



Family Promise Volunteers
Etta O'Hare, Penny Kiel

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHRISTMAS EVE DECEMBER 24, 2023 + 5:30PM

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

Every year at Christmas, Spring Break, and for two weeks in the summer, our church houses families in partnership with Family Promise. This organization aims to provide a "room in the inn" to combat housing insecurity for our neighbors. Any cash offerings we receive this night go to support their work.

GATHERING

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

GATHERING MUSIC

Brass Quintet

† PROCESSIONAL HYMN #41

"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

J. Wilcocks

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold Him, born the King of angels!

Refrain

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all
Glory in the highest! (*refrain*)

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given; word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing! (*refrain*)

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

† LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

MVPC/Family Promise Volunteers

ONE: This evening, we celebrate the bond between Family Promise and Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church.

ALL: **We give thanks for this sacred partnership, for the Prince of Peace came into this world so that all may have a room in the inn.**

ONE: That is why we welcome families from near and far, those who know abundance and those who know scarcity, for the promise of life is here!

ALL: **We light this Christ Candle proclaiming that promise. Let us share this light with the one to our right and our left.**

ONE: For the chaos and noise are ever present, but the promise of a silent night is upon us. Let us bask in that light and take it to all in need of peace.

ALL: **Let us celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace!**

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain

Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time, behold Him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel. (*refrain*)
Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.
Mild He lays His glory by, born that we no more may die.
Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. (*refrain*)

† PRAYER FOR ETERNAL LIGHT

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

God of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. During this season of Advent we have come to you celebrating Jesus Christ, Name above all Names, for we believe he is the light of the world. Tonight, we pray for his light to shine throughout time and in the hearts of all.

We celebrate the Wonderful Counselor who comes into the world offering sermons and parables that envision a new and different world.

We celebrate the Mighty God who instills fierce bravery in Mary to bear the Incarnate so that life may overcome death and light may eclipse the darkness.

We celebrate the Everlasting Father who dwells with the people in the deserts, in times of despair, and when fortunes are destitute. Continue to let us feel the warmth of your light.

Tonight, we celebrate the Prince of Peace coming into the world. For this is the name we long to see most. Amid the violence and the fragmentation of people, it is easy to recognize the brokenness. Help us to do the hard work. Help us to bear witness to peace by being disciples of wholeness.

Share your light, Holy One, and make it manifest across your sky so we can see the miracle in the manger: the promise of heaven present on earth. To your name, the one above all, we pray ...
(silent confession) ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF LIGHT

ONE: ...In the name of Jesus Christ, may the light shine through us.
ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE #23

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

GLORIA

Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains.
Gloria, in excelsis Deo; Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

All children 5th grade and younger are invited to come forward for storytelling and prayer.

PARADE OF THE ANIMALS

HYMN (*blue hymnal #53*)

"What Child is This?"

GREENSLEEVES

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Rev. Abernethy

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:2-7 & Luke 2:1-20

HOMILY

"Prince of Peace"

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.

+ **HYMN #40**

"Joy to the World!"

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world, the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns: let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders, of His love.

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.

OFFERTORY

"Christmas Fantasy for Organ & Brass"
Brass Quintet

arr. Joel Ramey

† DOXOLOGY

Tune of Hymn #53 "What Child is This"

These gifts we joyfully bring to you,
to fill the world with meaning;
our hearts and minds are longing for
the life of which you are dreaming.

This, this our gift we bring,
our lives we share, your praise we sing;
show us your vision, Lord,
for hope, and peace, and caring.

† PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

David Barclift

SENDING

† SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

*(Ushers will come to the end of each row to light candles. Once your candle has been lit,
please share the light with the person next to you.)*

† CLOSING HYMN #60

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

STILLE NACHT

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and Child! Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

POSTLUDE

"Joy to the World"

arr. Norman Johnson

Donna Maini

Leading Today's Worship Service
Rev. Barrett Abernethy, Senior Pastor
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor
Donna Maini, Music Director
Roger Scanlan, Choral Conductor
Shari Freeman, Director of Spiritual Care

Brass Quintet
Paul Bonapfel - baritone/trombone
Stephen Goodwin - trumpet
John Hibbard - tuba
Sean Mack - trombone
Craig Sprinkle - trumpet

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....



- Celebrating Mission Partners at MVPC During Advent/Christmas**
- Dec. 3: The Mount Vernon School
 - Dec. 10: Community Assistance Center
 - Dec. 17: Los Niños Primero
 - Dec. 24: SS Education Force (10:30am)
Family Promise (5:30pm)

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:



December 31 "Star of Wonder", Matthew 2:1-11, Chalking the Door, Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

January 7 "Welcome", Mark 1:4-11, Rev. Barrett Abernethy



New Directory: We will be doing a new pictorial directory for our 70th Anniversary! We need you to stay after worship any Sunday in January beginning Jan. 7 for a casual picture of you and your family. No purchase required!



Presbyterian Women: All women are welcome to join any of these PW activities! Please mark your calendar for Sunday, Jan. 14, right after the worship service for our Annual Luncheon. This New Year's Luncheon will be in combination with Circle of Grace and Young Adults. Jill Felts, former member, will speak on *Realizing Your Life's Blueprint*. Cost: \$20 when you sign up in the Narthex.



Lunch Bunch: Join Isaac and Shari on Sunday, December 31 after worship at City Barbeque.



CHURCH OFFICE will be closed Monday, Dec. 25, Tues. Dec. 26, Fri. Dec. 29, Mon. Jan. 1

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

December 24, 2023



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

Giving



Our **January Communion Offering** is for 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. Originally called the Community Action Center, CAC was started in 1987 in our Gailey Hall by five congregations including MVPC. Now the organization has four locations.



Adult Sunday School: Discovery meets in the Chapel and is using the curriculum "The Present Word". Crossroads meets in the Session Room and will use a DVD series titled "Great Figures of the New Testament" by Amy-Jill Levine. Both classes meet at 9:30am. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for more information.



Stephen Ministry: The holidays have a way of bringing out the best and the worst in people. For those whose hearts are already heavy, the excitement, joy, and hectic activity simply exacerbate the pain. Please know that here at MVPC, we have people called Stephen Ministers who want to walk with you as you work to resolve problems and renew your joy. Please contact a pastor or Pat Barte, Stephen Leader to get involved.



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: Susan Doyle, Eliana, Fay Hendricks, Megan Kendall, Mary Lynch, Chuck McCrory, Karen Morine, Meredith Nash, Carter Ramsey, Rob Russell, Elizabeth (Elo) Small, Isabelle Vannucci, Barbara Wasson, Gail Williams, and people of Israel, Ukraine, Myanmar, Turkey, and Zambia.

Attendance: 12/17/23 Worship 186
 Online 5

Thank you to Music Director, Donna Maini, who concludes her time with our church family today. We are grateful for your gifts, Donna, and blessings in your future endeavors.

Financial Update

December 14-20	Actual	Actual YTD	2023 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 6,525	\$ 441,247	\$471,275
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 8,761	\$ 90,537	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 199	\$ 8,693	\$ 9,000
Total	\$ 15,485	\$ 540,477	\$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