



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 11, 2022 • 10:30 AM

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

GATHERING

GATHERING MUSIC

“The First Noel”
arr. Dan Forrest

Donna Maini

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

† **LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE**

Crossroads Sunday School Class

ONE: Today we light the candle of joy:

ALL: Joy bursting forth from the womb at the expectation of the Messiah.

ONE: Joy bursting forth in the form of sisterhood between Elizabeth and Mary.

ALL: Joy bursting forth as Mary magnifies how the Lord has blessed her with bearing the Christ child.

ONE: Let us light this candle and may it shine all over the world!

ALL: Let us worship God!

The third candle of Advent is called the joy candle. Joy has its root in the hope and peace we find in living a Christ-centered life.

† **MORNING SONG #12**

“People Look East”
BESANÇON

People, look east. The time is near of the crowning of the year.

Make your house fair as you are able,

Trim the hearth and set the table.

People, look east and sing today:

Love the guest is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, one more seed is planted there:

Give up your strength the seed to nourish,

That in course the flower may flourish.

People, look east and sing today:

Love the rose is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build, guard the nest that must be filled.

Even the hour when wings are frozen God for fledging time has chosen.

People, look east and sing today:

Love the bird is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim one more light the bowl shall brim,

Shining beyond the frosty weather, bright as sun and moon together.

People, look east and sing today:

Love the star is on the way.

† PRAYER OF JOY

Rev. Abernethy

God of Joy, we are filled with joy because of all you have done for us. You have looked upon us with favor and blessed us beyond our comprehension. You have lifted us up when we were in the depths, fed us when we were hungry, and come to our aid when we were in need. We are overwhelmed with our love and thankfulness to you. This Advent season, we long to live into this joy. We desire joyful hearts as we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Christ child. Forgive us when our happiness ebbs and flows depending on our circumstances. Our joy is deeper than our experiences. Our joy is rooted in you and our identity as your beloved children. Let the Holy Spirit invigorate us to share our joy with others. Come to this place and encourage us to engage in the work of your Kingdom with joy... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: ...In the name of Jesus Christ, let there be joy.

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE #40

“Joy to the World”

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns: let us our songs employ;

While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains

Repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,

Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Abernethy

(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

ONE: May the peace of Christ be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

(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

Luke 1:39-56

HOMILY

Characters of Christmas: Mary

RESPONSE

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(from the Westminster Confession of Faith 6.097-6.098)*

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

Those who truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in a state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed. This certainty is not a bare conjectural or probable persuasion, grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, and the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God. Amen.

The Westminster Confession of Faith is one of three documents from the Westminster Assembly (1643-1653) included in the Book of Confessions. The group's goal was to develop standards for a church that was Calvinistic in theology and Presbyterian in polity but distinctively English in character.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Rev. Abernethy

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

“No Room”

arr. Harold DeCou

† 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

Sarah Chalpan

SENDING

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL #100 “My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout” CANTICLE OF THE TURNING

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,
And my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight,
And my weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest.
Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain:

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears,
for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,
And your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,
You will show your might, put the strong to flight,
For the world is about to turn. (*refrain*)

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be let on stone.
Let the king be aware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall keep no more, for the food they can never earn;
There are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. (*refrain*)

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forb ears heard is the promise which holds us bound,
Till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around.
(*refrain*)

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

POSTLUDE

“Sussex Carol”
arr. James Mansfield

Donna Maini

Leading Today's Worship Service
Rev. Barrett Abernethy, Senior Pastor
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor
Matthias Young, Director of Worship
Donna Maini, Accompanist

*If you are interested in joining MVP Church,
go to the Visitor's Table to pick up a visitor bag and a little gift
and someone will be there to greet you.*

We are located at:
471 Mount Vernon Hwy., NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328
mvchurch.org



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

The Canticle of the Turning, written by Rory Cooney in 1988, draws upon the deep assurances found in Mary's Magnificat.

MVPC Announcements....



WWW.MVPCHURCH.ORG

Zooming Thru The Carols

Dec. 12	Away in a Manger	Isaac
Dec. 13	Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	Barrett
Dec. 14	The First Noel	Barrett
Dec. 15	While Shepherds Watch Their Flock	Matthias
Dec. 16	Little Drummer Boy	Shari

Contact the office if you are not receiving the daily email with the Zoom link.

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 in the Narthex** and pick up a visitor bag where someone will be there to greet you.



Upcoming Services:



- December 18** Lessons & Carols
December 24 Christmas Eve, Live Nativity – 4:45pm, Worship – 5:30pm
December 25 “Characters of Christmas – The Shepherds”, Luke 2:8–20, Rev. Abernethy

Atlanta Concert Band: TODAY at 4:00pm in the Sanctuary. You are all invited!

Congregational Meeting: Next Sunday, December 18 after worship.



Presbyterian Women: The Presbyterian Women Christmas Luncheon is today, December 11, after the morning service in Fellowship Hall. We are looking forward to seeing all of you who signed up. We will also be accepting Walmart gift cards and/or cash for a Columbia Seminary student from Pakistan, who will be joining us for lunch. The **Book Circle** will meet on Dec. 9. Gigi Gunter will talk about “Life in a Sod House on the Kansas Prairie in the Early 1900’s” – experiences of her mother’s family.

Adopt a Family: The CAC Program Holiday connects families who need assistance with people who would like to spread some joy during the holiday season. Families who qualify for the program provide a wish list for their children and the donors “adopt” the families to provide holiday gifts. The generosity of donors and volunteers helps to bring some holiday cheer for families and their children. If you would like to adopt a family or have questions, please contact CAC at adoptafamily@ourcac.org

2022 Advent Devotional Calendar from the PCUSA is available on our website or contact the office for a copy.

Family Promise: We are looking forward to hosting two families at MVPC beginning Sunday, December 18 with their departure scheduled for late morning on Saturday, December 24. Look for ways to sign up with a link in the weekly Happenings email.

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Make sure to follow us on social media to stay up to date!

Giving



Ministry Team Cards: are available to be picked up in the Narthex.

The MVPC Members' Gift of Wisdom: Winter issue will be available in January.

Conversation (Adult Sunday School): Discovery meets in the Chapel and is using the book "The Present Word". Crossroads meets in the Session Room and is studying "Mere Christianity" by C. S. Lewis. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for more information.

The December Communion Offering will be toys/gifts for the International Women's House Santa Shop. Please pick up a blue bag with the shopping list attached.



Stephen Ministry: In 2023, Stephen Ministers will have continuing education at monthly meetings to enhance our service to those with early stage and declining memory loss, Dementia, and Alzheimer's. We feel we can bring comfort and encouragement and new resources to these congregants and community friends. If you or a friend are experiencing these issues or other difficulties that disrupt your normal life, please contact a pastor or Stephen Leader Pat Bartee to get a partner for travels through tough times. Contact a pastor or Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, to utilize one of our skilled & trained Stephen Ministers.



MVP Foundation: Join us in our "\$22K for 2022" matching campaign! We have a wonderful donor willing to match dollar for dollar up to \$22K. To date we have received \$23,564. The MVP Foundation has provided over \$500,000 to various mission partners such as our Youth Group, Los Niños, CAC, as well as the Intern Program here at MVPC.



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: Bob Addison, Mrs. JB, James Ballew, Neill Ferrill, Craig Mackie, Eliana, Alistair & Karen Morine, Irene Nelson, Deborah Phillips, Elaine Rawlings, Wilma Schmidt, Rob Southard, and people of Ukraine and Zambia.

Memorial Service for Lou Baine is planned for Sunday, January 8 at 1:00pm. There will be a light lunch after worship. Please **RSVP by Dec. 20** to the church office if you plan on staying for lunch.

It's not too late to turn in your Pledge Card! We have many ways to turn it in: mail it, put it in offering plate on Sunday, drop it off at the church office, email it to Yvonne@mvpchurch.org, call Yvonne (404.255.2211 ext. 216), or complete online @ mvpchurch.org. As of December 8, we have received 73 pledge cards for \$418,275.



Attendance: 12/4 Worship 103
Online 18

Financial Update

December 1-7	Actual	Actual YTD	2022 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 9,547	\$ 463,927	\$449,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 120	\$ 43,620	\$ 60,000
Non Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 65	\$ 7,466	\$ 10,000
Total	\$ 9,732	\$ 515,013	\$ 519,000

If you have any announcements that you would like to appear in the *Happenings* or *Good News*, please email them to debbie@mvpchurch.org