

**MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
TWENTY SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
NOVEMBER 17, 2024 • 10:30 AM

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

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

**GATHERING**

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**GATHERING MUSIC**

**“He Reigns”**

Newsboys

Rev. Jonathan Freeman

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

**OPENING PRAYER**

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

ONE: Are you awake? Are you alert?

**ALL: God is moving in our lives in a new way.**

ONE: Are you watching the signs? Are you interpreting what is happening today?

**ALL: God is moving in our lives in a new way.**

ONE: Do you see opportunities for ministry? Do you see people in need?

**ALL: God is moving in our lives in a new way.**

ONE: Come, let us worship and work in God’s reign.

**ALL: Let us worship God!**

† **MORNING SONG #15**

**“Rejoice! Rejoice, Believers”**

LLANGLOFFAN

Rejoice! Rejoice, believers, and let your lights appear;

The evening is advancing and darker night is near.

The Bridegroom is arising and soon He will draw nigh;

Up, watch with expectation, at midnight comes the cry.

See that your lamps are burning, replenish them with oil;

Look now for your salvation, the end of sin and toil.

The marriage feast is waiting, the gates wide open stand;

Arise, O heirs of glory, the Bridegroom is at hand!

Our hope and expectation, O Jesus, now appear;

Arise, Thou sun so longed for, above this shadowed sphere!

With hearts and hands uplifted, we plead, O Lord, to see

The day of earth's redemption, and ever be with Thee!

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Shari Freeman

**O Holy One, admitting how foolish we are is never easy. You have chosen us for yourself, yet we continue to seek out false gods in our lives and hearts. You promise to be with us every moment, yet we struggle to find time for you. You send your Word to us, yet we are too busy listening to the world to pay attention. You lead us throughout our days, yet we are unprepared to follow ...**

Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.  
You are the Potter, I am the clay.  
Mold me and make me, this is what I pray.  
Change my heart, O God, make it ever true.  
Change my heart, O God, may I be like you.

Based on Psalm 51:10, this song was written by a school principal named Eddie Espinosa in 1982. He was inspired to overcome complacency that had overtaken his life.

**O Patient One, have mercy on us and forgive us. Speak to us so we might listen and, in hearing, be transformed into your people. Fill us with holiness so we might give ourselves wholly to others. Prepare us to follow you faithfully so we might join with the Kingdom of God to carry out your mission and proclaim to the world your mighty name ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.**

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

† RESPONSE

**"We Are Standing on Holy Ground"**

HOLY GROUND

*Glory to God Hymnal*

We are standing on holy ground,  
And I know that there are angels all around;  
Let us praise Jesus now;  
We are standing in his presence on holy ground. (2x)

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Isaac 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

This scripture is often preached on the 1st Sunday of Advent since that liturgical season is about overcoming darkness to witness the divine revelation of God.

**SCRIPTURE**

Matthew 25:1-13

**HOMILY**

*"Planting Trees: The Olive Tree"*

**RESPONSE**

† **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (*from the Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.182*)

As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin, and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity; so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Amen.

**PRAYER 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**

**"Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning"**

Chancel Choir

African-American

Traditional

† **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**

Gill Hutt

**SENDING**

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL

**“This Little Light of Mine”**

LATTIMER

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel, **(NO!)** I’m gonna let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel, **(NO!)** I’m gonna let it shine.

Hide it under a bushel, **(NO!)** I’m gonna let it shine.

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Don’t let anyone blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.

Don’t let anyone blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.

Don’t let anyone blow it out, I’m gonna let it shine.

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

Everywhere I go, I’m gonna let it shine,

Everywhere I go, I’m gonna let it shine,

Everywhere I go, I’m gonna let it shine,

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

No one knows the true origins of this famous poem, but throughout the last century it has been a cry of liberation. It empowered Civil Rights activists in the 1960s as well as those who countered the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, VA in 2017.

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Abernethy

POSTLUDE

**“Grand Chorus”**

Alexandre Guilmant

Leading Today’s Worship Service

**Rev. Barrett Abernethy**, Senior Pastor

**Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt**, Associate Pastor

**Shari Freeman**, Director of Spiritual Care

**Jill Hudson**, Music Director

**Rev. Jonathan Freeman**, Guitar

**Chancel Choir** of MVPC

*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

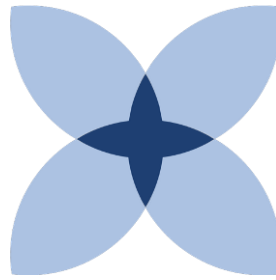


[mvpchurch.org](http://mvpchurch.org)

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

# MVPC Announcements....

Sunday School  
9:30 - 10:15am



Connection  
10-10:25am

Worship  
10:30-11:30am

**Welcome! We are glad to worship with you today!**

**Visitors & Membership:** Please go to our website: [mvpchurch.org](http://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.

## Upcoming Services/Events:



**November 24** *"Planting Trees: The Oaks of Righteousness"*, Isaiah 61:1-7,  
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

**December 1** *"Planting Trees: The Family Tree"*, Isaiah 11:10-16, Mathew 1:1-17,  
Shari Freeman



**Thanksgiving: New this year,** A change in plans. Mary Lea Woods and Gerald Fudge are hosting a potluck Thanksgiving meal. The invitation is open to anyone wanting to gather around the table to share good food, fellowship and gratitude. Please see Mary Lea in the Narthex or call 404.668.0151.

You can make a child's holiday season a little happier! Give holiday gifts to children of local families in need through the Community Assistance Center. Donors are asked to spend ~\$100 per child and bring their new and unwrapped gifts to CAC. The adoption portal closes the first week of December. Visit <https://ourcac.org/give-to-youth-programs/> for more info.



**Senior Adults:** Experience the magic of the holiday season with the Atlanta Christkindl Market, a unique German tradition on Wed., Dec. 4. We'll carpool to Buckhead Village in the morning and have lunch onsite while doing some Christmas shopping. Please sign up at the Seniors table on Sunday or contact Mary Lea Woods at [woods1166@yahoo.com](mailto:woods1166@yahoo.com) or 404.668.0151.



**Presbyterian Women:** The Presbyterian Women Day Circle and Bible study will meet on Tuesday, December 10 at 10:30 in the Kirk Center. Beth Abernethy will lead Lesson 4: *Prayers From the Heart, Hannah*. They will have a Christmas luncheon following the lesson, also in the Kirk Center. The Book Circle will meet on December 13 at the home of Ann Williams. Ann Young will lead a review of *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan. They will have a Christmas luncheon following the review.



**Altar Rose:** today we honor the birth of Liam Andrew Qualls born Nov. 8, Bob Addison's great grandson!

**November 17, 2024**



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

Giving



**Adult Sunday School: Discovery** meets in the Chapel and is using the curriculum "The Present Word". **Crossroads** meets in the Session Room and is studying "Understanding the New Testament" by David Brakke, Ph.D. Both classes meet at 9:30am. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for more information.



**Stephen Ministry:** The holidays are not always joyous for all people. Perhaps you live alone, perhaps you are still grieving for someone not at the table this year, or perhaps bringing family together promotes reminders of disharmony. Stephen Ministers are here to help you find safety and sanity during a hectic season. Contact Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, or a pastor to get connected with this helpful group of trained, skilled laypeople.



**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, Jeannie Chettleburgh, Lorry Clark, Mary Collins, Viola Crawford, Mike Damron, Gene Elder, Bruce Hagenau, Megan Kendall, Erven Kimble, Corny Laube, Chitip Likitcharoen, Chuck McCrory, Bill & Susan McLeish, Karen Morine, Andy Nelson, Maeve Ross, Katherine Slayback, Walt Walker, Ann Williams, Ann Young, and the people of Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia

**Christian Sympathy** for the family of Walt Walker. A longtime member, Walt died this past Wednesday. A graveside service will take place on Saturday, Nov. 30 at Arlington Cemetery.

**Attendance:** 11/10 Worship 96, Online 17

**Dates for your calendar:**

December 1	Hanging of the Greens and Dinner, 5pm
December 15	Atlanta Concert Band Performance
December 22	Lessons & Carols
December 24	Live Nativity 4:30pm
	Christmas Eve Service 5:30pm

*There is still time! Please consider giving a pledge for 2025 if you have not done so.*

**Financial Update**

As of November 14	Actual YTD	2024 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$453,189	\$509,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 57,406	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 22,616	\$ 9,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$533,211</b>	<b>\$578,000</b>

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