



# MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

JANUARY 1, 2023 • 10:30 AM

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

## GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC IN THE NARTHEX

Matthias Young

RINGING OF THE BELLS

† CHALKING OF THE DOORS

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt & Shari Freeman

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Holy God, you have led many people to these doors. Some from near, some from far. Some with immediate needs, some with precious gifts. Some full of questions, some full of knowing. We ask your blessing on this ordinary bit of chalk that it may mark these doors as extraordinary. May these marks be a welcome invitation for all who are led here this year, and a constant prayer for the nourishment and safety of this sanctuary. Amen.

† PROCESSIONAL HYMN #66 “We Three Kings of Orient Are”  
THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

Donna Maini

We three kings of Orient are, bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of night,  
Star with royal beauty bright;  
Westward leading, still proceeding,  
Guide us to thy perfect light!

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain gold I bring to crown Him again,  
King forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign. (*refrain*)

Frankincense to offer have I: incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, we are raising,  
Worshipping God Most High. (*refrain*)

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in the stone-cold tomb. (*refrain*)

Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and Sacrifice;  
Alleluia, Alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies. (*refrain*)

John Henry Hopkins Jr., an Episcopal Priest, composed both the lyrics and music for this Christmas carol in 1857 while he was a seminary student, for use in a Christmas pageant at the school.

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold;  
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward, beaming bright;  
So, most glorious Lord, may we evermore be led to Thee.

As with joyful steps they sped to that lowly manger bed,  
There to bend the knee before him whom heaven and earth adore;  
So may we with willing feet ever seek Thy mercy seat.

As they offered gifts most rare at that manger rude and bare;  
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day keep us in the narrow way;  
And, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds Thy glory hide.

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

Gracious God, on this side of Christmas we wonder if we were prepared for your arrival. Did we accommodate travelers on their way? Did we make space for the vulnerable to enter in? Did we listen for your voice in babies' cries, animal groans, and cold nights? Will we ever be totally prepared? We confess that, like Herod, we are compelled instead by our need to control and direct your presence in the world. We confess that, unlike the Magi, we don't immediately recognize signs of your presence in the world. We confess, and we trust in your grace that we are enough. We trust that we are always and forever loved by you ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE #68

“What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright”

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

What star is this, with beams so bright, more lovely than the noonday light?  
'Tis sent to announce a newborn King, glad tidings of our God to bring.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

*(All children 5th grade and younger are invited to come forward for storytelling and prayer.  
Afterwards the children are invited to Children's Church in the Chapel.)*

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Shari Freeman

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2:1-12

HOMILY

*Characters of Christmas: The Magi*

The Society of  
Biblical  
Literature  
published an  
updated  
edition of the  
NRSV in  
November  
2021. One of  
the revisions  
was to change  
the name of  
Jesus' visitors  
in Matthew 2  
from “wise  
men” to  
“magi.” Magi  
is consistent  
with the  
original Greek  
text.

## RESPONSE

### † AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(from The Heidelberg Catechism 4.027-4.028)*

ONE: What do you understand by the providence of God?

ALL: The almighty and ever present power of God by which God upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty — all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand... We can be patient when things go against us, thankful when things go well, and for the future we can have good confidence in our faithful God and Father that nothing in creation will separate us from his love. For all creatures are so completely in God's hand that without his will they can neither move nor be moved. ... Amen.

### OFFERTORY

**"If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee"**

Donna Maini

Georg Neumark (1621-1681)

### † 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

Dee Bradford-Smith

### THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

#### INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Shari Freeman

#### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

ONE: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

ONE: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: We lift them up to the Lord.

ONE: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God. ALL: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

### PRAYER OVER THE ELEMENTS & 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.

### BREAKING OF THE BREAD & COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

*(The congregation is invited to come forward to receive communion.*

*If you prefer a Covid Communion kit, let the pastor know.*

*If you prefer to remain seated, an elder will bring communion to you.)*

### POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

The patriarchal language found in the Heidelberg Catechism reflects the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The PCUSA maintains each confession's original language, reflecting the document's historical nature. Newer confessions use more inclusive language.

## SENDING

### † SONG FOR DISMISSAL #411 “Arise, Your Light Has Come!” FESTAL SONG

Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;  
Show forth the glory of your God, which shines on you today.

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;  
Proclaim the captives' liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,  
Bind up the broken -hearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!  
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

### † BENEDICTION

Shari Freeman

### POSTLUDE

“To God Be The Glory”  
arr. Edward Broughton

Donna Maini

Leading Today's Worship Service  
**Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt**, Associate Pastor  
**Matthias Young**, Director of Worship  
**Donna Maini**, Accompanist  
**Shari Freeman**, Seminary Intern

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



[WWW.MVPCHURCH.ORG](http://WWW.MVPCHURCH.ORG)

**Welcome! We are glad to worship with you today!**

**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:



**January 8** "Terrific Texts: Identity", Matthew 3:13-17, Rev. Barrett Abernethy

**January 15** "Terrific Texts: Peace", John 14:23-29, Rev. Barrett Abernethy

**Senior Adults:** Mystery Matinee Event and clues to a Spring Seniors' Day Trip (Sat. March 25), Saturday, January 28 at 1:00pm in Session Room. Popcorn and drink provided. Sign ups for the March 25 Day Trip (3 stops in a 15 seat van) will be at the Mystery Matinee Event.



**Presbyterian Women:** On January 10 the **Day Circle** and the **Sunday Circle** will meet together and study lesson 5, *Sabbath and Servitude*, in the Bible study guide, *Celebrating Sabbath*.

**Memorial Service for Lou Baine** is planned for Sunday, **January 8** at 1:00pm. The family is providing a light lunch after worship. All are welcome to stay for lunch.

**Church Office Will Be Closed** Monday, January 2 & Monday, January 16.



**January 1, 2023**



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

Giving



**Ministry Team Cards:** are available to be picked up in the Narthex.

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

**Conversation (Adult Sunday School):** Discovery meets in the Chapel and is using the book "The Present Word". Crossroads meets in the Session Room and is studying "Mere Christianity" by C. S. Lewis. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for more information.



**Stephen Ministry:** Winter seems to invite isolation and feelings of loneliness. Even unnecessary martyrdom and suffering. Fortunately, that doesn't need to happen. Our church has a team of Stephen Ministers who will walk with through the "winters" of life into the sunlight. The Please contact us to get started by asking a pastor or calling Pat Barte, Stephen Leader, to get started.

**MVP Foundation:** Thank you for a successful "\$22K for 2022" matching campaign! Because of your benevolence, the MVP Foundation will be able to continue to generously support our various mission partners such as our Youth Group, Los Niños, CAC, as well as the Intern Program here at MVPC.



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

**Prayer Concerns:** Bob Addison, Mrs. JB, James Ballew, Eliana, Jim Loth, Alistair & Karen Morine, Irene Nelson, Deborah Phillips, Elaine Rawlings, Wilma Schmidt, Rob Southard, and people of Ukraine and Zambia.

**It's not too late to turn in your Pledge Card!** We have many ways to turn it in: mail it, put it in offering plate on Sunday, drop it off at the church office, email it to [Yvonne@mvpchurch.org](mailto:Yvonne@mvpchurch.org), call Yvonne (404.255.2211 ext. 216), or complete online @ [mvpchurch.org](http://mvpchurch.org). As of December 29, we have received 74 pledge cards for \$421,275.

<b>Attendance:</b>	12/24	Worship	303	12/25	Worship	26
		Online	36		Online	8

**Please sign the Friendship Pad and pass it down the pew as you greet your neighbor!**

## Financial Update

December 23-29	Actual	Actual YTD	2022 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$15,622	\$ 505,383	\$449,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 1,010	\$ 45,880	\$ 60,000
Non Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 408	\$ 8,221	\$ 10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$17,040</b>	<b>\$ 559,484</b>	<b>\$ 519,000</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)