



Needlepoint By:
Nancy Morris

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SEPTEMBER 24, 2023 • 10:30 AM

Reaching out to ... Welcome. Worship. Share. Serve.

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

The apostolic symbols of Matthew, also called Levi, are three money bags and a quill. The money bags remind us of his original position as tax collector, an occupation much hated by his fellow Jews, before Jesus called him into his service. As a former tax gatherer Matthew was qualified by his business knowledge to record the discourses of Jesus. Tradition holds he authored the first gospel in the New Testament, hence the quill.

GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC

“Little Prelude & Fugue in F”
J.S. Bach

Paul Campbell

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

OPENING PRAYER

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

ONE: Return to the One Holy God who calls you to steadfast love.

ALL: **The Lord desires love, not sacrifice.**

ONE: Return to the One who heals and binds, revives and raises up.

ALL: **The Lord desires knowledge, not burnt offerings.**

ONE: Rejoice in the name of the One who fills all creation with light and life.

ALL: **Let us worship God!**

† **MORNING SONG #371**

“Lift High the Cross”
CRUCIFER

Refrain

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
Till all the world adore His sacred name.

Come, Christians, follow where our Savior trod,
The Lamb victorious, Christ, the Son of God. (*refrain*)

Each newborn servant of the Crucified
Bears on the brow the seal of Christ who died. (*refrain*)

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
Your death has brought us life eternally. (*refrain*)

So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the Crucified for victory. (*refrain*)

† PRAYER FOR CONFESSION

Shari Freeman

God of Calling, you called Abraham and Moses and gave them the strength they needed to follow you. You called Matthew, showering him with grace and mercy and leading him into a life in your abundance. You also call us, but sometimes we prefer to close our eyes and cover our ears, turning our backs to your will. In fear, we hold onto our current reality instead of opening our hands to accept your gifts. Forgive us, O God, and grant us the confidence and the hope that we need to let go and follow when you call ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

† RESPONSE #411

“Arise, Your Light is 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.

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

Shari Freeman

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 9:9-13

HOMILY

“Seats of Discipleship: Matthew”

RESPONSE

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*section 9.31 of the Confession of 1967 Inclusive Language Text*)

To be reconciled to God is to be sent into the world as God’s reconciling community. This community, the church universal, is entrusted with God’s message of reconciliation and shares God’s labor of healing the enmities which separate people from God and from each other. Christ has called the church to this mission and given it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The church maintains continuity with the apostles and with Israel by faithful obedience to his call.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD’S PRAYER

Rev. Abernethy

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.

This section of the Confession of 1967 defines the mission of the church. Our mission is to be sent into the world as God’s reconciling community, healing the breaches that separate people from God and each other.

OFFERTORY

“Whispering Hope”
arr. Paul Campbell

Paul Campbell

† 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

David Barclift

SENDING

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL #356

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” NETTLETON

Come, Thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unchanging love!

Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for Thy courts above.

In Hebrew, the word **ebenezer** means “stone of help.” In 1 Samuel 7:12, Samuel raises a stone to remind the Israelites of what the Lord has done for them.

† BENEDICTION

Shari Freeman

POSTLUDE

“Little Prelude in C” J.S. Bach

Paul Campbell

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Leading Today's Worship Service
Shari Freeman, Seminary Intern
Rev. Barrett Abernethy, Senior Pastor
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor
Paul Campbell, Guest Accompanist
Roger Scanlan, Choral Conductor

*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

Our mailing address is:
P.O. Box 76051
Sandy Springs, GA 30358

MVPC Announcements....

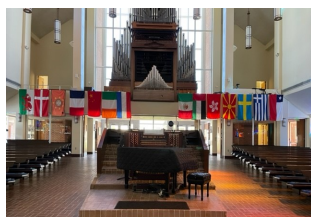


WWW.MVPCHURCH.ORG

Welcome! We are glad to worship with you today!

Visitors & Membership: Please go to our website: 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

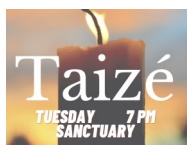
- October 1** Psalm 98:1-6 & Galatians 3:26-29, World Communion, Rev. Barrett Abernethy
- October 8** Mark 6:6b-13, "*James the Less*", Shari Freeman



Congregational Meeting: TODAY immediately after worship to elect new elders. Up for nominations are: Keith Bumgarner & Lois Johnson to serve a 3-year term, and Meg Christian & David Barclift to serve a 1-year term.

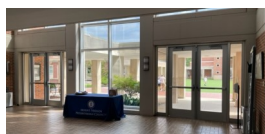


MVPC Takes a Hike! Put on your walking shoes and join us for an easy hike at Lost Corner Preserve TOMORROW, Monday, September 25. We'll meet at the church at 8:15am and carpool to the park.



LOST & FOUND: Please take a look in the hallway between the Sanctuary and church offices to see if you can find anything you may be missing. After Oct. 1 all will be donated.

Taizé: New day and time! All are welcome this Tuesday, Sept. 26 at 7pm for a peaceful time of worship in the Sanctuary.



Beginning Oct. 1, the doors to the Narthex/Lobby will be the only doors unlocked on Sunday mornings only. All other doors will be locked.



Blessing of the Animals: Sunday, Oct. 8 from 2-4pm outside Gailey Hall. Bring your pets to receive a blessing. Also, bring socks for SOCKtober month!

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

September 24, 2023



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

Giving



The Presbyterian Disaster Assistance is accepting donations to fund emergency grants to meet urgent needs in the communities affected by the devastating wildfires in Maui. You can donate at www.pcusa.org/hawaiiifires or by writing a check to MVPC or donating at mvpchurch.org/give and designating it for PDA Maui.



The September Communion Offering is for the Food Pantries at the Community Assistance Center. CAC provides basic needs assistance for Dunwoody and Sandy Springs neighbors to prevent homelessness and hunger while promoting self-sufficiency and empowering them to thrive. For more information, please go to www.ourcac.org.



Presbyterian Women: The Circle of Grace will meet Nov. 12 at Shelly Ray's home to prepare College Care Packages. The **Day Circle** will meet on Tuesday, October 10, at 10:00am in the Chapel. We will be studying, *Elizabeth's Sacred Encounter*, in the Horizons Bible Study: *Sacred Encounters: The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke-Acts* by Olive Mahabir. Study guides will be available for purchase. The **Book Circle** will meet Friday, Oct. 13 at 10:00am in the Session Room.



Adult Sunday School: Discovery meets in the Chapel and is using the curriculum "The Present Word". Crossroads meets in the Session Room and is studying "The Language of God" by Francis Collins. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for more information.



Stephen Ministry: Please sign up to become one of our Stephen Ministers, showing Christ's love through one relationship at a time. Difficulty and hardship cause people to lose their bearings and having a companion along to help conquer the fear and anger and hurt makes all the difference. Knowing that there will be no judgment, that confidentiality will be honored, that listening and encouraging will be abundant, a person can more easily change course and solve issues of concern. Prayerfully consider joining this quiet, effective group on our campus. Applications are available in the narthex through September or can be emailed by contacting Pat Barte. Interviews will be in October. Training will start in Jan.



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

Prayer Concerns: Dede Callahan, Mark Fifield, Kathy Havey, Fay Hendricks, Megan Kendall, Mary Lynch, Chuck McCrory, Meredith Nash, Andy Nelson, Daniel Newman, Carter Ramsey, and people of Ukraine, Myanmar, Turkey, and Zambia.

Attendance: 9/17/23	Worship	97
	Online	5

Financial Update

September 15-21	Actual	Actual YTD	2023 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 10,655	\$ 358,529	\$ 471,275
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 2,996	\$ 62,688	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 140	\$ 5,308	\$ 9,000
Total	\$ 13,791	\$ 426,525	\$ 540,275

If you have any announcements that you would like to appear in the *Happenings* or *Good News*, please email them to debbie@mvpchurch.org