



# MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 12, 2021 ✠ 10:30 AM

† *For those who are able, please stand.*

*As we move from a time of fellowship in Connection to a time of worship in Church,  
let us enter the Sanctuary in a prayerful manner,  
and may we open our hearts and minds to worship God.*

### ✠ GATHERING ✠

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#### RINGING OF THE BELLS

#### INTROIT

“Sleepers, Wake! A Voice Astounds Us”

Attr. Philipp Nicolai (1556-1608) • Harm. J.S. Bach (1685-1750)

#### PRELUDE

“Awake, the Voice is Calling Us” BWV 645  
Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)

Dr. Kenneth Sass

#### WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, & PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

#### † LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Members circa 1990s

ONE: We came to this church because we were told it is a place that has a heart for mission.

ALL: Today we hear that mission means offering food to the hungry,  
offering clothing to the naked, offering care to the sick...

ONE: That is why we are called to light the candle of joy. For joy is found in serving the least of these.

ALL: Let us find joy this Advent season,  
lighting up the world through actions that connect earth with heaven.

ONE: To God be the Glory! Let us worship God!

#### † MORNING SONG #8

“Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates”

TRURO

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates,  
Behold, the King of glory waits;  
The King of kings is drawing near;  
The Savior of the world is here!

Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
Make it a temple, set apart  
From earthly use for heaven's employ,  
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide  
My heart to Thee: here, Lord, abide.  
Let me Thy inner presence feel;  
Thy grace and love in me reveal.

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Shari Freeman

ONE: In the lives of neighbors who suffer brokenness and pain:

ALL: **We confess you are still speaking!**

ONE: In the struggle of the poor whose rights are not honored:

ALL: **We confess you are still speaking!**

ONE: In a world crying out for wisdom, love and mercy:

ALL: **We confess you are still speaking!**

ONE: In a world calling for the blessing of truth:

ALL: **We confess you are still speaking! Bless us to hear!**

ONE: Let us confess together:

ALL: **We confess that in our lives we often hide behind our work and play, schools and jobs, fun and fashion. We let ourselves get so busy that we forget the cause of the poor and the suffering. We confess we allow the powers of this world to seduce us into selfishness and silence our witness. Teach us to champion the cause of justice for all, strengthen us to love our neighbor and speak truth no matter the penalty. (*Silent Confession...*)**

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

† RESPONSE

**"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"**

VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
And ransom captive Israel,  
That mourns in lonely exile here  
Until the Son of God appear.

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

*(All children 5th grade and younger are invited to come forward for storytelling and prayer.)*

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

*(Please greet each other with the peace of Christ, in a manner comfortable for one another.)*

✠ THE WORD ✠

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PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Rev. Abernethy

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 25:31-46

HOMILY

*Eternal Action*

## ✠ RESPONSE ✠

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† SONG IN RESPONSE (*See Insert*)

“Canticle of the Turning”  
STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*from a Brief Statement of Faith, Lines 7-18*)

Shari Freeman

We trust in Jesus Christ,  
Fully human, fully God.  
Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:  
preaching good news to the poor  
and release to the captives,  
teaching by word and deed  
and blessing the children,  
healing the sick  
and binding up the brokenhearted,  
eating with outcasts,  
forgiving sinners,  
and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

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.

OFFERTORY

“For My Soul Thirsteth for God”  
from *Psalms* 42: Op. 42, No. 2  
Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

Dr. Roger Scanlan, Tenor

† DOXOLOGY

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”  
OLD HUNDREDTH

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

† PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Piper Neumann

## ✠ SENDING ✠

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### † SONG FOR DISMISSAL #15

#### “Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers”

LLANGLOFFAN

Rejoice! Rejoice, believers, And let your lights appear;  
The evening is advancing And darker night is near.  
The Bridegroom is arising And soon He will draw nigh;  
Up, watch with expectation, At the midnight comes the cry.  
See that your lamps are burning, Replenish them with oil;  
Look now for your salvation, The end of sin and toil.  
The marriage feast is waiting, The gates wide open stand;  
Arise, O heirs of glory, The Bridegroom is at hand!  
Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;  
Arise, Thou Sun so longed for, Above this shadowed sphere!  
With hearts and hands uplifted, We plead, O Lord, to see  
The day of earth's redemption, And ever be with Thee!

### † BENEDICTION

Rev. Abernethy

### † CHORAL RESPONSE

#### “Amen”

Marty Haugen (b. 1950)

### POSTLUDE

#### “Awake, the Voice is Calling Us” Op. 5, No. 7

Dr. Sass

Paul Manz (1919-2009)

#### “Awake, the Voice is Calling Us” Op. 135a, No. 25

Max Reger (1873-1916)



#### Leading Today's Worship Service

Rev. Barrett Abernethy, Senior Pastor

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor

Matthias Young, Director of Worship

Dr. Kenneth Sass, Principal Organist

Dr. Roger Scanlan, Tenor Soloist

Shari Freeman, Seminary Intern

*We thank you for worshipping with us today. If you are so moved and would like to give a tithe or offering,  
there are collection plates as you exit.*

*If you are interested in joining MVP Church, go to the Visitor's Table to pick up a visitor bag with a little gift  
and someone will be there to greet you.*

We are located at  
471 Mount Vernon Hwy, NE  
Sandy Springs, GA 30328  
[mvpchurch.org](http://mvpchurch.org)



Our mailing address is  
P.O. Box 76051  
Sandy Springs, GA 30358



## MVPC Announcements....

### Zooming Thru The Carols

- Dec. 13** "Little Drummer Boy" Isaac  
**Dec. 14** "Do You Hear What I Hear?" Shari  
**Dec. 15** "O Little Town of Bethlehem"  
Isaac  
**Dec. 16** "First Noel" Matthias  
**Dec. 17** "We Three Kings" Barrett



**Welcome!** Per Church Policy – We recommend the wearing of masks while indoors. If you would like more information on the church protocols, you can find a link on our website.

**Visitors & Membership:** Please go to our website: [mvpchurch.org](http://mvpchurch.org), contact our church office at 404.255.2211, or speak with one of our pastors after the service. If you are interested in joining MVP Church, please stop at the **Welcome Table in the Narthex** and pick up a visitor bag where someone will be there to greet you.



### Upcoming Services:



- December 19 Lessons & Carols  
December 19 Longest Night Service, 5:00pm in the Chapel  
December 24 Live Nativity, 5:00pm  
December 24 Christmas Eve, 5:30pm  
December 26 Carols & Casseroles



**Atlanta Concert Band Christmas Concert:** TODAY at 4:00pm in the Sanctuary.

**Drivers Needed:** We are in need of drivers to pick up residents from the MV Towers and bring them to church on Sunday mornings. Sedans are preferable to SUVs for mobility issues. Please contact the church if you would like to help in this ministry.



**Stephen Ministry:** Why are we called Stephen ministers? We are named for one of the first church's members, Stephen, who truly believed in caring for his fellow members, reaching out to those around him who were hungry, ill, or in need of care. We treasure this association to the beginnings of the church and feel honored to carry out the same mission. If you are feeling alone, discouraged, confused, sad, ill, or needing another person to walk difficult paths with you, please call a minister or Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader.

**Family Promise:** Your MVP Coordinators are happy to announce that **Dunwoody Community Church** has joined with **B'nai Torah** in providing valuable support as we all strive to make this group's time at **Mount Vernon Presbyterian** filled with the spirit and warmth of the holiday season. Please bring non-perishable items on/before Dec. 23 to the church office; and perishable items on Sunday, Dec. 26 to Fellowship Hall. Penny Kiel will be in Fellowship Hall to receive your items until 3:30pm. SignUp Genius is in the weekly email.

**December 12, 2021**



Make sure to follow us  
on social media to stay  
up to date!

**Youth:** We will meet today from 5-6:30pm at Gailey Hall. We will gather to share a meal, fellowship, bible study, as well as make smore's by the fire outside! We need volunteers to provide dinners. Please contact Isaac to signup.

**Conversation (Adult Sunday School):** At 9:30am the **Crossroads** class meets in the Session Room; and the **Discovery** class meets in the Chapel.

**The Christmas Joy Offering**, one of four annual special offerings of the Presbyterian Church (USA), will be received on Sunday, December 19. Donations go to the denomination's General Assembly to provide support for current and retired ministers and other church workers experiencing health and other financial challenges. A portion of the funds also goes to support Presbyterian-affiliated colleges providing education to racial and ethnic minorities (including Stillman College in Alabama).

**Children's Christian Education** will be in the Chapel during the second half of worship.

**Outreach Tree for the Homeless:** Please bring warm winter clothing and grooming products to decorate the Outreach Tree in the Narthex. Need gloves, hats, scarves, socks, coats/jackets, flannel shirts, sweatpants, hoodies, sturdy shoes, sneakers, rainwear, and blankets.



**The Presbyterian Women's Christmas Lunch and Celebration** is **TODAY** in the Kirk Center after the Sunday service. Rev. Isaac and Christina Toney-Schmitt will share some Advent Poems.

**The MVPC Members' Gift of Wisdom** Winter issue will be available in January.

**The December Communion Offering** is new, unwrapped toys and clothing for the children at the International Women's House, a shelter for abused refugee and immigrant women and their children. Please bring all donations to the church office any time before **December 19**.

**Prayer Concerns:** Carol Beckman, Inez Cole, Bruce Hagenau, Alistair Morine, Harry Nelson, Mary Lou Newman, Richard Player, Rob Southard, Katie Spotloe, Dave Whitacre, family of Yvonne White and vulnerable families

**Attendance:** 12/5 93(Sanctuary), 58(online)

*Please sign the attendance pad and pass it down the pew as you greet your neighbor.*

Giving



### Financial Update

December 1-8	Actual	Actual YTD	2021 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$34,875	\$490,052	\$438,290
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 2,947	\$ 41,853	\$ 70,000
Non Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 50	\$ 8,329	\$ 6,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$37,872</b>	<b>\$540,234</b>	<b>\$ 514,290</b>

If you have any announcements that you would like to appear in the *Happenings* or *Good News*, please email them to [debbie@mvpchurch.org](mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org)