



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
EPIPHANY OF THE LORD
DECEMBER 31, 2023 • 10:30 AM
Reaching out to ... Welcome. Worship. Share. Serve.

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

GATHERING

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

CHALKING THE DOOR

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt & Shari Freeman

Holy God, you have led many people to these doors. Some from near, some from far. Some with immediate needs, some with precious gifts. Some full of questions, some full of knowing. We ask your blessing on this ordinary bit of chalk that it may mark these doors as extraordinary. May these marks be a welcome invitation for all who are led here this year, and a constant prayer for the nourishment and safety of this sanctuary. Amen.

PROCESSIONAL HYMN (*see insert*)

“We Three Kings of Orient Are”
THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

OPENING PRAYER

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

ONE: Arise, shine, for your light has come!

ALL: **The glory of the Lord has appeared among us!**

ONE: Travel across the land to share good news throughout the earth:

ALL: **That the saving grace of Jesus Christ is right here among us.**

ONE: Come and adore the Savior of the nations.

ALL: **We offer the gifts of our lives to the Lord. Let us worship God!**

† **MORNING SONG #68**

“What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright”
PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

What star is this, with beams so bright, more lovely than the noonday light?

’Tis sent to announce a newborn King, glad tidings of our God to bring.

’Tis now fulfilled what God decreed, “From Jacob shall a star proceed”;

And lo! the Eastern sages stand to read in heaven the Lord’s command.

O Jesus, while the star of grace impels us on to seek Your face,
Let not our slothful hearts refuse the guidance of Your light to use.

† PRAYER FOR CONFESSION

Shari Freeman

God of Grace and Forgiveness, you light the night sky with stars that guide faithful watchers from east and west. Does every star in the night sky have someone, somewhere faithfully watching it? We ask your forgiveness for the times we've turned away from the lights in our lives, for the times we've ignored the billions of guiding lights around us. We are not always ready to respond to the epiphany message we hear. But we want to be ready, and we turn to you this morning so that we may be ready in the new year ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE #68(v. 4)

“What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright”

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

To God the Father, God the Son, and Holy Spirit, Three in One,
May every tongue and nation raise an endless song of thankful praise.

† STAR WORDS

(All are invited to come forward to pick up a star on the Communion table.)

† 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. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2:1-23

HOMILY

“Star of Wonder”

RESPONSE

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*from the Brief Statement of Faith, section 11.2*)

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. Amen.

OFFERTORY

† 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.

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.

† PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Kathryn Wade

SENDING

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL “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.

Arise, your light is come! Fling wide the prison door;
Proclaim the captives' liberty, good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come! All you in sorrow born,
Bind up the broken-hearted ones and comfort those who mourn.

Arise, your light is come! The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing; God's power will make us strong.

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

POSTLUDE

Leading Today's Worship Service
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor
Jill Hudson, Interim Music Director
Roger Scanlan, Choral Conductor
Shari Freeman, Director of Spiritual Care

*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



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

mvpchurch.org

MVPC Announcements....



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:



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

January 14 "Worship", Luke 24:13-35, Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt



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 next Sunday, 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, Jan. 1

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

December 31, 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: Holiday joy can be only an aspiration when you are having difficult times during the season. If you are experiencing grief, on-going care-giving chores, job loss, mid-life angst, empty nest, an abrupt move, a new and difficult diagnosis, memory issues that are impairing your daily life, or other life issues that are blurring your enjoyment of the season, please ask for a Stephen Minister to be in your life. Please contact a pastor or Pat Bartee, 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: 12/24/23 10:30am Worship 98, Online 115
5:30pm Candlelight 271, Online 11

Financial Update

December 21-27	Actual	Actual YTD	2023 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 13,277	\$ 454,524	\$471,275
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 4,450	\$ 94,987	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 149	\$ 8,842	\$ 9,000
Total	\$ 17,876	\$ 558,353	\$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