



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

GOOD NEWS

AUGUST 2024



A Note From The Pastor

BY REV. BARRETT ABERNETHY

Embodying Lusaka

I first noticed it when we were driving to the House of Moses one last time. It was our last morning in Lusaka, and we were going to join the staff at Alliance for Children Everywhere (ACE) Zambia for their morning devotional. After two weeks this had become a part of everyday life. It was on the bumpy, unpaved road just near the House of Moses entrance that I noticed my previously chapped lips were no longer chapped. It was then I knew, just as we were leaving the country, that my body was starting to conform to the country. I was beginning to embody life here in Zambia.

When I arrived, that was not the case. I had feverishly walked to the Waterfalls Mall just down the road from our hotel and paid 50 kwacha (\$2) for some Chapstick. I had woken up each morning with blood on my lips. The dry, drought ridden landscape situated at 4,000 plus feet did not align with my Atlanta based body. There was no humidity in the air, and the leaves around Lusaka sagged on the trees as if they were gasping for any droplet of water so they might rise again.

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Session Summary

Prayer Vine

It was in the back of that bus that I realized I had drawn closer to this place. That we had formed a bond. That is what makes these trips worthwhile. That is why they are a holistically spiritual exercise. When we are able to learn from the people around us, to feel their hopes, to listen to their words, to lift up in prayer their thoughts, to sense their challenges, to support them in their struggles - all of it and more - can allow us, if we welcome the Spirit to move us, to embody the place where we are. No, we can never fully know the depth of who they are or how they feel, we can never be “bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh” for we are not God, but we can welcome a place and its people into our hearts, our minds, and even give of our whole bodies. As Presbyterians, we believe in the sovereignty of God and that means God is not confined to one place, God is everywhere. That means, if we embrace the holistically spiritual aspect of travel or mission, we can embody our call and the surroundings we share.

As I write this note, I have been back in Atlanta a little over 24 hours. My body and mind are tired, and I can tell my lips are once again in need of Chapstick. Most of us call this feeling “jet-lagged,” but after what I learned on that bus a few mornings ago, I realize that my body is still adjusting to home, for home these past few weeks has been a world away. May we continue to embody the love of Jesus Christ wherever we go, knowing that as we go, we are led by the love of Christ who wants us to be fully present wherever we are.

*Grace & Peace,
Barrett*

Jan - June 2024	Actual YTD	2024 Budget
Member Giving Pledge	\$305,029	\$509,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$33,444	\$60,000
Loose Offerings	\$20,498	\$9,000
Total for week	\$358,971	\$578,000

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 Barcliff
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

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

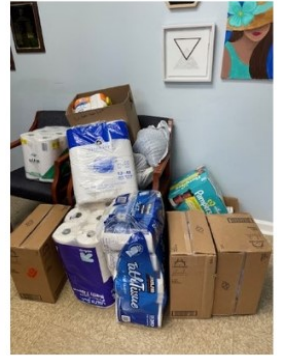


OUTREACH



Darryl Jones picked up our May Communion Offering of snacks, food and sports equipment for **Stirred Up Ministries** Summer Camp and Food Pantry. They also received a portion of the Pentecost Offering.

Our June Communion Offering was for Clothes, Paper Goods, Cleaning Products, Diapers and Women's Grooming Items for the **International Women's House**.



On Sunday, June 30, we hosted **Los Niños Primero** families for worship, and donated \$500 of that day's offering to them.

On Father's Day we had a special collection for the Caring Hands Fund for **Presbyterian Homes of Georgia**.



We hosted **Family Promise** in Fellowship Hall July 7-21. We welcomed our guests (3 adults and 6 children ages 3 to 13). Thank you to everyone who provided dinner and individuals who shopped, donated, and spent the night.



Our July Communion Offering was for men's grooming items and casual clothes for the **VA Domiciliary for Homeless Vets**. Our August Communion Offering is school supplies for **SSEF & Stirred-Up**.



Our special offering for **Zambia** raised \$4,000, and our team was able to deliver the offering in person. Thank you for your generous donations. Check out the church's Facebook page for more photos and daily recaps from our travelers.

GIFTS OF WISDOM

The Essence of Worship Surrounding Our Church Home.

SHARING my reflections and scriptures, visiting four areas for WORSHIP on Campus.

WELCOME.

Take this journey with me, it is my blessing to SERVE.
Each space offers a seat to stop, reflect, ponder and WORSHIP.

Blessings, my fellow travelers.

Dee Bradford-Smith

Seniors' Ministry Team Elder



Labyrinth - Resolution

(2 Timothy 2:14-16 NRSV)

"Remind them of this, and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety."

The labyrinth welcomes us to seek resolution, away from the quarrel and chatter, leaving the journey with inspiration and a new perspective.

Columbarium - Wisdom

(Hebrews 12:1 NRSV)

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us".

The wisdom and faith of our friends and families resting here comforts us with memories, wrapping us up like the warmth of an heirloom quilt. Having run the race, their strength and perseverance inspire, yet peace is found here. One cherishes to linger.



Gailey Hall - Family

(Acts 14:19-23) to be "rooted in faith and family strengthens the souls of the disciples, exhorts them to continue in the faith, and helps to appoint elders".

Generation after generation have followed and continue in the faith of their fathers, resting on the history of this campus cornerstone, our oldest foundation. Decades of members welcomed to warm fires, sharing familial memories, accepting the passing of the torch to future church duties.

Patio Garden - Peace

(Psalm 46:10)(Isaiah 1:30)

Peace found in the beauty of God's creation, yet the betrayal in Eden touched all of humanity for the never-ending centuries ahead. The surrendering Savior in the darkness of Gethsemane begins the hope of the resurrection. The Gardens we have chosen have nurtured earth shattering events. *"You will be like an oak with fading leaves, like a garden without water."* Yet here, in this quiet garden corner, we find rejuvenation and restoration. *"Be still and know that I am God."* We are garden stewards.



Waters flow with justice and justice begets peace.

HEALTHY AGING EVENT



Pat Bartee, Mary Lea Woods and Dee Bradford-Smith attended the June meeting of 75+ of the 400 members of Atlanta Senior Care Network Niche (ASCNN) to promote our upcoming Healthy Aging Conference.

A warm welcome and introduction was delivered by Dee's friend and Board President, John Butler, as she gave a 30 second promotion. Imagine that! Our audience represented Senior Services vendors of any imaginable need. Thirteen vendors have been chosen to add their great information at our conference for our attendees on **Sunday, August 25**.

Don't forget to register online!

If you need help, someone will be in the Chapel foyer before & after each worship service to sign you up.

<https://mtvernonhealthyaging.eventbrite.com/>

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Sandy Springs Education Force Reading Buddies provides meaningful relationships with caring adults to help children foster positive feelings about reading. Research shows this type of program can improve motivation, self-confidence and reading skills for children. Orientation, support, and training are provided for volunteers. Once per week, volunteers at Spalding Drive Elementary, Ison Springs Elementary, Lake Forest Elementary, and Dunwoody Springs Elementary Schools read to chosen students for 30 minutes. SSEF purchases books suitable for participants.

Contact Beppie Lever beppielever@earthlink.net if you are interested.



**Los Niños Sunday
June 30**





CELEBRATIONS

Stirred Up Ministries
"Stuff the Bus"



We have a lot to be thankful for!



Zambia Crew



Htet Nyunt & Pat Bartee visit
Joe Kelvington



New Stephen Ministers



Senior Adults at the High
Museum



Mailing Address:

MVPC

P.O. Box 76051

Sandy Springs, GA 30358

404.255.2211

mvpchurch.org



CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MONDAY-THURSDAY

8AM-4PM

FRIDAY 8AM - 2PM

This & That

August Events

VBS

8/10

Mount Vernon School

First Day

8/14

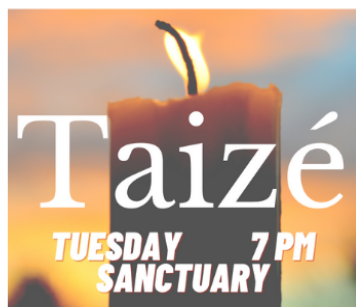
Healthy Aging

Conference

8/25

Taize

8/27



Photos courtesy of: Dee Bradford-Smith, Barrett Abernethy, Pat

Bartee, Beppie Lever, LNP, Christy Hill

(Please send any pictures to debbie@mvpchurch.org)

Getting to know...

DONNA MARTIN

What is your proudest accomplishment?

My proudest accomplishment is my son, Zack. From the time Zack was 8 months old, I have been a single parent. Zack is now 41 with a family of his own. Zack was a real challenge. He questioned everything as a child, in particular, authority. Now he is a freelance journalist, and the best father I know.



What is your favorite book to read?

My favorite book these days is "Lessons in Chemistry", by Bonnie Garmus. I love it! It takes place in the 60's, and features a brilliant female chemist, whom the men in her world do not take seriously. I think the dog in the book is my favorite character.

If you were a super-hero, what powers would you have?

If I was a super-hero, I would want to be able to fly. When I was a kid, I flew in my dreams all of the time.

What's the most daring thing you've ever done?

The most daring thing I have ever done was to move to Nashville three weeks after graduating from college. I had no job and knew no one in Nashville. I had no car, no place to live, and \$500 to my name.

What is your favorite childhood memory?

When I was seven, we lived in Charleston, WV. In my letter to Santa, I asked for a puppy. I told Santa I really wanted a kitten, but Mom and Dad don't like cats. It was snowing hard Christmas Eve. So, Dad wasn't able to pick up my present. Christmas morning was almost over. We had opened all our presents, and there was no puppy! Then someone knocked on our door. A lady was at the door, and she had the cutest ball of fluff in her arms! My best Christmas present ever had just arrived! She was a beautiful Persian kitten.



The Stephen Ministry is named after Stephen, who chose to serve the people of his church as his ministry. Extending pastoral care, especially in cases where long-term care and help is needed and wanted, enhances our church's ministry to those divorcing, grieving, serving as a caregiver, suffering from chronic disease, moving or moved and unhappy, feeling isolated and lonely adding to a family, experiencing job loss, an empty nest, or confusion about goals, purpose, and spiritual questioning. We also offer these services to our community. If you, or a friend, needs someone to walk with them through a distressing time, please call on us.

Contact Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, or a pastor to get connected.

AUGUST CALENDAR

Aug 2024 (Eastern Time - New York)						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>28</p> <p>9:30am - Crossroads 9:30am - Discovery 10:30am - Worship @ 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert</p>	<p>29</p> <p>12pm - Senior Adult 6:30pm - AI Anon @ 7pm - Scouts @ Gailey 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10am - Presbyterian 1pm - Staff Meeting @ 1:30pm - Staff Worship 5pm - CE Meeting Zoom 7pm - AA-Women's Big 8pm - AA @ Fellowship</p>	<p>31</p> <p>8am - School Chapel @ 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p>	<p>1</p> <p>7:45am - MVAA @ 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>2</p> <p>8pm - AA-Primary</p>	<p>3</p>
<p>4</p> <p>9:30am - Crossroads 9:30am - Discovery 10:30am - Worship @ 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert</p>	<p>5</p> <p>12pm - Senior Adult 6:30pm - AI Anon @ 7pm - Scouts @ Gailey 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>6</p> <p>10am - Presbyterian 1pm - Staff Meeting @ 1:30pm - Staff Worship 5pm - CE Meeting Zoom 7pm - AA-Women's Big 8pm - AA @ Fellowship</p>	<p>7</p> <p>8am - School Chapel @ 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p>	<p>8</p> <p>11am - Vernon Springs 2pm - General Ledger 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>9</p> <p>8am - Finance/Admin 10am - Book Circle, 8pm - AA-Primary</p>	<p>10</p> <p>8am - LNP Bingo @ Kirk 9:30am - Vacation Bible</p>
<p>11</p> <p>9:30am - Crossroads 9:30am - Discovery 10:30am - Worship @ 11:30am - PW Luncheon 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert</p>	<p>12</p> <p>5:30pm - Monthly FAMT 6:30pm - AI Anon @ 7pm - Scouts @ Gailey 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>13</p> <p>7:30am - MV Parent 10am - Day Circle - 10:30am - Staff Meeting 1:30pm - Staff Worship 7pm - AA-Women's Big 8pm - AA @ Fellowship</p>	<p>14</p> <p>8am - School Chapel @ 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p>	<p>15</p> <p>8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>16</p> <p>3pm - Senior Dinner @ FH 8pm - AA-Primary</p>	<p>17</p> <p>8am - LNP Event @ Gym</p>
<p>18</p> <p>9:30am - Crossroads 9:30am - Discovery 10:30am - Worship @ 11:30am - Session Mtg @ 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6pm - Magic Club @ 6:30pm - AI Anon @ 7pm - Scouts @ Gailey 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>20</p> <p>10:30am - Staff Meeting 1:30pm - Staff Worship 4pm - Stephen Min. - 7pm - AA-Women's Big 8pm - AA @ Fellowship</p>	<p>21</p> <p>8am - School Chapel @ 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p>	<p>22</p> <p>7pm - LNP Board Meeting 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>23</p> <p>8pm - AA-Primary</p>	<p>24</p>
<p>25</p> <p>9:30am - Crossroads 9:30am - Discovery 10:30am - Worship @ 11:30am - Coffee & 1:30pm - Healthy Aging 7pm - AA @ Kirk Center 7pm - Atlanta Concert</p>	<p>26</p> <p>6:30pm - AI Anon @ 7pm - Scouts @ Gailey 8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>27</p> <p>10:30am - Staff Meeting 1:30pm - Staff Worship 3pm - Stephen Ministry @ 6:30pm - AMIS Board @ 7pm - AA-Women's Big 7pm - Taize @ Sanctuary 8pm - AA @ Fellowship</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Newsletter Deadline 8am - School Chapel @ 7pm - Choir Rehearsal @</p>	<p>29</p> <p>8pm - AA @ Kirk Center</p>	<p>30</p> <p>8pm - AA-Primary</p>	<p>31</p>

AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Susan Sawyer	8/1
Joanna Mielke	8/3
Julia Northrop	8/4
Moira Speirs	8/6
Sarah Northrop	8/6
Wendy Hagenau	8/7
Paul Wade	8/8
Doug Sawyer	8/11
Bob Boyer	8/14
Alma Dowdakin	8/14
Lois Johnson	8/16
David Barclift	8/18
Pat Bartee	8/20
Duncan Jackson	8/21
Tom Rounds	8/21
Linda Bliss	8/24
Pieter Badenhorst	8/27
Kyle Hagenau	8/29
Cameron Gray	8/29
Ethan Ray	8/29



If you have a birthday in August 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
Jill Hudson	October 21
Rev. Barrett Abernethy	October 30
Steve Ray	December 1

ZAMBIA

Harriet Kemba

One of our recent recipients of the Zambia College Fund.

Harriet successfully completed her secondary education and was accepted to the University of Zambia, her mother was very happy but worried because she knew that she could not manage to pay the high university fees and also supply everything that was needed for her daughter to attend school. Also, Harriet could not commute to and from Chongwe because the distance to the University was too great and they could never afford the transport costs every school day. This meant that a boarding space had to be found for Harriet near the university where she could stay. When they found out about the Mt. Vernon Scholarship fund and the offer made to Harriet, the whole family rejoiced, knowing that her education would mean better seasons for them all.



Harriet and her mother at the ACE Zambia offices.

Harriet was accepted into the Bachelor of Education in Commerce and Entrepreneurship program in the School of Education, a four-year program which began in February 2024. Suitable housing was secured and other essentials like books, laptop computer were also procured, all thanks to the scholarship from MVPC through ACE. Harriet has since started school and her dream is to work in the agricultural ministry of the government and to help her mother expand her business when she amasses knowledge in entrepreneurship from her studies. She knows that her mother is an entrepreneur at heart but she could use more knowledge and expertise when it comes to growing a business and making significant profit.

Harriet is profoundly thankful to MVPC for making it possible for her to attain a university education. She can't think how else she could have managed it. Harriet, is doing the best she can to do well in school so that she can up-grade herself and her family. She says that her biggest dream is to help her mother educate her younger siblings so that in the future they can all be self-sufficient and make a positive impact in their community.

For more information on this mission, please contact:

Stan Williams

aswilliams@bellsouth.net

404.245.6749

SESSION SUMMARY

Session Meeting Summary

July 21, 2024

The Session met in its regularly scheduled stated meeting on July 21 and conducted the following business:

- The Christian Education Ministry Team reminded the group Vacation Bible School will be on August 10. Children are still registering, and more volunteers are needed.
- The Senior Adult and Congregational Care Ministry Teams are planning and working with Emory's Goizueta Alzheimer's Disease Research Center to offer a workshop on the MVPC campus on Sunday, August 25 from 1:30-4:00. Doctors will present workshops, and there will be opportunities for free screenings and healthy aging resources.
- Diane Bumgarner was elected to serve as a third member of the Columbarium Committee.
- Commissioners who will represent MVPC were elected to attend the August 6 Presbytery meeting. Those elected included David Hill, Christy Hill, and Pat Davis.
- Session approved a 50/50 split of the loose offering collected in the June 30 worship service with Los Niños Primero.
- Approval was given for the use of the sanctuary for a wedding on September 28. Member Amy Kiley will marry Jay McCrory on that date.
- Further discussion regarding the sale of cemetery lots at Arlington which were recently donated to the church. Session decided the lots will be sold together and are available for sale to members, extended family, and MVPC visitors.
- Session set September 29 as the date for a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of hearing the report of the Nominating Committee and electing elders to serve on Session.
- Rev. Toney-Schmitt reported that a new roof has been put on the Education Building and a new playground is nearing completion next to Gailey Hall. Shari Freeman will be presented at the upcoming Presbytery meeting with the Committee on Preparation for the Ministry recommending she be enrolled as a Candidate for the ministry.

The next Stated Session Meeting will be on August 18.

PRAYER VINE



Bob Addison - continued recovery from bladder cancer.

Jeannie Chettleburgh - sister-in-law of Shari Freeman, who is undergoing a new treatment for a brain tumor.

Lorry Clark - full healing as she tries to recover from multiple issues.

Bruce Hagenau - thanksgiving for positive results from a trial treatment for his cancer.

Megan Kendall - courage and resolve as she enters the second half of a trial treatment for breast cancer.

Erven Kimble - comfort and peace for Charlie Gray's friend who has been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer.

Chitip Likitcharoen - sister of Chantima who works in Children's Church, relief of severe back pain and lives in Thailand.

Chuck McCrory - future father-in-law of Amy Kiley, improvement in symptoms from severe cirrhosis.

Karen Morine - healing and hope for the current chemo treatments.

Andy Nelson - hope and healing as he recovers from a transplant at home.

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

Minnie Robinson - renewed strength as she recovers from knee replacement at her daughter's home.

Maeve Ross - on-going bravery as she gets ready for surgery to remedy a distended stomach due to peptides from her tumor.

Katherine Slayback - comfort for her family, who was seriously injured in a car accident while visiting her father in NY and is on life support. She is the caregiver for Anna Morine.

Blessings upon our church's ministries here and in Zambia. Safe travels for our returning representatives from a trip full of hope and blessing. Please fill the BLUE BAGS with men's clothing and toiletries for the VA Domiciliary. Many grocery stores, Walgreens, and CVS have socks and tee shirts for men for easy pickup.

Courage and hope for those fighting and suffering from oppression, injustice, depression, homelessness, and hunger. Renewed vigor of mind and spirit for those negotiating for peace, and wisdom and discernment for voters everywhere in a rapidly changing political world.

Bless our commissioning of new Stephen Ministers on July 28 and VBS volunteers in August. Please support, utilize, and share the existence of these programs with friends.

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 Staff

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

Good News!

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



Thanks to Mikel Rice (See Malachi 3:10) 09-14-1999
HEY, WHEN GOD OPENS THE FLOODGATES OF HEAVEN I PLAN TO BE PREPARED

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