



Sandy Springs Education Force volunteers sorting books to be distributed to local children.

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHRISTMAS EVE DAY LESSONS & CAROLS DECEMBER 24, 2023 + 10:30 AM

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

Joining in their commitment to support economically disadvantaged public school children, our church partners with Sandy Springs Education Force by serving as a staging area for books to be distributed to students in our midst. To date, we have sorted more than 18,000 volumes that have gone or will go to local children.

GATHERING

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

GATHERING MUSIC

“Away in a Manger”
Emi Lutz, Guitar

Matt Carlson

† PROCESSIONAL HYMN #49 **“Once in Royal David’s City”**

IRBY

Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable, and His cradle was a stall.
With the poor, oppressed, and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.

Jesus is our childhood's pattern; day by day, like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless, tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness, and He shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heaven above;
And He leads His children on to the place where He is gone.

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

† LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE Sandy Springs Education Force Volunteers

ONE: This morning we celebrate the bond between the Sandy Springs Education Force and Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church.

ALL: **We give thanks for this sacred partnership that connects us to the children of this city who do not call our campus their school.**

ONE: Much like the Advent light, our light should shine far beyond the sanctuary walls. In these shortened days, we must take the light out into the world.

ALL: **That is why we light the candle of love. For the love of Christ should be shared with all of God's children.**

ONE: Let us ring a joyful noise this day proclaiming this truth!

ALL: **Let us worship God!**

This morning is actually the 4th and final Sunday of the Advent Season, as the Christmas Season does not begin until the night falls. Join us again at 5:30pm when we will light the Christ candle.

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart, and soul, and voice;
 Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;
 Ox and ass before Him bow, and He is in the manger now.
 Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice, with heart, and soul and voice;
 Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!
 He hath opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.
 Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

Good Christian friends, rejoice, with heart and soul and voice;
 Now ye need not fear the grave: Jesus Christ was born to save!
 Calls you one and calls you all, to gain the everlasting hall.
 Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

THE FIRST LESSON
HYMN #9

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19
“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Piper Neumann
 VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 And ransom captive Israel,
 That mourns in lonely exile here
 Until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
 Our spirits by Thine advent here;
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 And death's dark shadows put to flight. (*refrain*)

O come, Desire of nations, bind
 All peoples in one heart and mind;
 Bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
 Fill the whole world with heaven's peace. (*refrain*)

THE SECOND LESSON
HYMN #22

Genesis 22:15-18
“Angels, from the Realms of Glory”

Piper Neumann

Angels from the realms of glory, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
 Ye who sang creation's story now proclaim Messiah's birth.

Refrain:

Come and worship, come and worship,
 Worship Christ, the newborn King!

Shepherds, in the field abiding, watching o'er your flocks by night,
 God with us is now residing; yonder shines the infant light:

Sages, leave your contemplations, brighter visions beam afar;
 Seek the great Desire of nations; ye have seen His natal star.

All creation, join in praising God, the Father, Spirit, Son,
 Evermore your voices raising to the eternal Three in One.

THE THIRD LESSON
HYMN #38

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7
"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Ryan Sawyer
CAROL

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold;
"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all gracious King":
The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

Still through the cloven skies they come, with peaceful wings unfurled,
And still their heavenly music floats O'er all the weary world;
Above its sad and lowly plains they bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds the blessed angels sing.

And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
Look now! for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing;
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.

For lo, the days are hastening on, by prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years comes round the age of gold;
When peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

THE FOURTH LESSON
ANTHEM

Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9
"In the Bleak Midwinter"
Chancel Choir

Ryan Sawyer
Harold Darke

THE FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1:26-35, 38
"O Holy Night"
Anthony Menardi, Soloist

Julia Northrop
Adolphe Adam

THE SIXTH LESSON
HYMN #24

Luke 2:1-7
"Away in a Manger"

Julia Northrop
CRADLE SONG

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
The little Lord Jesus laid down His sweet head.
The stars in the bright sky looked down where He lay,
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the poor Baby wakes,
But little Lord Jesus, no crying He makes;
I love Thee, Lord Jesus, look down from the sky,
And stay by my side until morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask Thee to stay
Close by me forever, and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And fit us for Heaven to live with Thee there.

THE SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-16

OFFERTORY

“I Shall Know Him When He Comes”

by Douglas Wagner

Chancel Choir

† DOXOLOGY

† PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Scott Martin

THE EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-11

HYMN #66 (v. 1,2,5)

“We Three Kings of Orient Are”

THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

THE NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

† HYMN #29

“Go, Tell It On the Mountain”

GO TELL IT

Refrain:

Go, tell it on the mountain over the hills and everywhere;
Go, tell it on the mountain, that Jesus Christ is born.

While shepherds kept their watching o'er silent flocks by night,
Behold throughout the heavens there shone a holy light. *(refrain)*

The shepherds feared and trembled, when lo! above the earth,
Rang out the angels chorus that hailed our Savior's birth. *(refrain)*

Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn. *(refrain)*

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Abernethy

POSTLUDE

“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”

arr. Harold DeCou

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

Readers

Piper Neumann

Julia Northrop

Ryan Sawyer

We are located at:
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Sandy Springs, GA 30328
mvchurch.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 signup 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 Barteel, 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