



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GOOD NEWS

MARCH 2023



A Letter From The Pastor

BY REV. BARRETT ABERNETHY

Trivia Time

If you have walked the halls of the church office lately you heard your pastors spontaneously yelling “Paul!” or “Moses!” or “Jeremiah!” We are engaging in a time honored tradition. As Shari will share with you later in the newsletter, part of going through the ordination process in the PCUSA are little things called ordination exams, and the first of those exams explores Bible Content. It is basically biblical trivia for pastors, and if you don’t pass it, you can’t go forward in the process.

So with it being the season of Lent and a time where we intentionally focus on our faith, why not do that with some old fashioned Bible trivia! On the next page are a smattering of the questions Shari (and Isaac and me before her) have been asked over the years. Good providence (Presbyterians don’t believe in luck!) and don’t look at the answer key!

It’s okay if you miss a few, your faith is so much more than passing an exam!

Grace and Peace,

Barrett

continued on next page

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Getting to Know...

Session Summary

1. In the creation story, who named the animals?
 - a. God
 - b. Eve
 - c. Abel
 - d. Adam

2. A central theme of the book of Leviticus is expressed by repeated calls for the people of Israel to “be holy” because
 - a. “I the LORD your God am holy.”
 - b. “judgment awaits the wicked.”
 - c. “God loves those who purify themselves.”
 - d. “you must be different than the nations.”

3. The group that tricks Joshua into making a treaty with them is
 - a. the Midianites.
 - b. the five kings of the Amorites.
 - c. the people of Ai.
 - d. the Gibeonites.

4. Who was king of Judah when the Assyrians besieged and took Samaria?
 - a. Ahaz
 - b. Josiah
 - c. Hezekiah
 - d. Zedekiah

5. Which prophet, when comparing the nations to God, describes them as being “like a drop from a bucket or accounted as dust on the scales”?
 - a. Isaiah
 - b. Nahum
 - c. Obadiah
 - d. Zephaniah

6. In which Gospel does the resurrected Jesus appear cooking fish on the beach at the Sea of Tiberias?
 - a. Mark
 - b. Luke
 - c. John
 - d. Matthew

7. Who is the “deacon of the church at Cenchreae” who Paul comments in the closing greetings of Romans 16?
 - a. Prisca
 - b. Junia
 - c. Phoebe
 - d. Aquila

8. From 1 John 2:4, complete this saying: “Whoever says, ‘I have come to know him, but does not obey his commandments, is’
 - a. in darkness.
 - b. a liar.
 - c. an antichrist.
 - d. a deceiver.

2023 Session Members & Ministry Teams

Moderator(s)

Rev. Barrett Abernethy
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

Clerk of Session

David Hill

Christian Education

Mary McClurg
Meg Christian

Congregational Care

Pat Barteo
Htet Nyunt

Fellowship

David Barclift

Finance/Administration/ Stewardship

Charlie Gray
John Hibbard

Outreach

Beppie Lever
Braegan Abernethy

Senior Adults

Dee Bradford-Smith

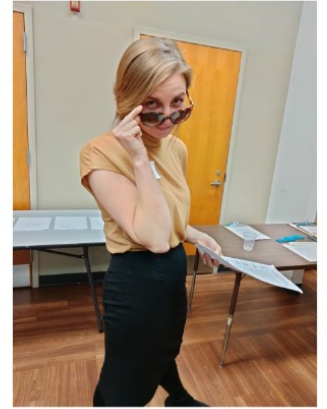
Witness

TBD

Worship

Gloria Gillespie
Malinda Holmes
Amy Kiley

WINTER MYSTERY DINNER



OUTREACH



Thank you for the very generous donations for our January Communion Offering for the Community Assistance Center and for buying the exact items on the list!

We donated 245 pounds of non-perishable food and toiletries. The February Communion Offering is for Clifton Night Shelter and the March Communion Offering will be for the Food Pantry at Columbia Theological Seminary.



New Outreach Ministry Team Member, Piper Neumann, worked with Christy Hill to completely refresh the Outreach Bulletin Board.

The Senior Adults volunteered before the Super Bowl on projects for the Sandy Springs Education Force, including putting together bundles of same level books to be distributed to children in the local public schools.

“We so appreciate the generous use of storage space in Gailey Hall for the books for our Mini Libraries Program and other materials. Also, providing volunteers to sort the books and the space to do the sorting is so valuable to us, as we do not have our own office space or storage.”

– Sandy Springs Education Force



The first Sunday in Lent every year is designated by the PC(USA) as “Wear your blue shirt to church Sunday” as a testament of one of the ways One Great Hour of Sharing makes a difference, through the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. Donations to support the victims of the earthquake in Turkey can be made through the PDA.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Barbara Hughes



Barbara shared her long-time love of Zambia, how it began, and why it matters so much:

I traveled to Zimbabwe and Zambia with Bill and Nancy Warwick from The Outreach Foundation over 20 years ago. Bill and Nancy had visited Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church several times and would come to inform us about the on-going outreach programs in these African countries. Mount Vernon was already supporting some of them.

In 2000, I traveled with a mission team to visit several outreach sites in Zimbabwe and Zambia. It is very simple to explain my dedication to Alliance for Children Everywhere for all these years. Within a few minutes at the House of Moses (HOM), I knew this was why my Lord had brought me to Zambia! After meeting and listening to the story of the two grandmothers who founded this ministry and visiting the nursery with 12 precious new lives (many had been abandoned or the mother died in childbirth), I knew that this was my calling.

During these 20 years, I have seen how God has blessed this ministry in so many ways. I have watched when a policeman or someone from the Zambian Social Services bring to the HOM a new baby who needs care. I watched and listened when the caregiver would gently take the screaming baby in for initial evaluation, bathe, and dress him, cuddle and pray for him, and then feed him. And in no time, there is silence...

I have had the opportunity to travel with many church members as part of several mission teams I organized. We were there to visit the House of Moses and the Bill and Bette Nursery, the 7 Faith Works Schools held in different churches, the High School in one of the largest compounds, and to help distribute formula and food to women with babies in the poorest of the poor areas, to worship with the caregivers and staff every day, etc.

Before the trip, most travelers have a very different perception of Africa and her people. At the final dinner, usually after 2-3 weeks, I ask them to tell me what was "heartbreaking" and what they found was "breathtaking". The first observance was always easy – the poverty and all the associated problems. But the breathtaking was always a surprise to them – the faithfulness to God of the people, their joy in music, the determination of the students to be successful at school, the beauty of God's creation, and on and on.

I have enjoyed being back on The Alliance for Children Everywhere Board as Treasurer. This is another area where God has truly blessed this work. Most recently, the organization has worked to help write the laws that allow a child to be fostered and/or adopted. This is the Organization's Strategic Objective: "that a child belongs in a permanent, secure, loving and caring home." The program is now in place which includes recruiting prospective families for foster care and adoption, home assessments, and training families. I am looking forward to visiting Zambia in June and meeting some of these families.

Statistics from the 2022 Annual Report speak for themselves:

88 children served in crisis homes

311 families provided nutrition support

1,891 educated students, 95% pass rate for Grade 7 (Zambian Government Tests)

372 educated high school students, 100% pass rate for Grade 12 (Zambian Government Tests)

Thank you again, Mount Vernon members, for all your support through the years.

Visits to Zambia are life changing. To learn more about how you can visit or help with these lasting and important efforts in Zambia, talk to Barbara.

PRESBYTERIAN ORDINATION

Shari Freeman



For several years I sensed that God was calling me to seminary, but I took no action. After I retired from my corporate career, I started to take the question of seminary more seriously, and after several months of discernment, I applied to Columbia Theological Seminary. When I started seminary, I knew I would eventually need to decide about vocation and ordination. After a few months into my seminary internship with Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church, I knew I wanted to work in congregational ministry, which meant I needed to seriously engage the question of ordination. I sought counsel from Barrett and Isaac, friends and professors at Columbia, and others I have worked with in ministry. Eventually, I felt confident that God was leading me to PCUSA ordination.

My PCUSA ordination journey officially started in April 2022 when I joined Mount Vernon. Six months later, in October 2022, the session received training from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta on the ordination process and voted to take me under their care as I work through it. I have applied to be an inquirer for ordination, and I am hopeful that I will be accepted after completing a psychological assessment in March (wish me luck!). After one year as an inquirer, I will move to the candidate phase of ordination. During this period, I must take five different ordination exams. I took the first exam on Bible content on February 4, 2023, and thankfully I passed it! The final four exams focus on exegesis, theology, Presbyterian polity, and worship.

God has led and provided resources for me throughout this journey, from Columbia Seminary to Mount Vernon, and now applying for PCUSA ordination. The ordination process in the Presbyterian church is daunting and somewhat intimidating, so I continue to seek discernment and place trust in God as I move step-by-step through this process. I am thankful for the Mount Vernon congregation's pivotal role in this process.

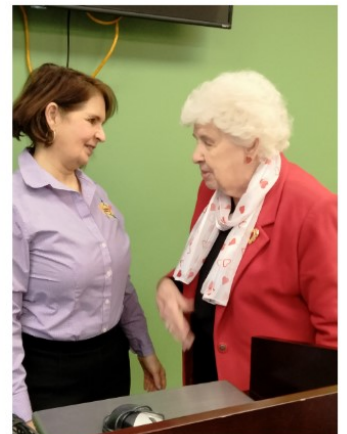
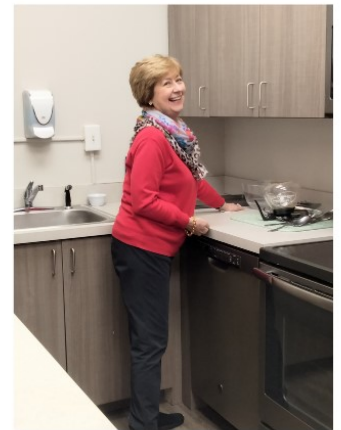
1. d. Genesis 2:20
2. a. Leviticus 19:1-2
3. d. Joshua 9
4. c. 2 Kings 18:9-10

5. a. Isaiah 40:15. When in doubt, always select "Isiah"
6. c. John 21:9
7. c. Romans 16:1
8. b. 1 John 2:4

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



Mission Lunch
February 12





Burning the Palms
with the school
children

Welcome!
Jane Brumby Chalpan
February 18
Parents: Kevin & Lizzy
Chalpan
Proud Grandparents:
Kirk & Sarah Chalpan



Inquirer's Lunch



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



**CHURCH OFFICE
 HOURS**

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

Church Office
 404.255.2211

THIS & THAT

January Financial Update

January 1 - January 31, 2023	Actual YTD	2023 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$87,922	\$421,275
Member Giving Non- Pledge	\$5381	\$60,000
Non member giving & Loose offering	\$780	\$9,000
Total Received	\$94,083	\$540,275



Spring Cleaning Staff Break Room

Blast from the Past Youth

Church Bulletin Bloopers:

"Thursday night Potluck Supper - Prayer and medication will follow."

Photos courtesy of: Dee Bradford-Smith, Donna Martin, Beppie Lever, Barrett Abernethy, Debbie Barclift

The Winter Issue of
THE MVPC MEMBERS' GIFT OF WISDOM
 is available in the Narthex.

MARCH CALENDAR

March 2023

SUN

MON

TUES

WED

THURS

FRI

SAT

AA - Chapel

Mon 6:30pm AI-Anon
Tues 7:00pm
Thurs 8:00pm
Fri - 8:00pm

AA Kirk Center

Mon 8:00pm
Tues 8:00pm
Wed. 8:00pm
Thurs. 8:00pm
Fri. 8:00pm

5 Worship 10:30am

9:30am Adult Sunday School
12:15 Sunday Circle - Session
5pm Youth
5pm Fascinating Bible Studies - Session

FAMILY PROMISE

6

1pm Senior Adult Mtg. - Session

SPRING BREAK

7

10am - PW CT Chapel
1pm Staff Meeting
5pm CE Meeting

8

7pm Choir Rehearsal

9

2pm Vernon Springs Bible Study

10

8am Budget Prep
10am Book Circle-Session

11

9am Bagpipes
**TIME CHANGE
SPRING FORWARD**

12

Worship 10:30am
9:30am Adult Sunday School
12:15 Sunday Circle - Session
5pm Youth
5pm Fascinating Bible Studies - Session

13

5:30pm FAMT - Zoom

14

10am Day Circle-Chapel
2pm Staff Meeting

15

8am School Chapel
7pm Choir Rehearsal

16

9am Bagpipes

17

18

9am Bagpipes

19

Worship 10:30am
9:30am Adult Sunday School
11:30am Session Mtg. KC
5pm-Youth - GH
5pm Fascinating Bible Studies - Session

20

6pm Magic Club-FH

21

1pm Staff Meeting

22

8am School Chapel
7pm Choir Rehearsal
8:15pm Taizé

23

6:30pm LNP

24

25

LNP Sat. School
9am Bagpipes
Sr. Adult Spring Trip

26

Worship 10:30am
8:30am Men's Breakfast
9:30am Adult Sunday School
11:30am Comm. & Coffee

5pm-Youth - GH
5pm Fascinating Bible Studies - Session

27

1pm Staff Meeting
5pm CE Meeting

28

7pm Choir Rehearsal

29

**Good News
Deadline**

30

**Good News
Published**

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Office Hours
M-Th 8am - 4pm
Fri 8am - 2pm



Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

Blessed to be a Blessing

Sunday Worship

10:30am Sanctuary

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Rachel Barclift Emery	3/1
Pat Hudgins	3/1
Alice Ann Lever	3/3
Gill Hutt	3/6
John Hibbard	3/9
Bruce Northrop	3/11
Alex Sprung	3/12
Pat Davis	3/13
Elo Small	3/14
Deborah Galloway	3/18
Michelle Smart	3/20
Mary Kilgore	3/21
Bruce Hagenau	3/22
Mike Gillespie	3/23
Connor Plumly	3/24
Jodi Jackson	3/26
Kirk Chalpan	3/27
Katie Sprung	3/27
Beppie Lever	3/28



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 March and don't see your name on the list, please contact debbie@mvpchurch.org or call the office.

Getting to Know...

DAVID BARCLIFT
FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

What is your favorite thing about your career?

As a landscape architect for almost 40 years, I love my job and never dream of doing anything else. Creating outdoor spaces, developing site plans and designing landscapes has always been very rewarding.

What/who makes you laugh the most?

Debbie and I have been married for 37 years and her wonderful sense of humor makes me laugh more than anything else.

What is your favorite family vacation?

As a Delta (retired) family, we love to travel and still try to fit in entire family vacations almost every year. My favorite place for many years was to go home to Florence, Alabama and enjoy time at my mom and dad's house on Wilson Lake.

How do you like to spend your free time?

Outside of work, my favorite things to do are to spend time with family and friends, travel, work in the yard (often times with help), and regularly play backgammon with Debbie.

What has been a recent exciting event?

Our most exciting recent news is that we became grandparents last year and look forward to celebrating Lucas' first birthday with him next month in Philadelphia over Easter weekend.



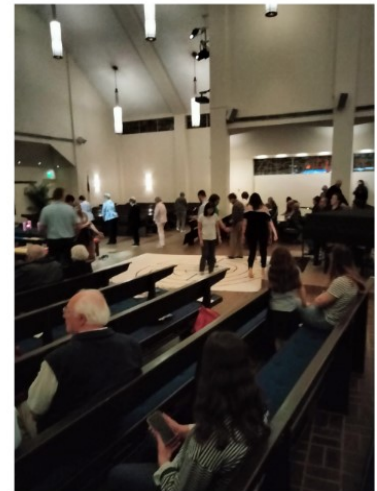
"And it is still true...when you go out in the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together"

Robert Fulghum



In 2019, our session decided our church should have a trained, skilled group of laypeople to assist our ministers in meeting the emotional needs of members and community members during troubling events. In July of that year, we confirmed six Stephen Ministers after 55 hours of training. In 2023 Stephen Ministers are still ministering to congregants and community members who need a listener, an encourager, a clarifier, a resource, a perspective-giver, as they make decisions and changes, all in confidentiality. Remember to utilize this significant resource when you or a friend needs it. Contact Stephen Ministry today.

WORSHIP



Taize

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.



Next service: Wednesday, March 22 at 8:15pm



Annual Meeting



SESSION MEETING SUMMARY

Stated Session Meeting February 19, 2023

Following is a summary of the meeting:

· Finance & Administration reported the HVAC system replacement loan was finalized in late January and the financial statement now reflects receipt of loan funds. In addition, member giving is strong here at the first of the year. Negotiations continue between the church and the school to finalize the MOU which outlines the cost sharing agreement for capital expenses that allows the school to use the MVPC campus.

· Everyone is encouraged to wear blue on February 26 in support of the PC(USA) Presbyterian Disaster Relief Fund.

· The Senior Adult ministry includes an upcoming trip for the group. In addition, the group continues its project to support the Sandy Springs Education Alliance (SSEF). The ministry team has created an information center for Seniors.

· The Youth continue work sorting books for the Sandy Springs Education Alliance (SSEF).

· Session determined dates on which ministry teams will meet after the worship service for collaborative work. The congregation is encouraged to join in on these dates to participate in the work of these ministry teams.

· The Church Nominating Committee is composed of two members elected by Session and three additional members elected by the congregation at the Annual Meeting. Representing Session will be Gloria Gillespie and Amy Kiley.

· Session accepted the resignation of Angie Hawthorne from Session and the Hawthorne's request to be removed from the church rolls.

· An additional date for Communion was approved. Communion will be served on Ascension of the Lord Sunday which is May 21.

· A report was given regarding the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta meeting on February 11. Following the PC(USA) General Assembly meeting last summer, presbyteries around the county must vote on proposed amendments to the Book of Order. This is taking place in our presbytery over four different meetings. Rev. Abernethy and David Hill (member of the Presbytery Bills and Overtures Committee) can respond to questions regarding the various proposed amendments.

· The church and the City of Sandy Springs are in negotiations regarding church property that will be impacted by the upcoming work on Mount Vernon Hwy and Johnson Ferry Rd. A committee made up of David Barclift, Steve Ray, John Hibbard, and Rev. Abernethy are involved in this work.

*The next Stated Session Meeting will be
March 19.*

PRAYER VINE



Mrs. JB - in need of a bone marrow donor.

Becky - Mary Lea Wood's sister-in-law had a bad fall and is in the ICU.

Sam Brasher - recovering from back surgery.

Keith Bumgarner - recovering from successful surgery on his spine.

David Cullen - Mary Kilgore's son-in-law is in the hospital with kidney problems - chemo is on hold until the kidney issues are taken care of.

Neill Ferrill - gratitude that the new clinical trial for glioblastoma is successful so far.

Dave Malloy - friend of Charlie Gray, celebrating a negative colonoscopy & biopsy.

Frank Mayer - Colleen Nelson's father continues with chemo and is in good spirits.

Karen Morine - healing and strength proceeding with more chemo despite negative side effects.

Neile Morrison - Betsy Cozine's friend's niece had a recent diagnosis of breast cancer.

Deborah Phillips - Braegan Abernethy's step-mother in AL, celebrating her breast cancer is in remission.

Carl Player - new member Nikki Player's grandfather-in-law died.

Wilma Schmidt - Braegan Abernethy's mother, waiting on good results on a recent scan.

Blessings for all ministries our church supports in Atlanta and in Zambia. Faith and fortitude for the freedom fighters of Ukraine. Faith and strength of the people of Syria & Turkey.

Do you need prayer?

Have our Prayer Vine pray for you!

Email your requests to pbartee@yahoo.com



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.

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

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
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

Good News!

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Dad Hengeveld (See Genesis 6-8) 03-05-2003
LIONARDO THINKS THAT HE IS "KING OF THE WORLD" AGAIN

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