

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 1, 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

"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"

Nettleton

Rev. Jonathan Freeman

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

OPENING PRAYER

† LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE *(MVPC Members who live South of the Church.)*

CANDLELIGHTERS: Undeterred by the asphalt that defines the city's perimeter, we come from the south to light this Advent Candle.

CONGREGATION: We celebrate Christ's ability to transcend boundaries and lead us to seek hope for the world!

CANDLELIGHTERS: Let this flame shine so that the wolf shall lie with the lamb,

CONGREGATION: The cow and the bear shall safely cross I-285,

CANDLELIGHTERS: And we shall begin to see a flicker of your hopeful, peaceful kingdom.

CONGREGATION: Let us worship God!

Each week during Advent, the Advent candles will be lit by congregation members who travel from different cardinal directions to attend church. For this first week of Advent, representing hope, our candlelighters are those who live south of the church.

† MORNING SONG #9

"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

VENI EMMANUEL

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight. *(refrain)*

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. *(refrain)*

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Abernethy

God of Hope, as we begin our Advent journey, we are reminded that the people which Jesus descended from were not perfectly divine, but imperfectly human. For 42 generations, you offered forgiveness and redemption from pride, selfishness, and the breaking of covenants. What you reveal to us through this family tree is that these broken people who didn't always love neighbor or self are still the people you chose to point us toward the light of the world. Each of them mattered. Each of them was your saint in their present moment.

In this present moment, inspire us to know that when we fall short and display pride, selfishness, or break covenants, that we are never permanently separated from your hope. For your candle this day signifies that whatever darkness we turn toward is but a shadow of your eternal promise. Lead us to continue to build the branches of your family tree, so that 42 more generations might inspire your story until the light shines over all the world ... *(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

Shari Freeman

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 11:1-10, Matthew 1:1-17

HOMILY

"Planting Trees: The Family Tree"

RESPONSE

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(from the Confession of Belhar)*

Shari Freeman

We believe:

that Christ's work of reconciliation is made manifest in the church as the community of believers who have been reconciled with God and with one another;

that this unity of the people of God must be manifested and be active in a variety of ways; in that we love one another; that we experience, practice and pursue community with one another; that we are obligated to give ourselves willingly and joyfully to be of benefit and blessing to one another; that we suffer with one another for the sake of righteousness; pray together; together serve God in this world; and together fight against all which may threaten or hinder this unity;

that this unity can be established only in freedom and not under constraint; that the variety of spiritual gifts, opportunities, backgrounds, convictions, as well as the various languages and cultures, are by virtue of the reconciliation in Christ, opportunities for mutual service and enrichment within the one visible people of God.

Today's
offertory is from
George Frideric
Handel's
Messiah,
composed in
1741.

OFFERTORY

"He Shall Feed His Flock/Come Unto Him"

Rebecca Shipley, Laurie Swann

† 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

MacKenzie Truitt

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Abernethy

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

Shari Freeman

ONE: The Lord be with you.

ALL: **And also with you.**

ONE: Lift up your hearts.

ALL: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

ONE: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.

ALL: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PRAYER OVER THE ELEMENTS & THE LORD'S PRAYER

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.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD & COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

(The congregation is invited to come forward to receive communion.

If you prefer to remain seated, an Elder will bring communion to you.)

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

Rev. Abernethy

SENDING

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL #31 "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"

MENDELSSOHN

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King.
Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

Joyful, all ye nations rise, join the triumph of the skies;
With the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Refrain:

Hark! the herald angels sing,
"Glory to the newborn King!"

Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time, behold Him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; Hail the incarnate Deity,
Pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel. *(refrain)*

Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!

Light and life to all He brings, risen with healing in His wings.

Mild He lays His glory by, born that we no more may die.

Born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. *(refrain)*

The words to this beloved Christmas Hymn were initially written by Charles Wesley in 1739 and titled "Hymn for Christmas Day." Felix Mendelssohn wrote the music.

† BENEDICTION

Shari Freeman

RECESSIONAL *(see insert)*

"Trees of the Field"

(The congregation is invited to recess out with the pastors as we bless the Prayer Tree in the courtyard.)

Leading Today's Worship Service

Rev. Barrett Abernethy, Senior Pastor

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor

Shari Freeman, Director of Spiritual Care

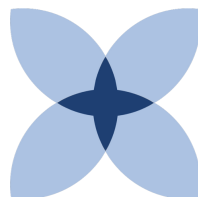
Jill Hudson, Music Director

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



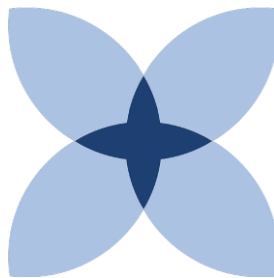
Our mailing address is:
P.O. Box 76051
Sandy Springs, GA 30358

MVPC Announcements....



We will be hosting the week of Dec. 22-29. Family Promise sign up is on the MVPC website: mvpchurch.org.

**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, 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:



Hanging of the Green: TODAY at 5pm! Plan to stay for dinner in Fellowship Hall afterwards.

December 8 *"Planting Trees: The Chrismon Tree"*, John 8:12-20, Rev. Barrett Abernethy

December 15 Children's Christmas Pageant during worship, Luke 2:1-21



Zooming Thru the Carols begins tomorrow! Watch for the email at 9am every weekday with the link to the Zoom call at noon. We hope to "see" you there!

CAC: 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 **Christkindl Market**, a unique German Marketplace on Thurs., Dec. 5 in Roswell. We will have designated drivers to pick up Seniors at their residences at around 3:30 and return them at the end of our shopping/eating experience. Please sign up at the Seniors table on Sunday or contact Mary Lea Woods at woods1166@yahoo.com or 404.668.0151.

Senior Adults: Christmas Party and White Elephant on Sunday, Dec. 8 after worship at La Madeleine. Please reserve your spot at the Seniors Table in the Narthex.



December 1, 2024



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

Giving



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.



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: Holidays bring joy to many but raise up old wounds for others. Please utilize our Stephen Ministers if you feel especially sad or lonely at this time to help you gain perspective and decide on new goals going forward. Please contact Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader. or a pastor to get connected.



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, Mary Collins, Viola Crawford, Mike Damron, Joann Egan, Gene Elder, Malinda Holmes, Megan Kendall, Corny Laube, Chitip Likitcharoen, Chuck McCrory, Bill & Susan McLeish, Karen Morine, Andy Nelson, Maeve Ross, and the people of Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia

Attendance: 11/24 Worship 76

Dates for your calendar:

December 1	Hanging of the Green 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 25	Actual YTD	2024 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$467,505	\$509,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 57,556	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 22,777	\$ 9,000
Total	\$547,838	\$578,000

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