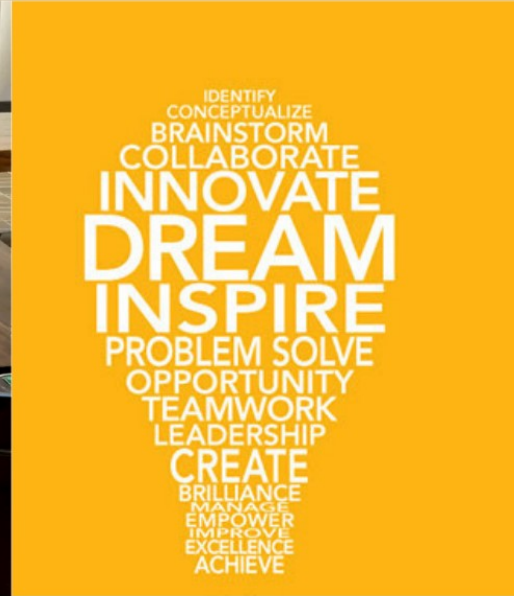




GOOD NEWS

FEBRUARY 2024



A Note From The Pastor

BY REV. BARRETT ABERNETHY

Lent (and Other Things) in the Air at MVPC this February

Friends, we have a wonderful February planned at Mount Vernon, and I want to take a moment to share a little about each Sunday as we (already!!!) turn toward the Lenten Season.

February 4

Since February is Black History month, we thought it appropriate to welcome Columbia Seminary Professor, Dr. William Yoo, to lead worship. Last year, Dr. Yoo's book *What Kind of Christianity: A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church* received

much acclaim. In addition to preaching, Dr. Yoo will offer remarks during a luncheon in the Fellowship Hall following worship. A limited number of copies of his book will be made available.

February 11

Super Bowl Sunday will see the church celebrate Transfiguration of the Lord. At the end of that service, we will also burn the palms as we have in past years in preparation for the Lenten Season.

Come back to the sanctuary that afternoon at 2pm as recent college graduate Ryan Sawyer offers his senior recital performance that celebrates his unique and varied talents.

IN THIS ISSUE

Session Retreat

Outreach

Exegesis

Volunteer Spotlight

Getting to Know...

This & That/
Celebrations

Calendar/Birthdays

Session Summary

Prayer Vine

Crosses of MVPC

continued on next page

February 14

Shift your Valentine's plans to Friday and come join us for the annual Pancake Supper and Ash Wednesday service. Dinner begins at 5:30pm and the Service starts at 6:30pm. Shari Freeman will offer the sermon, and I hope she uses my suggested title, "Love & Ashes."

February 18

We begin our Lenten Season with a new sermon series: The Crosses of Mount Vernon. Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt will kick off this series by exploring the Latin cross that hangs from the ceiling of our sanctuary. As we begin this series that examines the crosses we find on our campus, I hope you will look daily for the crosses you see. Perhaps they are two pieces of wood on top of each other or perhaps they are a cross affixed to a wall in your home. What do these crosses mean to you?

February 25

Our last Sunday service of the month will explore the Presbyterian Seal, or cross, which is appropriate because we conclude that gathering by holding our Church's Annual Meeting. You will receive the Annual Report which will detail how 2023 was a truly

wonderful year as we reached out to welcome, worship, share, and serve in various ways.

There is a great deal to pack into the shortest month of the year. Small groups are also starting up and we are well on our way to preparing for Easter (March 31) and our 70th Anniversary Service (May 19). Additionally, join us on April 28 as the President of Columbia Theological Seminary, Dr. Victor Aloyo, will preach and teach a Sunday School class.

More to come, later friends, but as you can see 2024 is going to be an exciting year!

*Grace & Peace,
Barrett*

January 1 - December 31, 2023	Actual YTD	2023 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$459,672	\$471,275
Member Giving Non- Pledge	\$113,215	\$60,000
Non member giving & Loose offering	\$8,910	\$9,000
Total Received	\$581,797	\$540,275

2024 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
Keith Bumgarner

Finance/Administration/ Stewardship

John Hibbard

Outreach

Beppie Lever
Braegan Abernethy

Senior Adults

Dee Bradford-Smith

Witness

Lois Johnson

Worship

Gloria Gillespie
Malinda Holmes

OUTREACH

To kickoff the new year, we sorted your generous donations to the Outreach Tree. We distributed them to Stirred Up Ministries, Clifton Sanctuary Ministries, International Women's House, and the Community Assistance Center. The youth used their outreach budget on items for the Outreach Tree as well.

The January Communion Offering was non-perishable food for the Community Assistance Center. Thanks to our church member volunteers, Anna Morine, volunteering at the South Sandy Springs CAC Food Pantry, and Sophie Galen, helping us pass out Communion Offering Blue Bags on Sundays.

We received two letters of appreciation from our mission partners:

From Andrea Brantley at Family Promise:

Happy New Year to you all!

I wanted to drop you a quick note and let you know how much we appreciate MVP having a second offering at your Christmas Eve Service. We are really touched by this generous gift! Thank you for believing in our mission and all that you do for our families and our organization.

*Much love,
Andrea*



From Lori White at Clifton Sanctuary Ministries:

Dear Mt Vernon PC,

Thank you so much for the latest financial donation to go towards bag lunches for our guests. This is an ongoing need and we are thankful to receive support as we feed the Clifton men. We are so grateful for your continued partnership. Blessings and Happy New Year!

Lori White, Community Relations

The February Communion Offering will be for Clifton Sanctuary Ministries: cereal, coffee/sugar/creamer, individually packaged snacks, juice boxes, gatorade, paper towels, paper napkins, paper plates and bowls, plastic forks and spoons, liquid laundry detergent, lysol spray, bleach., new towels and new twin-size sheets, brown paper lunch bags (larger 6 inch size), and Home Depot/Lowe's gift cards.

PRACTICAL EXEGESIS

SHARI FREEMAN

Exegesis is the process of carefully studying a passage of scripture to interpret and more deeply understand the text. Exegesis is the work that ministers do every week as they study scriptures and prepare upcoming sermons. However, anyone can use this practice to deepen their understanding of scripture.

Try this approach of studying scripture on your own. All you need to do is pick a scripture passage that interests you and then follow the steps below.

1) Translation

First, read the text in two or three translations and notice the differences.

www.biblegateway.com offers access to over 60 Bible translations, making switching from one translation to another easy. Check out the “Mounce Reverse Interlinear New Testament,” which shows a word-for-word translation of the New Testament directly from Greek to English. How do the differences in wording expand your understanding of the text?

2) Genre

Next, identify the style of literature represented by the text. The Bible includes many different types of literature, including historical narratives, letters, poetry, wisdom literature, prophecies, epistles/teachings, and the gospels. What genre is your text, and how does genre help you to understand the text?

3) Historical Context

Third, read about the historical context of the specific book. What do we know about the author of the text? Who was the original intended audience of the text? Most study Bibles contain information like this at the beginning of each book of the Bible. If you don't already have a study Bible, I recommend the Harper Collins Study Bible, New Revised Standard Version.

4) Literary Context

Finally, look at the text in conjunction with the overall book. What chapters come right before it and right after it? How do these chapters help you to interpret the text?

Using these four exegetical steps as you are studying a passage of scripture should bring a deeper understanding of the passage, along with the broader story of the Bible and the One who is telling it.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Thank you to all the MVPC members who donate their time and energy to benefit our community! The Outreach Ministry Team “spotlights” our members to share their volunteer experiences and the many opportunities available. If you know of someone who should be spotlighted, please contact Beppie, Braegan, or Christy.

Ann and Stan Williams A Lifetime of Service to Others

We are long term members at Mount Vernon and both have had the privilege of serving as Elders.

Ann is very involved in Presbyterian Women and has served as Moderator and attends PW Bible Study and the Book Circle. She also enjoys working with the Fellowship Team that provides meals for various activities.

Stan currently serves on the Finance/Administration Team and also on The Mount Vernon Foundation as Secretary. Stan also served on the Search Committee that called our Associate Pastor, Isaac.

We both have a special passion for the Zambia Mission which Mount Vernon significantly supports.

We encourage members to get involved in something you are passionate about and volunteer. There are so many opportunities at Mount Vernon. It is a great way to meet people and make lifelong friendships.

“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:10

Getting to Know...

KATHY HAVEY

What did you want to be when you were small?

When I was young I wanted to be a nurse. Having read all the books available about “Sue Barton”, “Cherry Ames”, and others I was sure I had the makings of an excellent nurse. Then when I got to high school I took chemistry...enough said. I became an elementary school teacher and was quite fulfilled.



What radio stations do you listen to the most?

When driving around Atlanta I mostly listen to oldies and classical music. Sometimes I throw in a little jazz or soul which mostly depends on the traffic.

If you could hire someone to help you, would it be with cleaning, cooking, or yard work?

If I could have someone help with cleaning or cooking, I definitely would say BOTH! They get done out of necessity not because I like to do either.

What are your hobbies?

I enjoy crocheting and sewing quilts in my spare time after wasting too much time on my iPad.

How would your friends describe you?

I am generally a positive thinking person and enjoy life.



If you are grieving way too long, if you have lost a job or are needing a life change, if you are wrestling with a chronic disease, if you are anxious about a move, if you are feeling lonely and isolated, if you are not managing an empty nest, if you are an exhausted caregiver, if you are at mid-life and feel aimless, if you are not dealing well with a new diagnosis, or have a temporary really hard issue in your life, Stephen Ministry can help! We can provide a safe haven for you to vent and discuss your angst in a confidential setting and be fully heard, receive encouragement and companionship, obtain resources, and clarify goals.

Please contact a pastor or Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader.



CELEBRATIONS

Sophie Galen

Taize
January 23

Chalking the
Door

Connection
Snacks



Sophie Galen comes faithfully every week to put the Attendance Pads in the pews! Thank you, Sophie!



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

THIS & THAT



THE
MOUNT
VERNON
SCHOOL



February

Events:

Tour the School
Feb. 2

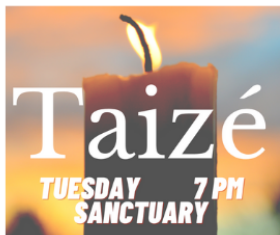
PW Mission Lunch
Feb. 11

Ryan Sawyer Recital
Feb. 11 @ 2pm

Ash Wednesday
Pancakes @ 5:30pm
Feb. 14



Ash Wednesday
Pancakes @ 5:30pm
Feb. 14



LUNCH
BUNCH

Taize
Feb. 27
7pm

Committees &
Coffee
Lunch Bunch
Feb. 25

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

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

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

The church calendar is now available on our website! Go to the website, click on "News & Events" at the top, then click on "Calendar". This is our Google calendar and is current.

Feb 2024 (Eastern Time - New York)

Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3
7:45am - MVA@ Session Room 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8am - MVS/MVPC Campus 8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	7am - LNP School 8am - Presbytery @ Roswell
8	9	10
8:30am - MVPN @ Session Room 11am - Vernen Springs Bible 2pm - General Ledger 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8am - Finance/Admin PRE-MEET 10am - Book Circle, Presbyterian 8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	10am - Brazell Memorial Service 12pm - Los Niños Primero @ 3:30pm - Los Niños Primero @
15	16	17
8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	5pm - AA @ Fellowship Hall
22	23	24
7pm - LNP Board Meeting @ 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	7:30am - LNP School @ Kirk 9am - Bagpipes @ Galley Hall
29		
8pm - AA @ Kirk Center		
7	8	9
8am - School Chapel @ Chapel 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @ Choir		
14	15	16
8am - School Chapel @ Chapel 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @ Choir		
21	22	23
Good News Deadline 8am - School Chapel @ Chapel 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @ Choir		
28	29	30
8am - School Chapel @ Chapel 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @ Choir		
6	7	8
10am - Presbyterian Women 10:30am - Staff Meeting @ Chapel 1:30pm - Staff Worship Planning 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ Session 5pm - Christian Education Meeting 7pm - AA-Women's Big Book @ 8pm - AA @ Fellowship Hall		
13	14	15
7:30am - MVPN @ Session Room 10am - Day Circle - Session 10:30am - Staff Meeting @ Chapel 1:30pm - Staff Worship Planning 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ Session 5pm - Worship Committee @ 6pm - AMIS @ Session Room 7pm - AA-Women's Big Book @ 8pm - AA @ Fellowship Hall		
20	21	22
10:30am - Staff Meeting @ Chapel 1:30pm - Staff Worship Planning 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ Session 4pm - Stephen Min. - Session 7pm - AA-Women's Big Book @ 8pm - AA @ Fellowship Hall		
27	28	29
10:30am - Staff Meeting @ Chapel 1:30pm - Staff Worship Planning 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ Session 7pm - AA-Women's Big Book @ 8pm - AA @ Fellowship Hall		
5	6	7
call grease trap 1pm - Senior Adult Meeting @ 6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center		
12	13	14
6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center		
19	20	21
6pm - Magic Club @ Fellowship 6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center		
26	27	28
6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center		
4	5	6
7:30am - Reverie @ Gym, Lower 9:30am - Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11:30am - Luncheon, William Yoo 2pm - Young Men's Service 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @		
11	12	13
7:30am - Reverie @ Gym, Lower 9:30am - Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 1pm - Ryan Sawyer recital. 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @		
18	19	20
7:30am - Reverie @ Gym, Lower 9:30am - Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11:30am - Session Mtg @ Kirk 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @		
25	26	27
7:30am - Reverie @ Gym, Lower 9:30am - Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @		

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Mike Hughes	2/2
Jack Nelson	2/6
Rose Nelson	2/7
Nikki Player	2/7
Ella Ponsell	2/9
Erin Jackson	2/15
Kate Christian	2/15
Loise Lord	2/17
Steve Ponsell	2/20
George Hammett	2/22
Taylor Doyle	2/23
Viola Crawford	2/23
John Allen	2/24
Chad Plumly II	2/28



If you have a birthday in February and don't see your name on the list, please contact 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

SESSION SUMMARY

Summary of the Stated Session Meeting January 26-27, 2024

The MVPC Session met in its January Stated Session Meeting during its Annual Retreat on January 26-27. The following business was conducted:

- Fellowship events for 2024 were approved and will be placed on the church calendar.
- Commissioners were elected for the upcoming Presbytery meeting on February 4
- PC(USA) and the Greater Atlanta Presbytery require that congregations do an Annual Statistical Report each year. The Session Clerk compiles this information that then must be approved by the Session.
- The Annual Congregational Meeting was approved to be held on the last Sunday in February, February 25.
- The 2024 Church Budget was approved. The Finance Committee reported that member pledges will allow for a bigger budget with most of the additional funds going to outreach work.
- New nominated elders were examined and found to be prepared for Session membership. Lois Johnson and Keith Bumgarner will begin serving three-year terms following installation which took place on January 28.
- The Session selected the following members for nomination to the congregation to serve as the officers of the MVPC corporation: John Hibbard (President), Charlie Gray (Vice President), Pat Davis (Secretary), and John Christian (Treasurer)
- Steve Ray was elected as the church Treasurer.
- David Hill was elected to serve as Session Clerk.
- The church By-Laws require the Session to select two elders to serve on the Nominating Committee. Keith Bumgarner and Pat Bartee were nominated to be presented to the congregation to serve on the 2024 Nominating Committee
- Church membership errors were recorded in the Session minutes from July 2023 through December 2023. These errors were corrected. The current church membership is 380.



PRAYER VINE



Christian Sympathy to the family and friends of Eleanor Brazell who died 1/16/24. Memorial service will be Saturday, February 10 at 10am with a reception after in the Narthex.

Eliana - recovering from back surgery with prayers that this will remove a major stumbling block in her health and wholeness.

Allison Eustis - recovery is going well after rotator cuff surgery.

Bruce Hagenau - thankful for a new treatment of radiation for his cancer.

Fay Hendricks - peace for her family and friends on her death from a blood disorder. Long time friend of Betsy Cozine.

Patricia Hibbard - her wrists continue to heal after a terrible fall last summer.

Megan Kendall - received great lab results and is looking forward to returning to her orchestra classroom.

Chuck McCrory - Amy Kiley's boyfriend's father, continued healing mercies as he battles cirrhosis.

Karen Morine - Bruce Morine's sister-in-law in New Zealand continues with chemo though mid-Feb to impede any new cancer spread.

Meredith Nash - is beginning PreK but needs prayers for courage as she faces her next round of treatment for childhood cancer.

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

Carter Ramsey - Steve Whisenant's relative is still battling a rare infectious disease during his senior year of high school.

Elizabeth (Elo) Small - continue healing and wholeness as she battles vertigo that is responding to physical therapy.

Isabelle Vannucci - friend of Christina Toney-Schmitt in CA continues healing from a car accident. Healing will be a long and tedious recovery.

Gail Williams - renewal of strength as she recovers at Manor Care.

Do you need prayer?
Have our Prayer Vine pray for you!
Email your requests to pbartee@yahoo.com

CROSSES OF MVPC

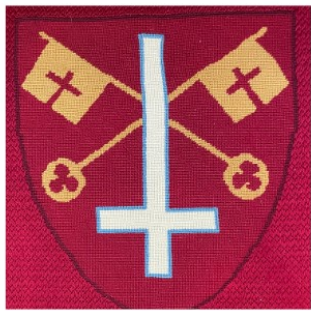
Join us during the Lenten Season as we explore the crosses of MVPC!

Each weekday, we will send out a devotional exploring the meaning of a particular cross. If you have a cross that is special to you or that you see often, take a picture, send it to debbie@mvpchurch.org, and write 3-4 sentences explaining what it means to you.

Here are some of the crosses of MVPC.



The Latin Cross
Towers over our Sanctuary



The Inverted Latin Cross
This one is found on the disciple cushion of Simon Peter



The cross on the liturgical parament. Green represents growth, or growing in faith.

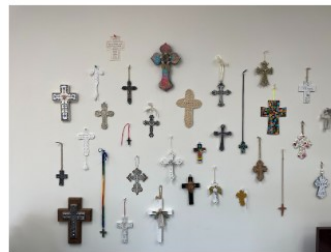
The Cross Saltire
Found on the disciple cushion of Andrew.



The Celtic Cross
over the Fellowship Hall



The Latin Cross
This one is on the disciple cushion of Simon the Zealot



Debbie's collections of crosses in the church office.



The Rustic Latin Cross
Found in Gailey Hall



The Latin Cross
This one is in the Kirk Center is modeled off the cross that hangs in the sanctuary.

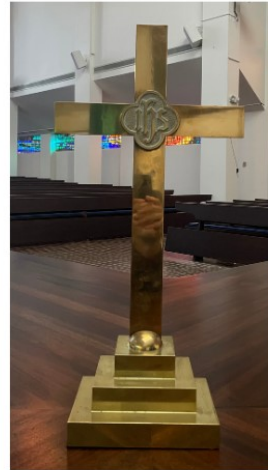
CROSSES OF MVPC



The Latin Cross
Found in our Chapel



The Cross Crosslet
The 4 crosses at each end represent the spreading of Christianity to all 4 corners of the earth.



The Calvary Cross
The 3 steps at the base represent Faith, Hope, and Love



The Presbyterian Seal (or Cross)
Was created in 1983. Find out more about its meaning in the stitching found in the Session Room



The Celtic Cross
Found in the Narthex



The Celtic Cross
Found over the Activities Building

The Tau Cross
The oldest form of cross. This traditional sign was made by Israelites on their door posts in Egypt during Passover.



The Latin Cross
This is on the front of the Sanctuary and was added during the pandemic when we were worshipping outside.



“Cross Images”
Stained Glass
by Eleanor Brazell



The Communion Table Cross



P.O. Box 76051
Sandy Springs, GA 30358

Return Service Requested

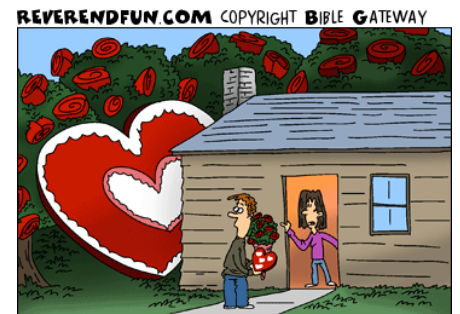
Got News? We'd love to hear from you! Send us your news so we can celebrate, laugh, and/or cry with you. After all, we are FAMILY. Deadline for news is the third Wednesday of each month for the *next month's* newsletter. Send your submissions to debbie@mvpchurch.org.

If you no longer wish to receive the Good News, please send an email to debbie@mvpchurch.org.

Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church

Rev. Barrett Abernethy	Senior Pastor/Head of Staff	barrett@mvpchurch.org
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt	Associate Pastor of Faith Formation	isaac@mvpchurch.org
Steve Ray	Church Finance and Operations	steve@mvpchurch.org
Debbie Nysewander	Administrative Assistant	debbie@mvpchurch.org
Yvonne White	Financial Assistant	yvonne@mvpchurch.org
Shari Freeman	Director of Spiritual Care	shari@mvpchurch.org

Good News!



JESUS STOPPED BY AND NOBODY LOVES MORE THAN HIM, BUT BEFORE YOU GET JEALOUS OR ANYTHING YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IT IS FOR YOU TOO

Follow Us
mvpchurch.org

