and postsecondary schools.

Additional communion services were approved for May 16th and 30th.

Commissioners who will represent MVPC at the May 11th Presbytery meeting will be Mary Kilgore, Dale Morine, and David Hill.

Joy Carden gave the Session an update on the work of the Congregational Care Ministry Team. Ministry teams this year are updating the descriptions of their responsibilities. Part of the updating process is presenting to and seeking feedback from the Session. Each month a different ministry team will present.

Pastor's Reports

Rev. Abernethy reports that he has been in discussions with Columbia Seminary about the possibility of having a ministry intern working at our church in the near future. The pastoral staff and the Worship Ministry Team are looking ahead at how worship services might take place as pandemic conditions improve. At the worship service an informal poll was taken regarding the congregation's feelings about moving to indoor worship. The results: 39 people indicated a willingness to worship indoors, 6 said no to moving indoors, and 30 people did not respond.

Rev. Toney-Schmitt discussed the youth gatherings this spring and the various styles of worship they used. He is looking forward to and hoping the youth will be able to move indoors in the fall so they can add food and fellowship to the Sunday afternoon gatherings.

Rev. Toney-Schmitt closed the meeting with prayer.

The Session will continue to conduct business using Zoom video conferencing. The next meeting will be on May 16th and will begin at 1:00 pm.

Contact

Debbie@mvpchurch.org

if you would like a copy of the
Annual Report.

2020 Annual Report



471 Mount Vernon Highway, NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328
404.255.2211
www.mvpchurch.org



Discovery

Sundays 10 am via Zoom

Preschool Zoom

Mondays 1:30 pm

Elementary Girls

Once a Month In-Person Outside

The COVID-19 Fund – A Year in Review



The COVID-19 Fund was established by Session at its April 2020 meeting, and members of the Task Force (Carol Beckman, Christy Hill, and Jeanne Mielke) were approved at the same time. The purpose of the fund was to give the congregation an opportunity to make donations to go directly to our ministry partners to help them more effectively deal with the added challenges of the Covid pandemic.

Through regular online meetings and close communication with our ministry partners, the Task Force has prayerfully considered how to disperse the funds so generously donated by the congregation. To date, **\$80,882** has been received and **\$77,471** dispersed to address hunger, homelessness, and quality of life issues in Sandy Springs, the greater Atlanta area, and across the world in Zambia. Recipients include:

The Community Assistance Center

Family Promise of North Fulton/DeKalb

Garden Presbyterian Church, Zambia

Alliance for Children Everywhere, Zambia

Los Niño's Primero

Stirred Up Ministries

International Women's House

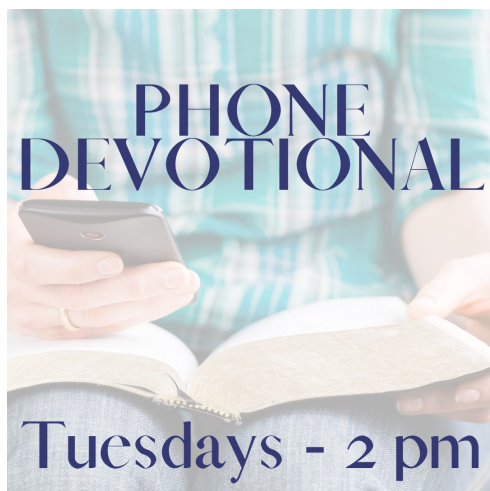
Drake House

New Church Development Commission, Presbytery of Greater Atlanta

Teacher Supply Closet, Sandy Springs Education Force

While we pray for an end to the pandemic and a return to a more "normal" life, we realize that many of our vulnerable brothers and sisters will continue to suffer for many months to come. Thank you for continuing to support the COVID-19 Fund.

For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me. Matthew 25



Join us on Tuesdays at 2 pm
for a phone devotional!

Dial 701-802-5094

Access Code: 5154569



May 12—7:30 pm
Join us for scripture, song,
and silence.

Signup on our website or
[here](#).

Grace and Peace! Welcome to the bit of poetry tucked away in the middle of the Good News. Easter has come and gone on our calendar, but the Easter season continues to burst with new wonders and life. The lingering bits of winter thaw out. The Earth blooms and blossoms. The animals emerge to an abundance of potential and life. And, as Mary Oliver points out, new life in Christ takes hold. Enjoy this bit of poetry and enjoy God's beautiful creation!

Isaac

Spring
By: Mary Oliver

*And here is the serpent again,
dragging himself out from his nest of
darkness,
his cave under the black rocks,
his winter-death.
He slides over the pine needles.
He loops around the bunches of rising
grass,
looking for the sun.*

*Well, who doesn't want the sun after
the long winter?
I step aside,
he feels the air with his soft tongue,
around the bones of his body he
moves like oil,*

*downhill he goes
toward the black mirrors of the pond.
Last night it was still so cold
I woke and went out to stand in the
yard,
and there was no moon.*

*So I just stood there, inside the jaw of
nothing.*

*An owl cried in the distance,
I thought of Jesus, how he
crouched in the dark for two nights,
then floated back above the horizon.*

*There are so many stories,
more beautiful than answers.
I follow the snake down to the pond,*

*thick and musky he is
as circular as hope.*

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



The Information Center is outside the Church office if you need Upper Room Devotionals (May-June) These Days Devotionals (April-June), the Good News, Stephen Ministry information, The MVPC Members' Gift of Wisdom, or Care Notes.



As things are getting better, with hospitalization numbers dropping and vaccines more readily available to most teens and adults, most people are feeling comfortable to resume some normalcy of life patterns. If you are not feeling adventuresome, maybe feeling unable to move forward, please contact Stephen Ministry and let us walk with you during this period of transition. You may have lost a loved one and not found real closure, you may be fearful of social relationships after being a hermit for a year, you may have financial problems from business or job loss, you may be an overburdened caregiver, you may be battling a health issue or have recently gotten a sober medical diagnosis, or you may be facing a divorce or a move. Stephen Ministers are trained, supervised, caring Christian helpers who walk into the difficulty with you. We comfort, listen, and hear you in a confidential one-on-one relationship for as long as you need us. Let Barrett, Isaac, or Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, know you want to get involved.

April 23-28	Actual	Actual YTD	2021 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$20,170	\$211,793	\$438,290
Member Giving Non- Pledge	\$0	\$10,480	\$70,000
Non member giving & Loose offering	\$0	\$5,432	\$6,000
Total for week	\$20,170	\$227,705	\$514,290

Children's Ministry

Our children's ministry at MVPC continues to gather digitally and in-person. See the many ways we've gathered this month, as well as the activities on the horizon!

Each Monday at 1:30pm we host a 20-25 minute Preschool Zoom Get Together of fun songs and Christian lessons. These get togethers are open to any young friend who would like to join and often bring together friends from across the country. Please invite your friends and relatives! You can contact the leader of this group, Carrie Southard (carriensouth@gmail.com), to receive the Zoom link.

This past April we made birthday cards for folks at the International Women's Shelter, made sandwiches for Clifton Sanctuary Ministries, shared Easter baskets during worship service, and continued our Godly Play ministry during the 11am worship service.

We will host our next Godly Play Lesson on May 16 during the 11am outdoor worship. Godly Play lessons lead children through the Bible with interactive story-telling, wonder-based questions, and craft activities. To participate in these lessons, please register your family for the May 16 outdoor worship service and make a note on SignUpGenius that your child will participate in Godly Play. All the children will sit with their family at the start of outdoor worship, then will leave for the picnic area beside the Fellowship Hall about ten minutes into the service. Godly Play will wrap up when the outdoor service concludes. Please contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt (isaac@mvpchurch.org) or Carrie Southard (carriensouth@gmail.com) if you would like more information or would like to join!

The May Communion Offering is non-perishable food for the Food Pantry at the Community Assistance Center. Most needed items include:

Canned meats (tuna, chicken, etc.)

Canned fruits and vegetables

Canned pastas and pasta sauce (no glass jars, please)

Cereal/Oatmeal

Macaroni and Cheese

Canned meat entrees (chili, beef stew, etc.)

Peanut Butter

Jelly

Soup

Rice

Donations may be brought to the in-person worship services in May or dropped off at any time in the bin outside the church office.

A drive-thru event is also scheduled for May 23 from 2-4 PM. Please consider purchasing food donations as a part of your regular grocery shopping routine by taking advantage of “buy one, get one free” at some supermarkets or the extra 10% habit recommended by a fellow church member – buy one item to donate for every ten items in your cart.

Thank you for your generosity!



May 16
11 am



Youth Group—May
2, 5-6 pm
Top Golf Alpharetta
May 16, 4-6pm



MAY 23, 2021

Blessing of the Animals 2 PM Food Drive 2 PM - 4 PM

**FOOD DRIVE
& FUR BABIES
DRIVE-IN**

May

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.
  						
2 Senior Sunday Outdoor Worship 11am Youth Group	3 Preschool Zoom 1:30pm	4 Presbytery Zoom 9am Staff Meeting 9:30am PW CT Zoom 10am Phone Devotional 2pm CE Meeting 5pm	5	6	7 Budget Meeting 9am	8 Drive-Thru Vaccinations 11am-5pm
9 Outdoor Worship 11am Fellowship Zoom 12:30pm Drive-Thru Vaccinations 2-7pm Mother's Day	10 Preschool Zoom 1:30pm Finance Admin. 5:30pm	11 Presbytery Zoom 9am Staff Meeting 9:30am Phone Devo. 2pm Worship Committee 4pm	12 Taizé 7:30pm	13	14 PW Book Circle Zoom 10am	15 May Day Circle meeting, lunch & PW CT Officer Installation 11:30pm
16 Ascension of the Lord Sunday Outdoor Worship 11am Godly Play 11am Session 1pm End of year Youth Group	17 Preschool Zoom 1:30pm	18 Staff Meeting 9:30am Phone Devo. 2pm Good News Deadline Good News Deadline	19	20	21 Maritza M. Appreciation Day	22
23 Pentecost Service 11am/ location TBD Food Drive & Fur Babies 2pm	24 Preschool Zoom 1:30pm	25 Staff Meeting 9:30am Phone Devotional 2pm	26 Last day for MVS students	27 LNP Board Meeting 7pm Good News Published	28	29 Drive-Thru Vaccinations 11am-5pm
30 Trinity Sunday Service 10am / location TBD Drive-Thru Vaccinations 2-7pm	31 Preschool Zoom 1:30pm Office Closed Memorial Day		In addition to our physical address, we now have a PO Box. MVPC PO BOX 76051 Sandy Springs, GA 30358			

May Birthdays

Shelly	Ray	5/1	Mary Earle	Pelfrey	5/19
David	Hill	5/2	Nathan	Abernethy	5/20
Sam	Nelson	5/2	Robin	Lindsey	5/20
Andrew	Nelson	5/2	Catie	O'Hare	5/20
Brad	Skidmore	5/4	Helen	Bigham	5/22
Mike	Smith	5/5	Jon	Barber	5/22
Guy	Lever	5/6	Ed	Spain	5/23
Kendra	Boyer	5/7	Warren	Aldrich	5/24
Helen	Johnson	5/13	Laura	Northrop	5/26
Tim	Southard	5/15	Wynn	Sims	5/29
Anmadri	Badenhorst	5/16	Spencer	Ponsell	5/29

If you have May birthday and your name does not appear in our birthday list, please contact Debbie@mvpchurch.org.



The annual Mother's Day Offering for Presbyterian Homes of Georgia will be received on May 9. This offering is a long tradition at Mount Vernon and other Presbyterian churches throughout the state with all proceeds going to the *Caring Hands Fund*.

These funds provide assistance to elderly residents who have outlived their financial resources and ensure that no one is ever asked to leave one of the homes due to inability to pay.

Donations may be sent to the church office with "Mother's Day Offering" written in the check memo line. Online donations may be made by going to phgainc.org - from the menu select "donate" and then "Caring Hands Offering".



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

PLACE
STAMP
HERE

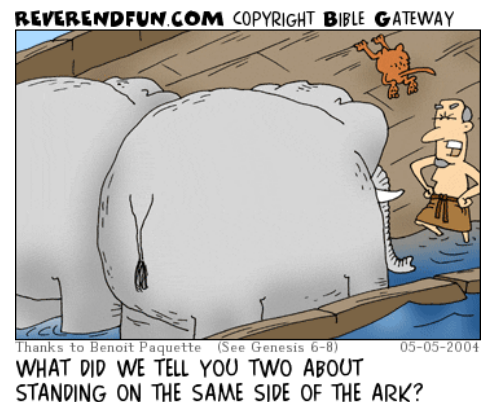
Return Service Requested

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/Head of Staff	barrett@mvpchurch.org
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt	Associate Pastor of Faith Formation	Isaac@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://www.instagram.com/mvp_church)