

MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 15, 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

"The Snow is Dancing"

arr. Nancy Zeltsman

Ryan Sawyer

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

OPENING PRAYER

† LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE *(MVPC Members who live East of the Church - Dunwoody)*

CANDLELIGHTERS: Undeterred by the stoplights and construction of the highway that bears this church's name, we come to light this candle.

CONGREGATION: **We celebrate how you come westward knowing that the light is still over the horizon, inspiring the rest of us on the Advent journey.**

CANDLELIGHTERS: This is why we light the candle of joy, for even as we patiently await the coming of the child, we believe the Son will shine in and through the hearts of all.

CONGREGATION: **Let us share that promised joy to one another, the neighbor down the street, and the stranger we have yet to meet. Let us worship God!**

† MORNING SONG #13

"Prepare the Way"

BEREDEN VAG FOR HERRAN

Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley a level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory, foretold in sacred story.

Refrain

O blest is Christ that came in God's most holy name.

Christ brings God's rule, O Zion; he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom, and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding, for grace and joy abounding. *(refrain)*

Fling wide your gates, O Zion; your Savior's rule embrace.
And tidings of salvation proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing, their adoration voicing. *(refrain)*

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Shari Freeman

God of New Life, foster a sense of holy expectation within us. We admit that we do all we can to control, to manage, and to limit risk. We think that we can hold the weight of the world on our shoulders and keep it all in balance. Sometimes, we think this is our duty. This is exhausting and impossible, and it does not lead to deeper communion with you or those around us. You are the One who gently holds the weight of the world and carefully keeps all in balance. You are the One breaking into our lives, again and again, planting seeds of expectation. Forgive us, God of New Life, and blow your Spirit into the holy expectation within us. Encourage us to be brave enough to hope for something new, and trusting enough to help it happen ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE *(see insert)*

"Change My Heart, O God"
Glory to God Hymnal

Eddie Espinosa

Written in 1982, this hymn draws on images from Jeremiah 18:1-6, Isaiah 64:8, and Psalm 51:10.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBER

Gail Hakim

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

(Please greet each other with the peace of Christ, in a manner comfortable for one another.)

THE WORD

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Please sing the first and last verses of these hymns from the blue hymnal:

- #27 Gentle Mary Laid Her Child
- #24 Away in a Manger
- #23 Angels we Have Heard on High
- #29 Go Tell It on the Mountain
- #43 O Little Town of Bethlehem
- #40 Joy to the World!

Our children will portray the Christmas story in five scenes. The scenes will transition while we sing these hymns. Anyone of any age, can come forward during the hymn to participate in the following scene.

RESPONSE

† **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (*from the Confession of 1967, Inclusive Language, 9.15-9.16*)

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

God's sovereign love is a mystery beyond the reach of the human mind. Human thought ascribes to God superlatives of power, wisdom, and goodness. But God reveals divine love in Jesus Christ by showing power in the form of a servant, wisdom in the folly of the cross, and goodness in receiving sinful men and women. The power of God's love in Christ to transform the world discloses that the Redeemer is the Lord and Creator who made all things to serve the purpose of God's love.

God has created the world of space and time to be the sphere of God's dealings with humankind. In its beauty and vastness, sublimity and awfulness, order and disorder, the world reflects to the eye of faith the majesty and mystery of its Creator.

PRAYERS 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

Themes from "A Charlie Brown Christmas"

Vince Guaraldi

Ryan Sawyer

† 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

Dick Freeman

SENDING

† SONG FOR DISMISSAL (*see insert*)

“The King of Glory Comes”

KING OF GLORY

Sing the Faith Hymnal

Refrain

The king of glory comes, the nation rejoices.
Open the gates before him, lift up your voices.

Who is the King of glory; how shall we call him?
He is Emmanuel, the promised of ages. (*refrain*)

In all of Galilee, in city or village,
He goes among his people curing their illness. (*refrain*)

Sing then of David’s son, our Savior and brother;
In all of Galilee was never another. (*refrain*)

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Abernethy

POSTLUDE

“Northern Lights”

Eric Ewazen

Ryan Sawyer

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

Chancel Choir of MVPC

Ryan Sawyer - Guest Musician

*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

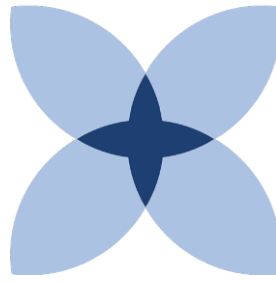


Our mailing address is:
P.O. Box 76051
Sandy Springs, GA 30358

mvpchurch.org

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, 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:



December 17 Taizé - Longest Night Service of Healing and Wholeness, 7pm, Sanctuary

December 22 Lessons & Carols, 10:30am

December 24 Live Nativity - 4:30pm
Candlelight Service - 5:30pm, John 1:1-9, Rev. Barrett Abernethy

January 5, 2025 Epiphany of the Lord/Chalking of the Door, Matthew 2:1-12,
Rev. Barrett Abernethy



New Traffic Pattern: The City will be opening Spruill Lane to traffic on Thursday afternoon, **December 19**. At the same time, the signal at Mount Vernon and Johnson Ferry will be taken out.



Zooming Thru the Carols This is the last week! Join us to learn interesting facts and origins of some of your favorite carols. Watch for the email in the morning every weekday with the link to the Zoom call at noon. We hope to "see" you there!



Caroling Opportunity with MVPC! You are welcome to join us on Sunday, December 22 at Mount Vernon Towers, 5pm



Atlanta Concert Band annual Christmas concert, TODAY Sunday, December 15 at 4pm in the Sanctuary. They promise to get you in the Christmas spirit!



Family Promise: We will be hosting Family Promise families the week of Christmas, **December 22-29**. Have you signed up to help yet? There are a few spots left. The links to sign up are in the weekly Happenings email or contact Isaac.

December 15, 2024



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

Giving



Presbyterian Women: Last Tuesday, the **Day Circle** enjoyed the bible study, *Prayers from the Heart*, Hannah, led by Beth Abernethy. After the bible study, they celebrated Christmas with a buffet luncheon. They also filled gift bags for Clifton Sanctuary Ministries. Last Friday, the **Book Circle** met at the home of Ann Williams. Ann Young led a review of *Small Things Like These* by Claire Keegan. They also had a Christmas luncheon following the review. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Presbyterian Women!



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: All the hecticness and chaos of Christmas can be overwhelming. Missing those who cannot be with us or are no longer with us can severely temper our enjoyment of the season. Our Stephen Ministers are here to walk through it with you. 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 her at 404.626.2432.

Prayer Concerns: Bob Addison, Jeannie Chettleburgh, Mike Damron, Joann Egan, Gene Elder, Malinda Holmes, Helen Johnson, Kirt Lattanze, Corny Laube, Chitip Likitcharoen, Chuck McCrory, Bill & Susan McLeish, Karen Morine, Andy Nelson, Maeve Ross, Freida Townsend, and the people of Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia

Attendance: 12/8 Worship 109, Online 7

Dates for your calendar:

December 24	Live Nativity 4:30pm
	Christmas Eve Service 5:30pm
December 29	Lunch Bunch after worship @ City BBQ

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

Financial Update

As of December 10	Actual YTD	2024 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$487,067	\$509,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 63,284	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 22,691	\$ 9,000
Total	\$573,042	\$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