



February 2022

# Good News

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## PASTOR'S DESK

*Welcome!*

### *Can I Get a Witness?*

As we ease our way into another year, I want to use much of this space going forward to share with you the joys I find working with your various ministry teams. This month I want to start with our Witness Team. This team of four (Angie and Robby Hawthorne, Dee Bradford-Smith, and David Hill) is small; so if you are longing to join a team and want to live out Christian Hospitality, this is the team for you! I have the privilege of staffing this team and so I want to share what they are up to and how you can help!

#### **What is the Witness Team?**

The Witness Ministry Team is the part of the church that ensures that visitors and members alike feel welcomed and encouraged by the church. They aim to promote the congeniality here at Mount Vernon once people enter the door and try to connect them to other ministries within the life of the church.

#### **What are they currently working on?**

The Witness Team can definitely use your help! They want to start a **Greeter Program** that would serve each Sunday, welcoming people at the door and instructing visitors where to go upon arrival. If you would like to help, please contact Angie Hawthorne or reach out to the church office.

#### **How you can help?**

Join the team! Invite someone to church. There is a meme I often see on social media that says 90% of people who join a church did so because they were invited by a friend. I know memes are not the most reliable, but I can tell you from (futile) experience that stat sounds very true.

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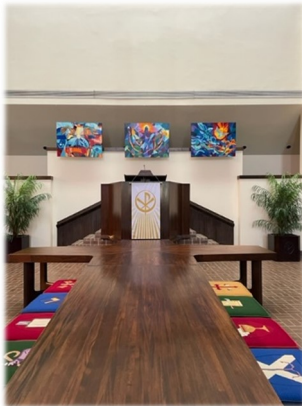
Invite them to church specifically on **February 27. Following worship we will have an inquirers lunch in the Fellowship Hall.** We welcome any and all new members, as well as visitors to join us for lunch, a time to hear from some of the other ministry teams to see what they are doing, including Q & A with the pastors.

See you- and your friends- in church!

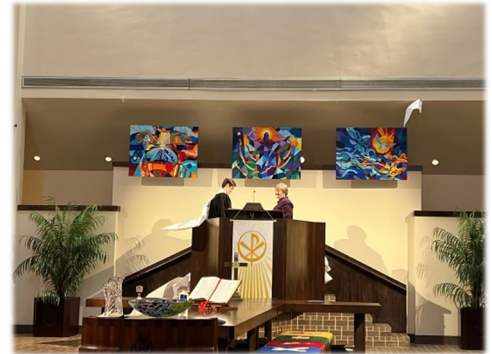
*Barrett*

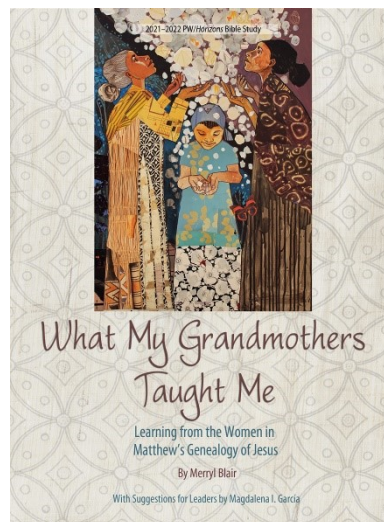
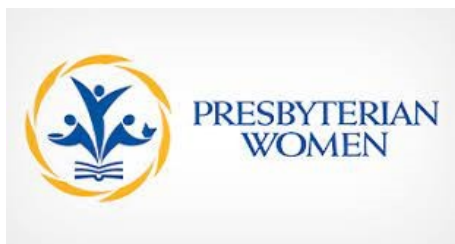


## Reveal of Paintings by Donna Martin



Church member, Donna Martin, unveils her 3 paintings, "Father," "Son", and "Holy Spirit" during the January 23 worship service.





In January the Day Circle and the Sunday Circle met together on Tuesday, January 11. They studied lessons 4 and 5 about the Book of Ruth from the Horizons Bible Study. To be safe the meeting was held via Zoom. The Book Circle met on Friday, January 14 at 10:00 and discussed *Small Great Things* by Jodi Picoult.

## Save the date!

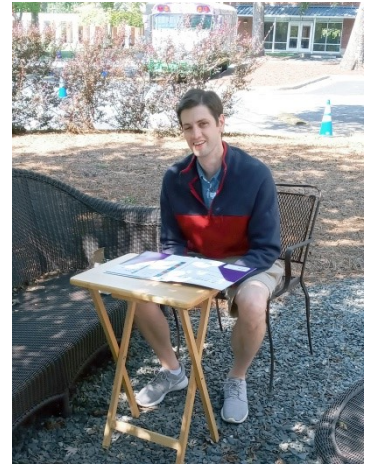
February 6

Nancy Dimmock will speak with us after the service on February 6. Nancy Miller Dimmock is a second-generation missionary. She was born and raised in the Belgian Congo (now DRC) and served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Lesotho. She and her husband Frank served for 30 years with the Presbyterian Church in Lesotho, Malawi and Zambia. Nancy is now retired and living in Decatur, but she is actively working with the Ministry of Hope Lesotho. The presentation will be online or by videoconferencing – we will provide more information soon.

The Winter Issue of THE MVPC MEMBERS' GIFT OF WISDOM available [CLICK HERE](#) for online or in the Narthex.

## Getting to know.....

Rev. Barrett Abernethy  
Pastor/Head of Staff



### What is your all-time favorite book?

*Friday Night Lights*. Some of you may know about the movie or the TV show. The book, however, mirrors so much of my childhood. Woven around a town immersed in high school football, it really is a reflection of the divisions that drive many of today's problems: education, race, economics, and the realization that for some, the best nights of their life will happen all before they turn 18.

### If you could choose to do anything for a day, what would it be?

I would want to go to one of the 423 National Park sites in the USA. This is something that started in the pandemic and I am hooked. Not sure if I will get to them all, but I aim to try! Thus far, I have been to 46 (throughout my lifetime). Every now and then, I will drag my family out of bed on a Saturday and check another off the list – through admittedly, it's getting to where those drives are becoming longer and longer!

### Which would you rather do: wash dishes, mow the lawn, clean the bathroom, or vacuum the house?

Mow the lawn. I didn't get to do this often as a child and even now the house we live in is completely landscaped, but mowing the yard reminds me of my grandfather. He lived on a small cotton farm in dusty west Texas. His yard was no more than the wild weeds that grew until they tumbled down the dirt road. When we visited though, he always had gasoline for his old mower, and I would mow those weeds until I ran out of gas– his "yard" was as many acres as I could mow. I always felt like I accomplished something on those days.

### What is your proudest accomplishment?

I am a Father, Husband, and Pastor, and the order of those three identities changes often on an hourly basis. I am most proud when at the end of the day I can take satisfaction in the knowledge that I did the best I could in living out my responsibilities to all three.

### What is your favorite family recipe?

My late grandmother made rice broccoli casserole that my mother now makes each Thanksgiving at our house. My father makes a mean chicken fried steak and a scrumptious pecan pie. We'll invite you over sometime!



We are excited to partner with other Atlanta PC(USA) congregations in the Vital Congregations Initiative! Through an abundance of study tools, church assessments, visioning strategies, and presbytery cohorts for our pastors and elders, this initiative will help us discern where we are as a church and where we may be headed.

We kicked-off at our Session Retreat with a presentation by the Rev. Katie Day, one of our VCI facilitators and pastor at Pleasant Hill Presbyterian. She shared her experiences in the program at a previous call, as well as what we can expect throughout 2022. She was a joy to listen to and shared hopes and prayers from the Presbytery.

We will kick-off again in February, this time in worship, with a seven-week sermon series on the seven marks of vital congregations: Lifelong Discipleship, Intentional Authentic Evangelism, Outward Incarnational Focus, Empowered Servant Leadership, Spirit-Inspired Worship, Caring Relationships, and Ecclesial Health. Join us on the journey!"



# Session Retreat

January 21 & 22, 2022



Whew! We're done!



Gloria, Wendy, Charlie



Budget Talk 2022



Isaac



Lone Ranger  
(Carol Beckman)



Shari & Rev. Katie Day



Ben Barber, Kyle Cumming, Jon Barber



Isaac & David



Social Distancing



Shari & Mary



What's on the floor?



Shari & Barrett



John Hibbard



Team Building



Masked Bandits

Photos courtesy of Dee Bradford-Smith

## OUTREACH

### The February Communion

**Offering** is for Clifton Sanctuary Ministries, a Presbyterian-affiliated homeless shelter and transitional housing facility in the Lake Claire neighborhood of Atlanta.



Most needed items include: laundry detergent, bleach, household cleaning products, paper towels, bathroom tissue, plastic forks and spoons, sturdy paper plates, paper napkins, hot and cold beverage cups, items for sack lunches (juice boxes, granola bars, fruit/applesauce cups, candy/cookies, and chips), Ziplock sandwich bags, coffee, sugar, instant grits packets, canned vegetables (green beans, corn, and peas), and grooming supplies (men's deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, etc.). Donations may be brought to the church at any time during February. Thank you for your generosity.

For more information about Clifton, please go online to [cliftonsanctuary.com](http://cliftonsanctuary.com).



**Thanks to all** who provided new toys, clothing items, and gift cards for the Santa Shop at the **International Women's House**, a shelter for abused refugee and immigrant women and their children. We received this note from the volunteer/outreach coordinator at IWH:

*To the congregants and staff of Mt Vernon Presbyterian Church,*

*On behalf of International Women's House, please accept my gratitude for your generous donation of Christmas gifts and gift cards.*

*Once again you have made the holidays brighter, the smiles bigger, the sorrows lighter, the children happier, the spirits more joyful, and the hearts filled with love. We truly cherish our partnership with Mt Vernon and treasure your ongoing support.*

*Wishing you all a healthy, happy, and peaceful 2022.*

*Gratefully,  
Lynn Tarnow*

For more information about the shelter, please go online to:  
[internationalwomenshouse.com](http://internationalwomenshouse.com)



# THIS AND THAT!



Taizé is a simple, meditative form of worship.

**February 8, 7pm in the Sanctuary**



**"Inquirers Lunch"**

**February 27**

Are you new member to Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church? Or are you a visitor? Do you have questions about us? You are invited to join us immediately after the worship service and burning of the palms. Please RSVP to the church office by **February 23**.



**New Member**  
Clark Nelson

Also in picture are his wife Colleen and their children who were baptized 1/23  
Rose, Finley, Thomas, Henry



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

**Dial 701-802-5094**



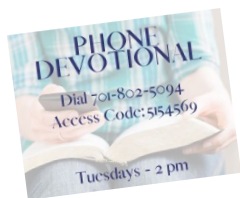
## CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

**MONDAY-THURSDAY**  
8AM-4PM  
**FRIDAY 8AM - 2PM**

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

Mailing address:  
**MVPC**  
**P.O. Box 76051**  
**Sandy Springs, GA 30358**

# February Calendar of Events



Tuesday, February 1

Staff Mtg. - 9:30am  
PW - 10:00am - Zoom  
Phone Devotional - 2:00pm  
Christian Ed. - 5:00pm Zoom  
Vespers @ Towers - 6:30

Wednesday, February 2

Choir Rehearsal - 7:00pm

Sunday, February 6

**Worship - 10:30am**

Tuesday, February 8

Staff Mtg. - 9:30am  
Phone Devotional - 2:00pm  
Vespers @ Towers - 6:30



Wednesday, February 9

Choir Rehearsal - 7:00pm

Sunday, February 13

**Worship - 10:30am**

Monday, February 14

Vespers @ Towers - 5:00pm

FAMT - 5:30pm Zoom

Valentine's Day

Tuesday, February 15

Staff Mtg. - 9:30am  
PW Day Circle - 10am  
Phone Devotional - 2:00pm  
Worship Committee - 4:00pm Zoom  
Vespers @ Towers - 6:30



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN

Wednesday, February 16

Witness Committee - 4:00pm

Choir Rehearsal - 7:00pm

**Good News Deadline**

Friday, February 18

Book Club - 10am

Sunday, February 20

**Worship - 10:30am**

Session Meeting - 11:30am

Winter Dinner - 6:00pm

Youth - 5:00pm

Tuesday, February 22

Staff Mtg. - 9:30am  
Phone Devotional - 2:00pm  
Vespers @ Towers - 6:30

Thursday, February 24

**Publish Good News**

Sunday, February 27

**Worship - 10:30am**

Annual Meeting - 9:30am

Burning of the Palms

Inquirers Lunch

Youth - 5:00pm

SESSION  
MEETING

ANNUAL  
MEETING

## February Birthdays



Laura Snipes



Mike Hughes	2/2
Jack Nelson	2/6
Ella Ponsell	2/9
Erin Jackson	2/15
Kate Christian	2/15
Louise Lord	2/17
Laura Snipes	2/18
Steve Ponsell	2/20
George Hammett	2/22
Taylor Doyle	2/23
Viola Crawford	2/23
John Allen	2/24
Chad Plumly II	2/28



**WAYS  
TO  
GIVE**

**ONLINE**



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

**MAIL**



Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church  
PO BOX 76051  
Sandy Springs, GA 30358

**QR CODE**



January 1- December 31, 2021	Actual YTD	2021 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$510,618	\$438,290
Member Giving Non- Pledge	\$55,722	\$70,000
Non member giving & Loose offering	\$11,648	\$6,000
<b>Total Rec'd</b>	<b>\$577,988</b>	<b>\$514,290</b>

If you have a February birthday and your name does not appear in our birthday list, please contact [Debbie@mvpchurch.org](mailto:Debbie@mvpchurch.org).





**Please keep these individuals and their families in your prayers.**

Pat Bartee – knee replacement surgery went very well and she is at home recovering with her daughter and taking PT. She is in good spirits and please pray for perfect healing.

Carol Beckman – Prayers for remission of non-Hodgkins lymphoma. Carol is doing well and getting back to a normal routine. She appreciates all the prayers!

Inez Cole – prayers for perfect healing following a broken hip.

Bruce Hagenau – prayers for perfect heart rhythm and elimination of prostate cancer. Bruce is feeling MUCH better.

Alistair Morine – Prayers for strength and a miracle of healing.

Beverly Northrop – she's back home and doing well! She has tested negative for Covid.

Richard Player – tests have come back normal!!! He is healed and back to normal. He and his wife Nikole truly appreciate your prayers.

Rob Southard – prayers for freedom from addiction.

Katie Spotloe – test results show that she still has a blockage but the heart has already re-routed blood to make up for the blockage! She is out of danger. Katie is Charlie Gray's niece.

Dave Whitacre – prayers for healing and reduction of pain.

Prayers for strength, provision, health and wholeness for vulnerable children, families and staff we support at schools and an orphanage in Zambia, with Los Niño's Primero, the Community Assistance Center, and with Family Promise.

Do you feel a need for prayer?  
Have our Prayer Vine pray for you!  
Email your requests to  
[prayerrequests@mvpchurch.org](mailto:prayerrequests@mvpchurch.org)  
or call the church office at  
404.255.2211



"Be kind, compassionate, and forgiving to each other,  
in the same way God forgave you in Christ" Eph. 4:32

The whole mission of the MVPC. Stephen Ministry is to funnel Christ's love to someone who needs it. We keep trained in strategies, we meet to encourage each other and learn from each other, we engage in prayer and bible study individually, to be equipped to help spiritually and have prayer partners within our group to enrich our prayer life. We practice confidentiality when we speak among ourselves so that it becomes natural to us with relationships with others. We are ready to help members and friends of members and non-churched community members in one on one, personal relationships that can bring comfort, relief, clarity, and re-creation of life after loss and illness and stress.

Contact a minister or Pat Bartee. Stephen Leader, to begin that experience.





## SESSION MEETING

## Summary of Session Meeting & Retreat January 21-22, 2022

The Session holds its annual retreat each January. The regular monthly Session meeting is held as part of the retreat. Following is a summary of the January 21-22, 2022 meeting:

The Session voted in December to hold the MVPC Annual Meeting on February 27. At this meeting the congregation will be presented with the 2022 budget, elect officers for the MVPC Foundation, the MVPC Corporation, and the 2022 Nominating Committee. In addition, the Session is recommending the congregation approve amendments to the church by-laws. Copies of the 2021 Annual Report will be made available to the congregation. Proposed amendments to the by-laws are available for review.

The 2024 Class of Ruling Elders was successfully examined. Those nominated and successfully examined include Pat Bartee, Dee Bradford-Smith, Kyle Cumming, Gloria Gillespie, Malinda Holmes, Beppie Lever, and Mary McClurg. Ordination and Installation will take place on January 30.



The 2022 church budget was approved.

The Annual Statistical Report for 2021 was approved. The report is sent to PC(USA) and becomes part of the MVPC Annual Report distributed at the Annual Meeting.

Session approved continuation of the current Sunday schedule (Conversations, Connections, Church). This schedule will be reviewed prior to the beginning of the summer church schedule.

Session elected David Hill as Clerk of Session and Steve Ray as Church Treasurer for 2022.

The baptism of Clark and Colleen Nelson's four children was approved.

A wedding was approved to be held in the MVPC sanctuary.

Commissioners elected to represent MVPC at the February 12 Presbytery Meeting are David Barclift, Charlie Gray, David Hill, and Mary Kilgore.

The next monthly meeting of the Session is scheduled for February 20.

## 2022 Session Members and Ministry Teams

### Moderator

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

### Clerk of Session

David Hill

### Christian Education

Mary McClurg

### Congregational Care

Pat Bartee

### Fellowship

David Barclift

### Finance/

### Administration/

### Stewardship

Charlie Gray

John Hibbard

### Outreach

Carol Beckman

Beppie Lever

Brent Schwieger

### Senior Adults

Mary Kilgore

### Witness

Angie Hawthorne

Dee Bradford-Smith

### Worship

Gloria Gillespie

Malinda Holmes

Amy Kiley

### Youth

Jon Barber

Kyle Cumming



PO Box 76051  
Sandy Springs, GA 30358

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 Wednesday of each month for the *next month's* newsletter. Send your submissions to [debbie@mvpchurch.org](mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org).

*If you no longer wish to receive the Good News, please send an email to [debbie@mvpchurch.org](mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org).*

## Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church Staff

Rev. Barrett Abernethy	Pastor/Head of Staff	<a href="mailto:barrett@mvpchurch.org">barrett@mvpchurch.org</a>
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt	Associate Pastor of Faith Formation	<a href="mailto:Isaac@mvpchurch.org">Isaac@mvpchurch.org</a>
Matthias Young	Director of Worship	<a href="mailto:matthias@mvpchurch.org">matthias@mvpchurch.org</a>
Steve Ray	Church Finance and Operations	<a href="mailto:steve@mvpchurch.org">steve@mvpchurch.org</a>
Debbie Nysewander	Administrative Assistant	<a href="mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org">debbie@mvpchurch.org</a>
Yvonne White	Financial Secretary	<a href="mailto:yvonne@mvpchurch.org">yvonne@mvpchurch.org</a>
Dr. Kenneth Sass	Principal Organist	
Shari Freeman	Seminary Intern	<a href="mailto:shari@mvpchurch.org">shari@mvpchurch.org</a>

Good News!



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