



# GOOD NEWS

OCTOBER 2023



## A Letter From The Pastor

BY REV. BARRETT ABERNETHY & CHARLIE GRAY

Dear Mount Vernon Family,

Recently, the Session approved a new tagline for the church. Over the past month you have seen it at the top of the church bulletin in bold red letters.

**Reaching Out To ... Welcome.  
Worship. Share. Serve.**

As we come to you this Stewardship Season, we come with gladness and excitement in our heart. Looking back, we cannot help but express our gratitude to you. Next year, 2024, will mark the 70th anniversary of Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church. Through the foundation we find in Christ Jesus, we still witness the work that has

been done by the saints who came before, the saints currently present, and through God's work we look forward to welcoming the saints who will come.

In the Bible, the number 70 is often associated with fulfillment. Psalm 90 refers to 70 years as the extent of a human life. Jesus, meanwhile, tells us to forgive "not just seven times, but seventy times seven." Hence, 70 years can come with a feeling of completeness, but we write to you in the spirit of resurrection, a spirit of newness. A spirit ready to begin the story of the next 70 years.

That's why we wholeheartedly support the new tagline above. It embraces the ways in which we see God at work as we begin what we believe is a new chapter at Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church.

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Right now, you are **Welcoming** an intergenerational community from our immediate surroundings and beyond. This has led to a thriving Senior Adult ministry and continues to forge bonds with families and children in our midst.

Right now, you are **Worshipping** in a communally focused fashion, celebrating the rituals of tradition and the comforts of casual in a way that gives a sense of belonging to all who walk through our doors.

Right now, you are **Sharing** the love of Christ in an abundant way. By our rudimentary math, we estimate more than 3,000 people consistently utilize our campus in some way each week. They come to glorify God so that relationships can grow, and communities can thrive.

Right now, you are **Serving** in ways large and small. This past year, you partnered with the Sandy Springs Education Force on a book sorting project that ensures public-school children will have books to call their own. This has allowed our intergenerational body a chance to serve together no matter age or ability.

For 70 years, you, Mount Vernon, have done church the right way. You have celebrated the creation of new ministries. You have cared for one another in times of sadness. You have grown together through peaks and valleys. You continue to love God and love neighbor. That's why reaching out to welcome, worship, share, and serve is more than just a tagline. It's a theology that embodies who we are as a people of Christ.

We hope you will be prayerfully moved to join us for **Stewardship Sunday, October 22 at 10:30am** as we come together to glorify God in the heart of north Atlanta.

*Peace,  
Barrett & Charlie*

**Please contact the church office for a 2024 pledge card or pick one up in the Narthex.**

January 1 - August 31, 2023	Actual YTD	2023 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$338,699	\$421,275
Member Giving Non- Pledge	\$52,152	\$60,000
Non member giving & Loose offering	\$4,994	\$9,000
<b>Total Received</b>	<b>\$395,845</b>	<b>\$540,275</b>

## 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 Bartee  
Htet Nyunt

### Fellowship

David Barclift

### Finance/Administration/ Stewardship

Charlie Gray  
John Hibbard

### Outreach

Beppie Lever  
Braegan Abernethy

### Senior Adults

Dee Bradford-Smith

### Witness

We are all witnesses to the love of Jesus Christ.

### Worship

Gloria Gillespie  
Malinda Holmes  
Amy Kiley

# FALL KICK-OFF & BBQ



**Cornhole  
Competition & the  
Winners!**

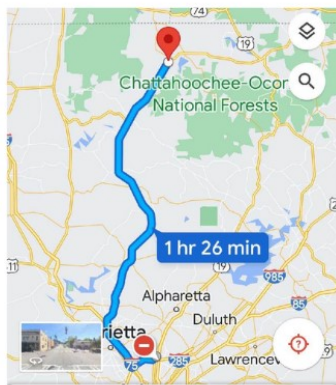


# SENIOR ADULTS

Movie Matinee  
"The Way"  
Saturday, September 16



These are just a few Birthday Cards sent out to 65+ members. They are created by Donna Martin with a message inside by Dee Bradford-Smith.



1 hr 26 min (87 mi)



Blue Ridge Train Trip  
Saturday, October 14

# CONNECTIONS TEA

Thank you to all that brought  
Connection Snacks  
throughout the year!



# OUTREACH

Irene Wong  
Ministry & Mission  
AMIS



SSEF Book Sorting



# MVPC TAKES A HIKE

An easy hike for all ages!

HIKING WITH THE SAINTS

Monday, October 23 @ 8:30AM

Meet at the church at 8:15am to carpool or join us at Big Trees.

Join us as we walk the trails of Big Trees Forest Preserve at:  
7645 Roswell Rd., NE | Sandy Springs, GA 30328



*Always in the big woods when you leave familiar ground and step into a new place there will be ... a little nagging of dread. It is the ancient fear of the Unknown, and it is your first bond with the wilderness you are going into. What you are doing is exploring. You are undertaking the first experience, not of the place but of yourself in that place.*

Wendell Berry

We had a great hike at Lost Corner!





## Player Baptism



We celebrate the baptism  
of  
Elaine Frances Player  
September 17

A note from  
long time  
member Jack  
Bobeng!



*“Dear Barrett,  
I’m reading over the Good News  
that keeps me informed. I  
noticed the restaurant ‘La  
Madeleine’ which brought back  
fond memories. I have enclosed a  
picture of Barbara and me  
having dinner one evening a  
very long time ago. I’m doing  
OK. I turn 95 on the 30th. I still  
wish I was in Dunwoody and  
attending church. Say ‘hi’ to all  
my old friends.  
God Speed Barrett, Jack”*

Thanks for our  
lovely  
Connection  
Snack  
volunteers!  
Be sure to sign  
up!





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

Church Office  
404.255.2211



**CHURCH OFFICE  
HOURS**

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



**2024 MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH ESTIMATE OF GIVING**

*Reaching Out To ... Welcome. Worship. Share. Serve.*

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

My total gift for 2024 will be \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I plan to give:

1 time     Weekly     Monthly     Quarterly

Yes, please send me a Contribution Book.

Using the enclosed envelope, please bring your pledge card on Stewardship Sunday, October 22; mail your pledge card to: P.O. Box 76051, Sandy Springs, GA 30358; or send an email to [yvonne@mvpchurch.org](mailto:yvonne@mvpchurch.org).

**Church Bulletin Blooper:**

*"Low Self-Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7-8:30pm. Please use the back door."*

*Photos courtesy of: Dee Bradford-Smith, Donna Martin, Beppie Lever, Barrett Abernethy, Isaac Toney-Schmitt*

# THIS & THAT

"Here's Your Sign"

October Events:

World Communion  
Oct. 1

Blessing of the Animals  
Oct. 8

Pumpkin Palooza  
Oct. 22

Stewardship Sunday  
Oct. 22

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

# Getting to Know...

BOB ADDISON

## Where were you born?

I am from Hartwell, GA. I was born on a cold December day in the front bedroom of my aunt and uncle's house. The local doctor came to the house and delivered me.

## What is your favorite book to read?

My favorite book to read is the Bible. About 20 years ago at MVP, I led a study of each chapter of each book of the Bible.

## What is your favorite sport to watch and play?

My favorite sport is "Southern" football. I attended Newberry College in South Carolina on a football scholarship. Football is in my blood and on the field!

## What was your work life like?

My work life was in two phases. As a teen, I had the following jobs: grocery store stocker and delivered groceries, movie and drive-in movies, jack-of-all-trades, grave digger, factory worker, Hartwell Dam grass cutter, and for Breakstone foods I was in shipping and receiving. After college, I worked for the DeKalb County School System for 31 years. At Druid Hills High, I was a social studies teacher, football assistant and Head soccer coach. At Lakeside High, I was a 10-month counselor. At Peachtree High and Shamrock High/Junior High School, I was a 12-month counselor (Head of the Department).

## What are your favorite activities in retirement?

In retirement I love to watch movies, tell corny jokes, go out for lunch, play duplicate bridge, and play nicket/dime/quarter poker. Seeing and talking with family and friends is very important to me!



### Looking for NEW Stephen Ministers!!!

If you have a desire to be a better listener, a heart for other people, a willingness to learn new, effective communication skills and experience a deeper spiritual life, we will train you! We need two to three females

and one to two males. We serve our congregation and the community and keep our skills honed by "befriending" some of our homebound members, a practice continued after the pandemic, when we do not have a care receiver. We welcome all former Stephen ministers and newcomers and congregants wanting to serve in a different way.

Contact Pat Bartee at 404 626 2432 and pick up an application on Sundays in Sept. in the Narthex or call Pat to email one.



# CHANGES TO BOOK OF ORDER

Shari Freeman

In order to become an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church (USA), candidates for ministry must take and pass a series of ordination exams. I took the my second of the five ordination exams late last month. This one covered polity – designed to assess a candidate's working knowledge of the PC(USA's) constitutional structure and governance. The exam is based on the PC(USA) Book of Order. And, just in time for my exam, the PCUSA has published an updated Book of Order!

The Book of Order is typically updated every two years, but because of Covid it has not been updated since 2019. Proposed amendments are reviewed and approved at the General Assembly meeting and then voted on by each presbytery. A majority of the presbyteries must approve the amendments. There are over 30 amendments included in the new Book of Order for 2023-2025 and here are five key ones to know about:

## **Openness**

The foundation section of the Book of Order adopted more expansive wording regarding openness. It states that "In Christ, Church members share with all humanity the realities of creatureliness, sinfulness, brokenness, and suffering, as well as ... a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of all people of all ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, genders, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity."

## **Boundary Training**

Ministers, commissioned ruling elders, all councils (including sessions), certified Christian educators, and inquirers for ministry are now required to complete boundary training, which includes the topics of sexual misconduct and child sexual abuse prevention, and to repeat the training every three years. We are working with the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta to offer this training for the session at MVPC.

## **Family Leave**

Congregations must now offer 12 weeks of paid family leave for called and installed pastors.

## **Electronic Meetings**

As a result of the pandemic, language was added to allow for electronic session and congregational meetings.

## **The Book of Discipline**

The Church Discipline section of the Book of Order has been re-organized and replaces the previous Rules of Discipline. The approved amendments in that section only changed a few procedures but revamped the information's layout. The processes for remedial versus judicial cases are grouped separately, making it easier for church councils to understand and follow the different procedures.

# OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Todd Simon	10/2
Tara Allen	10/5
Madison Hahn	10/5
Rita Sheffey	10/5
Sarah Chalpan	10/6
Ellen McCormick	10/6
Ann Williams	10/9
Marion Satterfield	10/10
Ian Hughes	10/11
Susan Hasell	10/11
Eleanor Brazell	10/13
Lisa Cumming	10/13
Lucy Hibbard	10/14
Marguerite Nelson	10/14
Leah Reid	10/15
Wright Hardy	10/17
Barbara Bruce	10/18
Charlie Bryson	10/20
Lisa Gray	10/20
Charley Plumly III	10/22
Bryce Cumming	10/23
Bryan Jackson	10/28
Kwaku Boadi	10/28
Mary Beth Combes	10/28
Hannah Hagenau	10/29
Barrett Abernethy	10/30
Jack Sims	10/31
Amy Kiley	10/31
Kathy Havey	10/31



If you have a birthday in October  
and don't see your name on the list,  
please contact  
[debbie@mvpchurch.org](mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org) or call the  
office.

## Staff Birthdays

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

# OCTOBER CALENDAR

## October 2023

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<b>1</b> <b>Worship 10:30am</b> 9:30am Adult Sunday School 10am Connection Snacks 7pm ACB-FH	<b>2</b> 1pm Senior Adult Mtg.-Session	<b>3</b> 10am - PW/CT Chapel 1pm Staff Meeting 5pm CE Meeting	<b>4</b> 8am School Chapel 6pm Worship Mtg. 7pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>5</b> 2pm Ledger Meeting	<b>6</b> 8am Budget Prep  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>7</b> 9am Bagpipes-GH LNP Sat. School 2pm Northrop Memorial Reception - KC
<b>8</b> <b>Worship 10:30am</b> 9:30am Adult Sunday School 10am Connection Snacks 2-4pm Blessing of the Animals	<b>9</b> 5:30pm FAMT - Zoom  <b>NO SCHOOL</b>	<b>10</b> 10am Day Circle-Chapel 1pm Staff Meeting	<b>11</b> 6pm Family Promise Coordinator Mtg. 7pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>12</b> 11am Vernon Springs Bible Study	<b>13</b> 10am Book Circle-Session	<b>14</b> 9am Bagpipes-GH LNP Sat. School Sr. Adults Train Trip
<b>15</b> <b>Worship 10:30am</b> 9:30am Adult Sunday School 10am Connection Snacks 11:30 Session Mtg. 7pm ACB-FH	<b>16</b> 5pm Worship Meeting	<b>17</b> 9:30am Staff Meeting	<b>18</b> 9:30am School Chapel 7pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>19</b> 1:30pm Villages Bible Study 6pm Zambia Mtg.	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 9am Bagpipes-GH 10-2 Emily's Trick/Treat
<b>22</b> <b>Worship 10:30am</b> 9:30am Adult Sunday School 10am Connection Snacks 11:30am Officer Training 4pm Pumpkin Palooza	<b>23</b> 8:15am MVPC Hike 6pm Magic Club-FH	<b>24</b> 1pm Staff Meeting 7pm Taizé	<b>25</b> 8am School Chapel 7pm Choir Rehearsal  <b>Good News Deadline</b>	<b>26</b> 6:30pm LNP	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 9am Bagpipes-GH LNP Sat. School
<b>29 OUTDOOR</b> <b>Worship 10:30am</b> 9:30am Adult Sunday School 10am Connection Snacks 11:30am Officer Training 7pm ACB-FH	<b>30</b>  <b>Good News Published</b>	<b>31</b> 9:30am Staff Meeting	<b>Fellowship Hall</b> Mon 6:30pm AI-Anon Tues 7:00pm Thurs 8:00pm Fri - 8:00pm	<b>AA - Chapel</b> Mon 6:30pm AI-Anon Tues 7:00pm Thurs 8:00pm Fri - 8:00pm	<b>AA Kirk Center</b> Mon 8:00pm Wed. 8:00pm Fri. 8:00pm	



Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church  
 www.mvpchurch.org  
 404.255.2211

*Blessed to be a Blessing*

**Sunday Worship**  
 10:30am Sanctuary

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

# SESSION MEETING SUMMARY

## Stated Session Meeting September 17, 2023

The Session met on September 17 for the regular monthly Session meeting. The following business was conducted:

- The Congregational Care Ministry Team is looking for at least two people for training to become Stephen Ministers. This is a vital ministry offered by our church for members as well as non-members.
- The Finance and Administration Ministry Team reported that giving continues to be on schedule. The HVAC work was recently completed and there were no unexpected additional costs. A recent very heavy rain flooded portions of the low level of the sanctuary building and part of Fellowship Hall. A study will be done soon to determine what improvements are needed in the drainage system. The Mount Vernon Highway improvement project will take away the on-street parking as well as part of the playground. The church and city are involved in discussions regarding how much the city will pay MVPC for the land that will be taken.
- The Vital Congregations Initiative planning team will be working in the coming months to determine the updates to the church website and other ways the church communicates. Our new tagline Reaching out to... Welcome. Worship. Share. Serve. will have a prominent role in shaping MVPC's outreach and communication with the community.
- A planning team is about to begin work planning a July 2024 Zambia trip.
- Two members who have moved out of state and are attending other churches were removed from the church rolls. Church membership currently is 379.

*The next Session Meeting will be  
October 15.*

# PRAYER VINE



**Dede Callahan** - recovering from surgery and is in rehab at the Breman House.

**Mark Fifield** - at home recovering from a recent surgery.

**Fay Hendricks** - healing and comfort for Betsy Cozine's friend who has heart issues.

**Megan Kendall** - Hill's niece, courage and strength as her chemo treatments are taking toll on her and is taking a leave of absence to focus on getting well.

**Mary Lynch** - mother of Felicia Hutt is recovering from breast cancer surgery.

**Chuck McCrory** - Amy Kiley's boyfriend's father, comfort and faith as he battles severe cirrhosis.

**Karen Morine** - Bruce Morine's sister-in-law in New Zealand had a recent scan that shows more cancer on her liver & connecting tissue to her stomach

**Meredith Nash** - Hill's friends 4 year old daughter, faith and strength as she is in the hospital to stabilize from chemo treatments.

**Andy Nelson** - continued healing as he receives treatment for leukemia.

**Mrs. JB** - still waiting on a bone marrow donor.

**Carter Ramsey** - Steve Whisenant's relative in a north GA boarding school is back at school after contracting a rare infectious disease. He will transfer to a school in Atlanta to be closer to doctors.

Blessings to our homebound members who often tune into our services.

Blessings upon the ministries our church supports here and in Zambia.

Faith and courage for those reeling from disaster, gun violence, oppression, and injustice and those fighting for freedom and identity.

Do you need prayer?  
Have our Prayer Vine pray for you!  
Email your requests to [pbartee@yahoo.com](mailto: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](mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org).

*If you no longer wish to receive the Good News, please send an email to [debbie@mvpchurch.org](mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org).*

## Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

<b>Rev. Barrett Abernethy</b>	<i>Senior Pastor/Head of Staff</i>	<a href="mailto:barrett@mvpchurch.org">barrett@mvpchurch.org</a>
<b>Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt</b>	<i>Associate Pastor of Faith Formation</i>	<a href="mailto:isaac@mvpchurch.org">isaac@mvpchurch.org</a>
<b>Steve Ray</b>	<i>Church Finance and Operations</i>	<a href="mailto:steve@mvpchurch.org">steve@mvpchurch.org</a>
<b>Debbie Nysewander</b>	<i>Administrative Assistant</i>	<a href="mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org">debbie@mvpchurch.org</a>
<b>Yvonne White</b>	<i>Financial Secretary</i>	<a href="mailto:yvonne@mvpchurch.org">yvonne@mvpchurch.org</a>
<b>Shari Freeman</b>	<i>Seminary Intern</i>	<a href="mailto:shari@mvpchurch.org">shari@mvpchurch.org</a>

# Good News!

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(See Matthew 14:14-21) 10-25-2013

GRAB AS MANY FISH AND LOAVES AS YOU LIKE ... NO LIMIT

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