



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GOOD NEWS

MARCH 2024



A Note From The Pastor

BY REV. BARRETT ABERNETHY

Holy Week at MVPC

Easter comes early MVPC! Because of that we will conclude the month of March with a Holy Week full of worship and activities. Here is a little more about what you can expect:

March 24: Palm Sunday

Join us as we start Holy Week with Palm Sunday worship. Thanks to Isaac, I have the best (Georgia Bulldog inspired) sermon title of the year, "Between the Hedges!" We will celebrate Jesus's triumphal entry into Jerusalem by singing Hosanna in the Highest! If you are unaware, Hosanna is a cry for help meaning "Save us!"

After we wave our branches, we invite you to join us for our annual Palm Sunday luncheon and Easter Egg Hunt. Bring your children and grandchildren as it will be a glorious day!

March 25-27: Holy Week Noon Devotionals

Once again, this year we will come together each day at noon during Holy Week for 30 minutes followed by a light lunch in the narthex. This year, like last year, we will incorporate students from the Mount Vernon School into each of the services and we will highlight this connection utilizing the themes of Inquiry, Innovation, and Impact that the School sees as essential to their mission.

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Session Summary

Prayer Vine

Monday March 25: Inquiry

We will begin this week by focusing on the conversation between Pilate and Jesus (John 18: 28-38) in which the Roman governor inquires of Jesus, "What is truth?"

Tuesday March 26: Innovation

We will continue by reading from Matthew 16: 24-26 in which Jesus calls us to take up our cross- to be innovative to the work Jesus inspired. Look forward to the students composing a hymn on this day!

Wednesday March 27: Impact

Several choirs from the School of all age ranges will join us as we ponder the impact of Jesus' death. We will examine John 19: 38-42 in which Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take and prepare Jesus's body for burial.

Thursday March 28: Maundy**Thursday Agape Meal**

We break from the Noon Day services and come together for the 6:30pm Agape Meal celebration that recognizes the Last Supper. Please sign-up to join us online at mvpchurch.org or you can do so each Sunday in the narthex before or after Sunday worship.

Friday March 29: Good Friday, Innocence

While our school friends will be on holiday, we will return to the sanctuary at noon and explore the final moments on Golgotha where Jesus is crucified with criminals to his left and right.

Sunday March 31: Easter Sunday, Inspiration

We will turn from Holy Week/Lent and enter into the brightness of Easter morn with our annual Sunrise Service on the courtyard at 7am followed by worship in the sanctuary at 10:30am. If you have not yet had your directory picture taken, we will have one final makeup following worship so we can have our new directories ready for our 70th Anniversary Worship Service on May 19.

A busy week to conclude the month at MVPC as we will fully live out our mission to Welcome, Worship, Share, and Serve. We hope to see you!

*Grace & Peace,
Barrett*

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

January 1-31, 2024	Actual YTD	2024 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$ 47,417	\$467,555
2024 Prepaid Pledges	\$ 41,445	\$ 41,445
Member Giving Non- Pledge	\$ 1,250	\$60,000
Non member giving & Loose offering	\$ 357	\$9,000
Total Received	\$ 90,469	\$578,000

ASH WEDNESDAY



OUTREACH



The Outreach Ministry Team expresses gratitude for your very generous donations to the Community Assistance Center in January. We donated **192 pounds of non-perishable food and toiletries**. We also received many diaper donations for the South Sandy Springs Food Pantry location. We were able to donate five large boxes of disposable face masks to CAC (leftovers from pandemic bulk buying) which freed up some much-needed storage space in Gailey Hall.

We are grateful for an increase to the Outreach budget, which will allow us to give financial support to our outreach partners at Community Assistance Center, International Women's House and Sandy Springs Education Force, in addition to continuing to collect donations for them through our Monthly Communion Offering. We will also be able to supplement our Special Offerings and support needs that come up at the local public schools.

The February Communion Offering is for Clifton Sanctuary Ministries and the March Communion Offering will be for the Student Food Pantry at Columbia Theological Seminary.

Don't forget to stop by our bulletin board outside the church office to admire the creative work of our team members Piper Neumann and Christy Hill, and learn more about each month's Communion Offering partner.



GIFTS OF WISDOM

“Gifts of Wisdom 2.0 -- Welcome”

Through the pandemic, “The MVPC Members’ Gift of Wisdom” publication created space for our church members to share their insights and perspectives. The topics were varied: care for the environment, care for one another in Stephen Ministry, attention to the financial markets, resources for understanding systemic racism, reports from the Presbyterian Women, articles on the Marks of Vital Congregations from the Vital Congregations Initiative, and, occasionally, poetry. Each article sought to unite a particular topic with a members’ knowledge of the topic and that members’ understanding of scripture. Those of us who wrote articles for the publication noted that MVPC is unique to have a publication written and produced almost entirely by lay people.

We will continue to write and share “The MVPC Members’ Gift of Wisdom,” but in a new format: right here! Rather than a quarterly publication we will share bits of wisdom monthly in our Good News. Hopefully this brings a broader audience, and(!) encourages our readers to submit their own bits of wisdom.

Every day, we live into our tag line as a church reaching out to welcome, worship, share, and serve. Most often we live into the call to “welcome” by opening our doors to new folks and inviting everyone into a common space of worship. But, we welcome fellow members too! We open the doors to Sunday school rooms, invite members to be elders, encourage one another to serve on committees, stand behind tables of yummy treats in the narthex, and(!) make space to hear one another’s perspectives in publications like this one. The welcoming culture is alive and well at MVPC, and I encourage you to take hold of the invitation.

40 DAYS AND 40 NIGHTS

SHARI FREEMAN



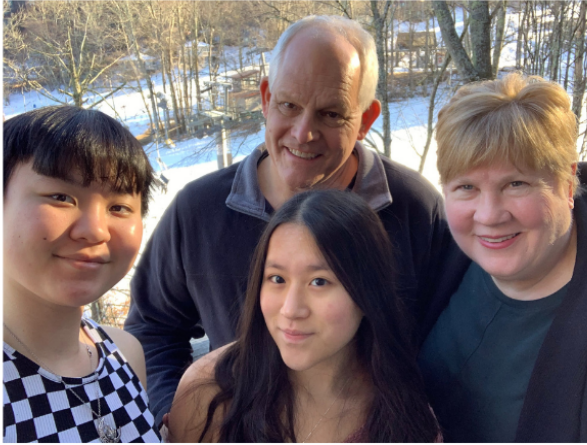
As you read this newsletter, you may find yourself in the middle of Lent. Lent is the period of 40 days (excluding Sundays) that lead to Easter. The season of Lent is an opportunity for growth in our faith through prayer, spiritual discipline, and self-examination, all done in preparation for the upcoming celebration of the death and resurrection of Christ at Easter.

The pattern of fasting and prayer for 40 days is found in several places in Scripture. In the New Testament, the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke all mention the 40 days when Jesus went into the desert to fast and pray and experience temptations from Satan after his Baptism. This pattern is also seen in the Old Testament. Moses went into the mountains for 40 days to pray and fast before receiving the Ten Commandments (Exodus 24). The prophet Elijah spent 40 days in the mountains fasting and praying before meeting God at Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19). There are other 40s in the Bible, including 40 days of rain in Genesis 7, Jonah's warning to Ninevah, and the Israelites wandering for 40 years in the desert.

The Bible stories of 40 days (or years) teach us about the power of faith, repentance, and grace to transform our lives. As we embrace the 40-day journey of Lent, we can deepen our faith, find greater meaning and purpose, and develop a closer relationship with God.

If you want to adopt a new practice for Lent, there is still time! Lent is a great time to engage in your faith. You could commit to reading a Lenten devotional each morning or reading through one of the Gospels. If physical activity better suits you, consider taking a walk each day and spending the time in silence or prayer. I encourage you to try something new to create a meaningful Lenten experience.

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.

The Schneider/Neumann family: Jeff, Donna, Mia and Piper

Volunteering is a true family affair with this family. Below, Donna shares the wide-ranging list of organizations and opportunities she and her family have a passion to help.

“As a family, we have volunteered with Family Promise in various ways, including bringing meals, providing table decor, and breaking down after the families leave.”

Donna and Piper enlisted a group from Donna’s work to sort clothes at Foster Care Support Foundation in Roswell. This wonderful charity provides free clothes, toys, and baby gear to families who are fostering without benefit of government support. Often, it is grandparents on fixed incomes who are fostering grandchildren.

Piper, Donna, and Mia volunteer sorting books for the SSEF (Sandy Springs Education Force.)

Piper will be a Leader-in-Training at Camp High Harbour Lake Allatoona this summer.

Donna stays involved with the Walton Orchestra (where her children attend school). In addition, she serves as the chair for their 115-home subdivision’s Architectural Control Committee, a job no one wants because sometimes people have to be told (in the most tactful terms) that their proposed changes are in poor taste. “While no one wants this job, most residents are extremely appreciative that the committee is ensuring we maintain neighborhood standards. This job takes about an hour a week.”

And of course, Dad Jeff, is always behind and supportive of his volunteering ladies, helping where needed, transporting the girls where and when needed and often assists Piper when changing the Outreach Bulletin Board each month. Piper serves on the Outreach Ministry Team and assists with designing, creating, and changing the Outreach Bulletin Board at the first of each month.

“Beyond our volunteering, we have a passion for helping disadvantaged children continue with post-secondary education. We have helped send multiple Chinese orphans to college or trade school, once they age out of the orphanage program. And we’re proud to contribute to the Zambia post-secondary scholarship program. As I often say, “Where else can this amount of money make such a difference in someone’s life?”



CELEBRATIONS

We were busy in February!

1. Learning Walk around the school 2/2

2. Dr. Yoo on 2/4

3. Mia Neumann concert at Walton HS

4. 70th Anniversary Card mailing (don't forget to RSVP!)

5. Ryan Sawyer Recital 2/11

6. Andrea Brantley with Family Promise at PW Luncheon

7. New Stephen Minster Training

8. Committees & Coffee, February 25



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

Mailing address:
MVPC
P.O. Box 76051
Sandy Springs, GA 30358

Church Office
404.255.2211



**CHURCH OFFICE
HOURS**

MONDAY-THURSDAY
8AM-4PM
FRIDAY 8AM - 2PM



SMITH-GILBERT
GARDENS
CITY OF KENNESAW BOTANICAL GARDEN



THIS & THAT

March Events:

Family Promise
March 10-16

Senior Adults
Movie Matinee
March 16

Day Trip to
Smith Gilbert Gardens
March 23

Holy Week
Palm Sunday
March 24

Devotional/Lunch
March 25-27

Maundy Thursday
Agape Meal
March 28

Good Friday
Devotional/Lunch
March 29

*Photos courtesy of: Dee Bradford-Smith, Christy Hill, Donna Martin, Beppie Lever, Robin Truitt, Barrett Abernethy, Isaac Toney-Schmitt
(Please send any pictures to debbie@mvpchurch.org)*

MARCH 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 the most current calendar.

Mar 2024 (Eastern Time - New York)		Fri		Sat																											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
7:30am - Reverse @ Gym, Lower Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 9:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 10:30am - Senior Adult Camaraderia 12pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @	10am - Los Niños Primero @ 8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	7am - Los Niños Primero School 9am - Bagpipe Practice @ Gallely 10am - Stephen Ministry @	7:30am - Reverse @ Gym, Lower Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 9:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 10:30am - Senior Adult Camaraderia 12pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @	1pm - Senior Adult Meeting @ 6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	9:30am - Staff Meeting @ Chapel 10am - Presbyterian Women 11am - Staff out to Lunch 1:30pm - Staff Worship Planning 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ Session 5pm - CE Meeting Zoom 7pm - AA-Women's Big Book @	8am - School Chapel @ Sanctuary 5:30pm - Mission and Ministry @ 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @ Choir	7:45am - MVA @ Session Room 12:45pm - PreSchool meeting 2pm - General Ledger Meeting @ 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8am - Finance/Admin PRE-MEET 10am - Book Circle, Presbyterian 8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	8am - Los Niños Primero @ 9am - Bagpipe Practice @ Gallely	FAMILY PROMISE- FFGH 7:30am - Reverse @ Gym, Lower Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @	5:30pm - Monthly FAMT 6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	7:30am - MV Parent Network @ 10am - Day Circle - Session 10:30am - Staff Meeting @ Chapel 1:30pm - Staff Worship Planning 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ Session 7pm - AA-Women's Big Book @	8am - School Chapel @ Sanctuary 11am - Stephen Ministry @ 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @ Choir	8:30am - MVPN @ Session Room 11am - Vernon Springs Bible 12:45pm - PreSchool meeting 7pm - Glenview HOA @ Gallely Hall 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	7:30am - LNP School ED 1pm - Senior Adult Movie Matinee	FAMILY PROMISE- FFGH 9:30am - Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11:30am - Session Mtg @ Kirk 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center	6pm - Magic Club @ Fellowship 6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	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	Piano tunings 12:45pm - PreSchool meeting 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	7:30am - LNP School ED Kirk 9am - Bagpipe Practice @ Gallely 10am - Senior Adult Trip @ Smith-	9:30am - Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 11:30am - Pain Sunday Luncheon 1:30pm - YMSL SB, GH 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @	6:30pm - AI Anon @ Chapel 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	10:30am - Staff Meeting @ Chapel 1:30pm - Staff Worship Planning 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ Session 7pm - AA-Women's Big Book @ 7pm - Taize @ Sanctuary 8pm - AA @ Fellowship Hall	12:45pm - PreSchool meeting 7pm - LNP Board Meeting @ 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center	8pm - AA-Primary Purpose @	9am - Bagpipe Practice @ Gallely	9:30am - Crossroads Class, 9:30am - Discovery Class, Sunday 10:30am - Worship @ Sanctuary 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert Band @		

MARCH BIRTHDAYS



Happy Birthday!

Rachel Barclift Emery	3/1
Pat Hudgins	3/1
Alice Ann Lever	3/3
Gill Hutt	3/6
John Hibbard	3/9
Bruce Northrop	3/11
Alex Sprung	3/12
Pat Davis	3/13
Elo Small	3/14
Deborah Galloway	3/18
Michelle Smart	3/20
Mary Kilgore	3/21
Bruce Hagenau	3/22
Mike Gillespie	3/23
Connor Plumly	3/24
Jodi Jackson	3/26
Kirk Chalpan	3/27
Katie Sprung	3/27
Beppie Lever	3/28

If you have a birthday in March 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

Getting to Know...

MARY LEA WOODS

What is your proudest accomplishment?

I was scared to death, but I gave a talk at my industry's national convention to hundreds of people. I still remember the title, "Developing and Delivering Financial Reports to Financial Executives." The talk received excellent reviews and was later published in a magazine..



What did you want to be when you were small?

When I was a child, Mom and Dad took us kids to see the "Sound of Music." It was wonderful, and I told Mom that I wanted to be a nun when I grew up so I could spend every day singing. She told me that, unfortunately, little Presbyterian girls don't grow up to be Catholic nuns.

If you could choose to do anything for a day, what would it be?

If I could choose an activity without restrictions of time and space (or language), I would love to sit and chat with Leonardo da Vinci. What a genius, and his creativity moves me every time I see his paintings, sculptures and diaries. Wouldn't that be a fascinating afternoon?

What would you change about yourself if you could?

I would spend more time in the present moment savoring the awe and beauty of each precious molecule, be it water, a dragon fly, or the eyes of each person I meet.

What is your biggest fear?

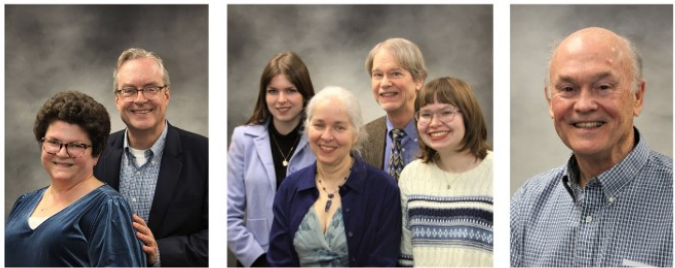
My biggest fear is that I won't live long enough to use all of my craft supplies! I focused on work for 42 years while collecting them; now I want to use every piece of paper, stamp and die cut to make more greeting cards for friends and family.



This time between winter and spring when clothing choices are a challenge and weather is like a roller coaster leaves us frustrated, angry, yet longing for spring. When life leaves you in limbo and you feel alone, ineffective, and longing for relief, please call Stephen Ministry and let us help! We can walk with you through it, bringing clarity and encouragement as you resolve issues. We serve our community as well and like for our members to recommend us to friends and neighbors!

Call Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, or a pastor to get involved.

70th ANNIVERSARY



Pictorial Directory

There's one more chance to get your picture in the new directory in time for the 70th Anniversary on May 19, 2024!

Makeup Day for pictures will be Easter Sunday, March 31 after worship!



We received this photo from Lou Minor Lyon (little blonde girl sitting in between her parents). This photo was taken roughly a month after the founding of MVPC. Her father, Harold, was our first pastor.

Metropolitan Herald - Atlanta, Ga.
THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 1954



FAMILY TIME for the Rev. Harold W. Minor, Jr., pastor of the new Sandy Springs Presbyterian Church, Mrs. Minor, Margaret (in mother's lap) and Louise, is a brief one. "Building a church from the ground up" keeps a young minister on the go.

SESSION SUMMARY

Session Meeting Summary February 18, 2024

The MVPC Session met for its monthly meeting on February 18. Following are items of interest from this meeting:

- David Barclift noted that attendance at Fellowship activities is excellent. The recent pancake dinner had the largest number attending in years.
- The Senior Adult Ministry Team working with the Congregational Care Ministry Team and Emory Hospital is planning a workshop on healthy aging. The workshop date is tentatively set for August 25. The workshop will be open to the public.
- Several reports were heard by Session including a summary of the recent Presbytery meeting as well as a report of our church's annual financial review. The financial review committee recommends the church create a financial procedures handbook and do a review of insurance policies.
- Rev. Toney-Schmitt and Shari Freeman will begin offering a once a month worship service at Vernon Springs Senior Living in addition to the weekly Bible Study that already is done each week.
- Rev. Abernethy reported that road construction impacting our church campus will begin on February 27. This construction project will involve work on both Mount Vernon Highway and Johnson Ferry Rd. and will last approximately two years.

PRAYER VINE



Eliana - hope and pain relief as she undergoes physical therapy for her back.

Bill Barron - father of Meg Christian as the family considers the next steps in treatment for Alzheimer's.

Bruce Hagenau - continued healing for his second radiation treatment for cancer.

Megan Kendall - wisdom for the doctors at MD Anderson in Houston.

Chuck McCrory - strength and courage for Amy Kiley's boyfriend's father, as he battles cirrhosis.

Karen Morine - hope and courage for Bruce Morine's sister-in-law in New Zealand. A recent scan showed cancer still present after this last round of chemo.

Meredith Nash - got a week off from treatments and got to go to beach for a few days. She is gaining weight and strength.

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

Greg Slingerland - grandson of Bob Martin and nephew of Donna Martin who suffered burns over 50 percent of his body in an apartment fire in Harlem, NY.

Maeve Ross - healing for this toddler who has been diagnosed with a neuroblastoma and leg tumor and has begun chemo.

Isabelle Vannucci - daily strength and courage for a friend of Christina Toney-Schmitt in CA continues healing from being hit by a car while crossing the street. Healing will be a long and tedious recovery.

Gail Williams - is feeling much better and adjusting to her new home at Somerby.

Blessings on our new Stephen Ministry trainees as they learn how to minister to our congregation in hard times. Mercies and thanksgiving for our homebound members who paved the way for our vibrant congregation response to worship and to service.

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



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!



DAD, I NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND OUT WHERE IT TALKS ABOUT THE EASTER BUNNY IN THE BIBLE

Follow Us
mvpchurch.org

