



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
JANUARY 21, 2024 • 10:30 AM

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

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

Today we focus on what it means to **Share** the love of God. This can have several meanings. How do we share God's grace to others? How do we share this campus with others? How do we share in God's abundance together? Let's explore this today!

GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELLS

GATHERING MUSIC

“Seek Ye First”

Maranatha Worship

Nichol Jacobs, Anthony Menardi, Rebecca Shipley
Soloists

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

OPENING PRAYER

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

ONE: We are a congregation reaching out to share God's love with others,

ALL: **Because God's love has been graciously shared with us.**

ONE: God calls us to see the divinity in everyone around us,

ALL: **And to care for one another as if we are caring for God.**

ONE: No one can completely hide from God's love. →

ALL: **We will make sure that God's love reaches everyone. Let us worship God!**

Our focus passage is Matthew 25:31-46, which starkly illustrates the actions of the “sheep and goats”. In the scriptures the goats do not follow the king (God), but as this line confirms, even when separating ourselves in sin, we cannot hide from God. Hence, we can always be redeemed.

† **MORNING SONG #343 “Called as Partners in Christ's Service”**

BEECHER

Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.

May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.

Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.

Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.

Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.

So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.

This confession was written as a part of the Matthew 25 worship resources from the Presbyterian Mission Agency. The national conference of Matthew 25 churches was held this week in Atlanta.

† PRAYER FOR CONFESSION

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

Merciful God, we confess that we have wandered from your way of truth and life. You call us to share all that we have and work together, but we hoard up treasures for ourselves and deny others their daily bread. You call us to set the captives free and seek justice for the oppressed, but we live in fear of our neighbors and hide our true selves from those closest to us. You call us to walk in new life and to be witnesses to the resurrection, but we dwell in the valley of dry bones and keep silent about your saving love. Forgive us, God of Grace. Set us free from sin, death, and fear so that we may feel and share your love ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE #387

“Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”

Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us, for our use Thy folds prepare:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast bought us, Thine we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

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

Rev. Abernethy

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 25:31-46

HOMILY

“Share”

RESPONSE

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*from the Belhar Confession*)

We believe:

that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;
that this unity can be established only in freedom and not under constraint;
that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God; Amen.

This confession, inspired by God to bring unity among people in apartheid South Africa, speaks to hope we can find when we share in reconciling love of God.

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

“The Lord is My Shepherd”

arr. Thomas Matthews

Chancel Choir

Nichol Jacobs, Soprano

† 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

Braegan Abernethy

SENDING

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL (*see insert*)

“They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love”

We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord;
We are one in the Spirit; we are one in the Lord,
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored:

Refrain

And they’ll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
Yes, they’ll know we are Christians by our love.

We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand;
We will walk with each other; we will walk hand in hand,
And together we’ll spread the news that God is in our land: (*refrain*)

We will work with each other; we will work side by side;
We will work with each other; we will work side by side,
And we’ll guard human dignity and save human pride: (*refrain*)

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come,
And all praise to Christ Jesus, God’s only Son,
And all praise to the Spirit, who makes us one: (*refrain*)

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Abernethy

POSTLUDE

“Fugue”

G.F. Handel

Leading Today’s Worship Service
Rev. Barrett Abernethy, Senior Pastor
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor
Jill Hudson, Interim Music Director
Roger Scanlan, Choral Conductor
Shari Freeman, Director of Spiritual Care
Emi Lutz, Guitar

*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

MVPC Announcements....

Save the Date!
70th Anniversary Service
May 19, 2024



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. Please sign the Friendship Pad and pass it down the pew as you greet your neighbor. If you are a visitor, please stop at the **Welcome Table** and pick up a visitor bag.

Upcoming Services/Events:

Sermon Series: Reaching Out to ...



- January 23** Taizé Service, 7pm in the Sanctuary
- January 28** "Serve", 1 Corinthians 3:18-4:2, Ordination/Installation of Elders, Rev. Barrett Abernethy
- February 4** Guest Preacher Dr. William Yoo, Luncheon and discussion of his book *What Kind of Christianity..* (see insert) to follow in Fellowship Hall



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 for a casual picture of you and your family. The last day for pictures is next Sunday, Jan. 28. No purchase required!



Senior Adults are going to Fernbank Museum on Sunday, Jan. 28 after worship. Cost is \$20.95. We will stop for an early dinner at Louisiana Bistreaux in Decatur. Please sign up in the Narthex.



Lunch Bunch: Please join Isaac and Shari after worship for lunch next Sunday, Jan. 28.



Small Groups: Be sure to reserve your spot today! The signups are in the Narthex. There are several options that begin January 28. All are invited!

Christian Sympathy to the family and friends of Eleanor Brazell who died Jan. 16 after a short illness. Her service will be held in our Sanctuary on Feb. 10 at 10am.

January 21, 2024



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.



Presbyterian Women: All women are welcome to join any PW activities! Save the date! The Presbyterian Women's Mission Lunch will be on **February 11** in the Kirk Center following the worship service. Andrea Brantley, CEO of Family Promise, will speak to us about the good work that the agency is doing in the community. Lunch will be provided.



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: Winter is synonymous with wilderness in scripture, a time of harsh reckoning in bleak circumstances. Though a time of barrenness, it also is a time of dormancy, of hidden re-creation, and of promise. If the dark days of winter bring up sadness and angst for you and you could use some help in sorting through a long grief, a job loss, an impending move, a move made, a new diagnosis, an empty nest, isolation or loneliness, mid-life inertia, or anything that saps your joy, please call on your Stephen Ministry Team. 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: Anne Baynham, Susan Doyle, Eliana, Allison Eustis, Bruce Hagenau, Fay Hendricks, Patricia Hibbard, Megan Kendall, 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.

Dates for your calendar:

Sunday, Feb. 11	2pm Recital by Ryan Sawyer
Wednesday, Feb. 14	Pancake Supper & Ash Wednesday Service, 5:30pm
Sunday, Feb. 18	First Sunday of Lent, Sermon Series: The Crosses of Mount Vernon
Sunday, Feb. 25	Annual Meeting of the church following worship

Financial Update

(2024 numbers will be released following approval of our new budget later this month.)

December 2023 FINAL	Actual	Actual YTD	2023 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 37,736	\$ 459,672	\$471,275
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 38,220	\$ 113,215	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 1,115	\$ 8,910	\$ 9,000
Total	\$ 77,071	\$ 581,797	\$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