



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GOOD NEWS

JANUARY 2023



A Letter From The Pastor

BY REV. BARRETT ABERNETHY

Survey Says...

Happy New Year to you and yours! May Christ bless your house and all the houses (to ring in the new year in the spirit of the Magi see the Chalking of the Door liturgy within this newsletter) you encounter this coming year.

As we begin 2023, we will begin our second and final year within the Vital Congregations Initiative (VCI). On Sunday, January 8th, we will continue this journey of discernment and exploration during a unique worship service. On this particular Sunday, we will set aside

15-20 minutes for you all to take the Congregational Vitality Survey.

You may ask why are we doing this during church? Good question. For starters, we are doing this survey during Baptism of the Lord Sunday. This specific Sunday is a perfect time to ponder and wonder about our identity as individual Christians and as a body of Christ. This survey was designed by PCUSA Christian Educators in collaboration with theologians and sociologists. It will feel and look very much like a survey you do online or receive in the mail from time to time.

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Yet, we hope responding to the survey during worship will bring a spiritual component. You will take this alongside your neighbors, your brothers and sisters, and one can be sure there will be different answers to different questions, yet as the comfort and familiarity of the sanctuary reminds us, we are all connected by a grace that is unbound. Once completed, the survey will assess the Seven Marks of what makes a Vital Congregation (discipleship, evangelism, outward focus, servant leadership, worship, caring relationships, and ecclesial health). Hopefully, these results will lead us to explore growing edges and embrace of our strengths so we may live into our

communal vow to raise one another in the faith of Jesus Christ. A vow, as you likely recall, is proclaimed during baptism, hence why we will take this survey during this service.

I hope you will view this survey as an opportunity. As a confessing church, we confess what we believe, and we write that statement down from time to time. It is a spiritual exercise that reminds us why we enter the household of faith, and baptism is that visible sign of entry into God's invisible grace. This will serve as a guide for the rest of the year as the Holy Spirit continues to mold us into the people we are and strive to be.

Grace and Peace,
Barrett



January 1 - November 30, 2022	Actual YTD	2022 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$454,381	\$449,000
Member Giving Non- Pledge	\$43,649	\$60,000
Non member giving & Loose offering	\$7,401	\$10,000
Total Received	\$505,431	\$519,000

2022 Session Members & Ministry Teams

Moderator
Rev. Barrett Abernethy

Clerk of Session
David Hill

Christian Education
Mary McClurg

Congregational Care
Pat Barte

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
Kyle Cumming

CHRISTMAS



OUTREACH



December has been a busy month for Outreach! Many warm coats, jackets, sweatshirts, gloves, hats, and scarves were piled under and on the Outreach Tree. These items will be distributed to the International Women's House, Community Assistance Center, Stirred Up Ministries, Clifton Shelter, and our other Outreach Ministry Partners.

Thanks to all who donated toys, night clothes, and beauty items for the December Communion Offering to be given to the International Women's House. Gift cards totaling \$200+ were also donated. Affirmation Gift Bags to wrap the gifts were decorated at the Children's Christmas Workshop and Youth Group.



MVPC served as the host church for Family Promise the week before Christmas, with many volunteers shopping, cooking, hosting and staying overnight.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Sana Rohail
Columbia
Seminary Student

Christmas Luncheon





Atlanta Concert Band,
December 11

Legacy Senior Adult
Leaders Lunch

We welcomed
several Vernon
Springs residents for
Lesson & Carols!
December 18

Donna Martin's
painting "Unity in
Christ" has been hung
in the office.
Come see it!





CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

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



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

Church office phone:
404.255.2211

THIS & THAT

Church Office
will be closed
January 2



Connection Snacks

Church Bulletin Bloop:

"Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our church and community."

Photos courtesy of: Mary McClurg, Dee Bradford-Smith, Donna Martin, Carol Beckman, Beppie Lever, Gloria Gillespie

Do you take pictures with your phone?
Thank you!
Please share them with the church office.

The Winter Issue of
THE MVPC MEMBERS' GIFT OF WISDOM
will be available in January.

SENIOR ADULT CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Saturday, December 10



CAROLING & YOUTH



Vernon Springs



MV Towers



Vernon Springs



MV Villages



MV Towers



Vernon Springs



Vernon Springs



MV Towers

Memorial Drive Donations

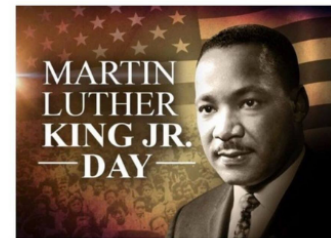


Sandy Springs Education Force Sorting/Pen Testing



JANUARY CALENDAR

Sunday, January 1	Worship - 10:30am Adult Sunday School - 9:30am
Monday, January 2	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED Christmas Clean-up - 10:00am
Tuesday, January 3	Staff Meeting - 9:30am PW CT - 10:00am CE Meeting - 5:00pm
Wednesday, January 4	Stephen Ministry - 2:15pm Choir Rehearsal - 7:00pm
Thursday, January 5	Ledger Meeting - 2:00pm
Sunday, January 8	Worship - 10:30am Adult Sunday School - 9:30am Lou Baine Memorial Service - 1:00pm Youth - 5:00pm
Monday, January 9	Senior Adult Meeting - 1:00pm
Tuesday, January 10	FAMT - 5:30pm Staff Meeting - 9:30am Day Circle - 10:00am
Wednesday, January 11	Worship Committee - 4:00pm Witness Meeting - 4:00pm Choir Rehearsal - 7:00pm
Thursday, January 12	Mission & Ministry - 5:30pm
Friday, January 13	Book Circle - 10:00am
Sunday, January 15	Worship - 10:30am Adult Sunday School - 9:30am Called Session Meeting - 10:00am Youth - 5:00pm
Monday, January 16	CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED
Tuesday, January 17	Staff Meeting - 9:30am
Wednesday, January 18	VCI - 11:30am Choir Rehearsal - 7:00pm
Friday, January 20	Session Retreat
Saturday, January 21	Session Retreat - Gailey Hall
Sunday, January 22	Worship - 10:30am Adult Sunday School - 9:30am Youth - 5:00pm
Tuesday, January 24	Staff Meeting - 9:30am
Wednesday, January 25	Choir Rehearsal - 7:00pm Taizé Service - 8:15pm
Saturday, January 28	GOOD NEWS DEADLINE Senior Adults Matinee Event- 1:00pm
Sunday, January 29	Worship - 10:30am Men's Breakfast - 8:30am Adult Sunday School - 9:30am Youth - 5:00pm
Monday, January 30	GOOD NEWS PUBLISHED
Tuesday, January 31	Staff Meeting - 9:30am



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Brian Eustis	1/2
Christina Toney-Schmitt	1/4
Christy Hill	1/5
Gloria Gillespie	1/7
Donna Newmann	1/11
Anna Morine	1/19
Mark McGuire	1/19
Corny Laube	1/21
John Christian, Jr.	1/23
Aiden Ray	1/24
Charlie Gray	1/25
Betsy Hastings	1/26
Joe Kelvington	1/26
Lisa Hughes	1/27
Mary Lea Woods	1/31



Staff Birthdays

Yvonne White	January 26
Shari Freeman	June 11
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt	June 14
Debbie Nysewander	July 2
Matthias Young	July 15
Rev. Barrett Abernethy	October 30
Steve Ray	December 1

If you have a birthday in January and don't see your name on the list, please contact debbie@mvpchurch.org or call the office.

PRAYER VINE



Craig Mackie - comfort and peace for his family as they mourn his death and celebrate the short life of a loving husband, father, and friend.

Bob Addison - continued recovery from shoulder surgery and is improving each day.

James Ballew - Patricia Hibbard's brother, gratitude for good health during the holidays; and has been rescheduled for post-surgical treatment in mid-January.

Eliana - continued faith in the process for Carrie Southard's niece.

Jim Loth - continued recovery after his surgery to give him a new pacemaker.

Alistair & Karen Morine - have added care at home.

Irene Nelson - mother of Andy Nelson & Martha Baitcher, comfort & peace who is in hospice in FL in her own home.

Deborah Phillips - Braegan Abernethy's step-mother in AL, has breast cancer surgery on Dec. 29.

Elaine Rawlings - Martha Baitcher's friend who had surgery for oral cancer complications.

Wilma Schmidt - Braegan Abernethy's mother, gets a post-chemo on 1/4 which will determine what type of surgery will be required.

Rob Southard - needs continued determination and confidence as he continues to succeed in combatting addiction.

Blessings for all ministries our church supports in Atlanta and in Zambia. Faith and fortitude for the freedom fighters of Ukraine.

Do you need prayer?

Have our Prayer Vine pray for you!

Email your requests to pbartee@yahoo.com

WORSHIP



An Invitation to Chalk Your Door at Home

An old Epiphany tradition involves writing the letters CMB and the numbers of the current year, separated by crosses (+), over the doors of Christian homes and sanctuaries. This year would look like this:

20 + C + M + B + 23

The letters CMB are said to stand for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Malchior, and Balthazar) or the Latin phrase "Christus mansionem benedicat" (Christ bless this house).

Grab a piece of chalk to carry on the tradition! Gather your household around the front door and write "20 + C + M + B + 23" across the top of your door, then offer this prayer in unison:

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.

Taize Returns

We are glad to announce that after a hiatus, we are bringing the Taize Prayer service back. This service will take place every fourth Wednesday at 8:15pm.

What is Taize? This is a service of songs, silence, and scripture. It began in 1940 amid the violence of World War II in France. In line with these beginnings, Taize prayer is intended to suspend time for the parishioner. The simplistic songs are meant to be a chant that become prayers, while the silence invites one to talk to God, or more importantly, for God to speak to you.

Our first service will be Wednesday, January 25 at 8:15pm. We hope you will join us and contact the church office for more information.



SESSION MEETING SUMMARY

Stated Session Meeting December 18, 2022

The monthly Session Meeting considered the following items of business:

- Thank you letters were received from several organizations: the John Mohr Mackintosh Pipes and Drums regarding their participation in the October 30 service and for allowing them to use our campus as their rehearsal site; the Alliance for Children Everywhere for our monthly donation to support the school in Zambia; Presbyterian College reporting on the status of MVPC endowment funds; and Family Promise for a recent donation.
 - The Finance and Administration Ministry Team reported that the congregation continues to provide financial support beyond what was budgeted for 2022.
 - Stated Session Meeting dates for 2023 were approved. The Session will not meet in June or November. All meetings will be on the third Sunday with the exception of December when the meeting will be on the second Sunday.
 - Communion dates were approved for 2023.
 - Special Offering dates were approved for 2023.
 -
- The next Stated Session Meeting will be during the Session Retreat, January 20 & 21.*

Getting to Know...

GLORIA GILLESPIE
WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

What do you do to keep fit?

Walking while listening to music, books, or podcasts. I get more reading done if I can log extra steps.

Do you collect anything?

Paint swatches ready for the next DIY project. Home improvement is my passion. Mike's skill and know-how makes it all possible.

Aside from necessities, what one thing could you not go a day without?

Wordle, Spelling Bee, and a soy chai latte to start my day. A close second is simply connecting with co-workers and friends.

If you could live anywhere, where would it be?

I'm here! I wanted to live in Atlanta when I was a young adult. It just took a few years. I love to be a tourist in this great city.

What two radio stations do you listen to in the car the most?

I listen to WABE (NPR) and The Message---contemporary Christian interchangeably. I'm always ready to sing along.



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 you through the "winters" of life into the sunlight. Please contact us to get started by asking a pastor or calling Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, to get started.



P.O. 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.

If you no longer wish to receive the Good News, please send an email to debbie@mvpchurch.org.

Good News!

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church Staff

Rev. Barrett Abernethy	<i>Senior Pastor/Head of Staff</i>	barrett@mvpchurch.org
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt	<i>Associate Pastor of Faith Formation</i>	isaac@mvpchurch.org
Matthias Young	<i>Director of Worship</i>	matthias@mvpchurch.org
Steve Ray	<i>Church Finance and Operations</i>	steve@mvpchurch.org
Debbie Nysewander	<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	debbie@mvpchurch.org
Yvonne White	<i>Financial Secretary</i>	yvonne@mvpchurch.org
Shari Freeman	<i>Seminary Intern</i>	shari@mvpchurch.org



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