



Needlepoint By:  
Jane Doty

**MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**  
**SEPTEMBER 3, 2023 • 10:30 AM**

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

The apostle Simon Peter was among the first disciples chosen by Jesus and the first to recognize Jesus as Messiah. The crossed keys on his shield represent Peter as holder of the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. Peter preached in many places, eventually coming to Rome, and it is believed he formed the first Christian community there. He was arrested and imprisoned, sentenced to die. He requested crucifixion head down, for he did not feel himself worthy to die in the same manner as his Lord had died.

**GATHERING**

**GATHERING MUSIC**

**“Glorious Majesty”**  
Lani Smith

Donna Maini

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

**OPENING PRAYER**

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

ONE: Jesus turned to his disciples after some time together and asked, “Who do people say that I am?”

**ALL: Jesus turned again to his disciples and asked, “Who do you think I am?”**

ONE: Jesus nurtures his relationships with his disciples with questions, curiosities, and wonder.

**ALL: Jesus guides his disciples to new identities, new life, and even new names.**

ONE: Today we meet Simon, renamed Peter by Jesus, the holder of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.

**ALL: May Simon Peter’s witness to God aid our witness to God. Let us worship God!**

† **MORNING SONG #442**

**“The Church’s One Foundation”**  
AURELIA

The Church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ her Lord; she is His new creation by water and the word.  
From heaven He came and sought her to be His holy bride; with His own blood He bought her and for her life He died.

Elect from every nation, yet one o’er all the earth, her charter of salvation one Lord, one faith, one birth;  
One holy name she blesses, partakes one holy food, and to one hope she presses, with every grace endued.

*Though with a scornful wonder this world sees her oppressed, by schisms rent asunder, by heresies distressed,*  
yet saints their watch are keeping; their cry goes up, “How long?”  
And soon the night of weeping shall be the morn of song.

Mid toil and tribulation, and tumult of her war, she waits the consummation of peace forevermore;  
Till with the vision glorious her longing eyes are blest, and the great church victorious shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth has union with God the Three in One, and mystic sweet communion with those whose rest is won: O happy ones and holy! Lord, give us grace that we, Like them, the meek and lowly, may live eternally.

Samuel John Stone wrote these lyrics in response to a schism within the church of South Africa. John Colenso, the Bishop of Natal, denounced the Bible as untrue. Stone became involved in this debate and wrote a set of hymns in response, hence the highlighted line in the 3rd verse.

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

God of Forgiveness, we need your forgiveness just as Simon Peter needed your forgiveness. Like us, Simon Peter often said the right things, declared that you are the Messiah, and stepped up to be the leader who holds the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. Simon Peter knew you as God, yet he would still go on to deny knowing you at your crucifixion. Like us, Simon Peter is up to the task of the call to be your disciple. And, like us, Simon Peter needs your forgiveness to continue being your disciple. Hear the urgency to be near you in our confession, forgive us, and bring us into your loving presence ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE #341 (v. 1) "Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine!"

ASSURANCE

Blessed assurance: Jesus is mine!  
O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long;  
This is my story, this is my song,  
Praising my Savior all the day long.

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

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

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Rev. Abernethy

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 16:13-20

HOMILY

*“Seats of Discipleship: Simon Peter”*

RESPONSE

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*Apostles’ Creed*)

Rev. Abernethy

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER

Shari Freeman

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.

Welcome back to our Seminary Intern, Shari Freeman! She has spent the summer serving at Presbyterian Village in Austell and begins her final semester at Columbia Seminary this fall.

OFFERTORY

“There is a Redeemer”  
Mark Hayes

Donna Maini

† 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

Pat Davis

## SENDING

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL

**"You Are Holy"**

Prince of Peace

### **Mount Vernon Side**

You are holy;  
you are mighty;  
you are worthy,  
worthy of praise.

I will follow;  
I will listen;  
I will love you  
all of my days.

### **Johnson Ferry Side**

You are holy;  
you are mighty;  
you are worthy,  
worthy of praise.

I will follow;  
I will listen;  
I will love you  
all of my days.

### **All Together**

I will sing to and worship the King who is worthy.  
I will love and adore him; I will bow down before him.  
I will sing to and worship the King who is worthy.  
I will love and adore him; I will bow down before him.  
You're my Prince of Peace, and I will live my life for you.

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Abernethy

POSTLUDE

**"Trust and Obey"**

Larry Dalton

Donna Maini

### Leading Today's Worship Service

**Rev. Barrett Abernethy**, Senior Pastor

**Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt**, Associate Pastor

**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.*

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** and pick up a visitor bag.

## Upcoming Services/Events:



### Fall Sermon Series: Seats of Discipleship

- September 10** Kickoff Sunday, Luke 10:1-12, Rev. Barrett Abernethy
- September 17** John 2:13-22, "Simon the Zealot", Rev. Barrett Abernethy



**Congregational Meeting:** Sunday, September 24 after worship to elect new elders.



**Small Groups:** Signups for our 6-week small groups will be in the Narthex TODAY. The small groups will begin September 17.



**Presbyterian Women:** The Day Circle will meet on Tuesday, Sept. 12, at 10:00am in the Chapel. Pat Davis will teach Lesson 1, *Elizabeth's Sacred Encounter*, in the Horizons Bible Study: *Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts* by Olive Mahabir. The Book Circle will meet on Friday, Sept. 8, and review *The Woman with the Cure* by Lynn Cullen.



**Family Promise:** We are **very** thankful to Penny Kiel for her years of dedication and leadership with the Family Progress program here at MVPC. We are now seeking 2-3 volunteers to share the coordinator role. Please contact Beppie Lever ([beppielever@earthlink.net](mailto:beppielever@earthlink.net)) or Braegan Abernethy ([bcabernethy@gmail.com](mailto:bcabernethy@gmail.com)) if you are interested or have questions.

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

**September 3, 2023**

