



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHRISTMAS EVE

DECEMBER 24, 2024 • 5:30PM

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

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

GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELLS

GATHERING MUSIC

“Away in a Manger”

Brass Quintet

“Angels We Have Heard on High”

“The First Nowell”

† PROCESSIONAL HYMN #41

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Wilcocks

O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold Him, born the King of angels!

Refrain

O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given; word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing! (*refrain*)

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above! Glory to God, all
Glory in the highest! (*refrain*)

WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

† LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE (Christ Candle: Our MV Neighbors - MV Woods, MV Village, MV Towers)

CANDLELIGHTERS: Tonight, we celebrate with those of you who have come from the north, south, east, and west.

CONGREGATION: **We join our voices with the ones who did not cross a river, encounter a stoplight, or traverse a freeway to rejoice in the coming of the Christ child.**

CANDLELIGHTERS: Let us light this candle, ringing forth the hope, peace, joy, and love that emits from the flame of Christ,

CONGREGATION: **And let us take this light back out into the world by our thoughts, our words, and our deeds. Let us worship God!**

During Advent we welcomed church members who live to the north, south, east, & west of the church to light the Advent candle. Tonight we welcome our neighbors who come from nearby to light the Christ Candle.

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 God-head 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*)

† PRAYER FOR ETERNAL LIGHT

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

God of Light, throughout the Advent bleakness, we have come from north, south, east, and west to see the sparks of hope, peace, joy, and love. Tonight, we come to fan the flame of incarnation. For it transcends all directions and moves beyond time and distance. That is why we fill the pews this night. Because we believe this hope still has meaning.

It still has the power to overcome the darkness.

It still has the presence to bring peace to our broken lives.

It still has the warmth to share joy with our neighbor.

It still has the benevolence to shepherd those hurting.

It still has the grace to share brightness with all.

We believe this because your Son is the light of the world, not a world or our world, but all the world. Let that truth burn bright on this cold, winter's night, reconciling and reorienting us to be the people we are called to be. Fan the flame for us to see and then imprint it upon our hearts, for that is how the hope shines for eternity. To the promise of your Son, the Incarnate One, we pray ...
(silent confession) **Amen.**

† ASSURANCE OF LIGHT

ONE: ...In the name of Jesus Christ, may the light shine through us.

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

† RESPONSE (*see insert*)

"Still, Still, Still"

STILL, STILL, STILL

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

All children 5th grade and younger are invited to come forward for storytelling and prayer.

PARADE OF THE ANIMALS

SONG FOR THE PARADE *(see insert)* **"Good Christian Friends, Rejoice"**

IN DULCI JUBILO

ANTHEM

"Love Came Down at Christmas"

Allen Pote

Chancel Choir & Anthony Menardi, Soloist

THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Rev. Abernethy

SCRIPTURE

John 1:1-14

HOMILY

"Peace Light"

Pastoral Note:
This is the first
Christmas Eve in my
pastoral career (12
years) where I
haven't preached on
Luke 2!

RESPONSE

† **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** *(Apostles' Creed)*

Rev. Abernethy

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.

† **HYMN #40**

"Joy to the World!"

ANTIOCH

Joy to the world, the Lord is come: let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

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.

No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found, far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness, and wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love, and wonders, wonders, of His love.

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

"Angels Carol"

John Rutter

Chancel Choir

† DOXOLOGY

Tune of Hymn #53 "What Child is This"

These gifts we joyfully bring to you,
to fill the world with meaning;
our hearts and minds are longing for
the life of which you are dreaming.
This, this our gifts we bring,
our lives we share, your praise we sing;
show us your vision, Lord,
for hope, and peace, and caring.

† PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Steve Whisenant

SENDING

† SHARING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

(Ushers will come to the end of each row to light candles. Once your candle has been lit, please share the light with the person next to you.)

† CLOSING HYMN #60

"Silent Night, Holy Night"

STILLE NACHT

Rev. Jonathan Freeman, Guitar

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright,
Round yon virgin mother and Child! Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing "Alleluia;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night! Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

On Christmas Eve of 1818, Joseph Mohr, a Priest in Austria, was confronted with a damaged church organ. He took the words to a poem he'd written and asked nearby organist Franz Gruber to compose a melody and guitar accompaniment for that night's mass.

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

POSTLUDE

"In Dulci Jubilo"

J.S. Bach, BWV 729

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

**Scouting USA
Troop #463**

Brass Quintet

John Hibbard - tuba
Dan Howard - trumpet 1
Will Hudson - trumpet 2
Sean Mack - trombone
Donald Rooney - French horn

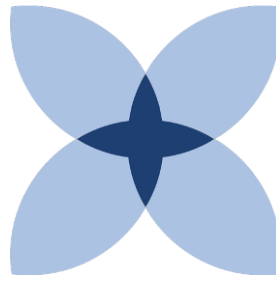
We are located at:
471 Mount Vernon Hwy., NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328



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

MVPC Announcements....

Sunday School
9:30 - 10:15am



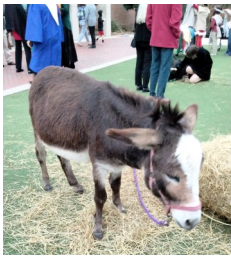
Connection
10-10:25am

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 24 Live Nativity - 4:30pm
Candlelight Service - 5:30pm, John 1:1-14, Rev. Barrett Abernethy

December 29 *"Who Gets to Decide That I Am Lost?"*, Luke 2:41-52, Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

January 5, 2025 Epiphany of the Lord/Chalking of the Door, Communion, Matthew 2:1-12,
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt



CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED: December 25-27, January 1, 2025. We will close at noon on December 24 and December 31.



Family Promise: We will be hosting Family Promise families this week, **December 22-29**. Any cash offering we receive this night will go to this organization that longs to support families in need.



Lunch Bunch Please join Isaac and Shari for lunch after worship on **Sunday, December 29**.



Presbyterian Women: Presbyterian Women enjoyed all of their Christmas activities. Next year, the **Day Circle** will meet on Tuesday, January 14. Sarah Chalpan will teach Lesson 5: Speaking Word of Lord, Huldah. The **Book Circle** will meet on Friday, January 10. Marion Satterfield will lead a review of *The Tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather Morris. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Presbyterian Women!

December 24, 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: Christmas is a time of rejoicing for many and gathering family. But, for some, it is a painful reminder of loss, hurt, strained relations. Our Stephen Ministers are standing by to help you traverse a difficult time and walk with you through it and to help you as you seek new and different ways to seek reconciliation. 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: Dee Bradford-Smith, Jeannie Chettleburgh, Mike Damron, Joann Egan, Gene Elder, Jeanne Gilliland, Malinda Holmes, Helen Johnson, Kirt Lattanze, Corny Laube, Chitip Liticharoen, Kathryn Mackie, Chuck McCrory, Bill & Susan McLeish, Karen Morine, Andy Nelson, Freida Townsend, and the people of Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia

Christian Sympathy for the family of Hazel Cofield who died on December 14. A service will be held on Sunday, January 26 at 2pm at Patterson's Funeral Home in Brookhaven.

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

As of December 19	Actual YTD	2024 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$491,386	\$509,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 63,384	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 22,721	\$ 9,000
Total	\$577,491	\$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



Christmas Poinsettias 2024

*The following persons have presented poinsettias to decorate the Sanctuary
in honor or loving memory of those listed beside their names.*

Barrett, Braegan, Evie Abernethy	In honor of our parents
Bob Addison	In memory of Ann Addison
Dee Bradford-Smith	In memory of Arthur & Lula Bradford, John Bradford-Smith, Marcia Hutchinson
John & Meg Christian	In memory of Dr. William R Barron, John Robert Christian, III, John & Nana Christian
Pat Davis	In memory of Allen & Mary Elizabeth Summerville
Duncan Family	In memory of Bill Duncan
Eustis Family	In memory of John & Jeanne Bills In Honor of Ross & Marilyn Eustis
Mark & Joann Fifield	In memory of Carl & June Fifield, William O'Hara In Honor of Ann O'Hara
Richard & Shari Freeman	In memory of Thomas Chettleburgh
Mike & Gloria Gillespie	In memory of Pam Bettis (Gloria's sister)
Jeanne Gilliland	In memory of Hazel Cofield
Charlie & Lisa Gray	In memory of Warren & Josephine Gray, Ed & Mary Ann Parker
Bruce & Wendy Hagenau	In memory of Norma McMinn, Karl Hagenau In honor of Jeanne Hagenau
Gail Hakim	In memory of Rax Hakim In honor of my sons & families
George Hammett	In memory of Rev. Jenny Hammett
Wright Hardy	In honor of loved ones
John & Patricia Hibbard	In memory of loved ones In honor of Lucy, Alex, Sarah, Brian, & Emma Kate
Malinda Holmes	In honor of Lily, Franklin, Jackson, Charlie
Jill Hudson	In honor of our amazing MVPC Staff, the wonderful choir
Hughes Family	In memory of Tom & Barbara Hughes
Cathy Jenkins	In memory of Jim & Sandra Harbuck
Kilgore Family	In memory of Wayne Kilgore
Sam & Mary McClurg	In honor of family
Bruce & Laura Northrop	In memory of Mort & Bev Northrop, Kay & Fleming Vinson
Jeff Schneider & Donna Neumann	In memory of Warren & Lorraine Schneider, Paul Neumann
Moira Speirs	In memory of Bucky & Janet O'Hare, Alex & Cathy Speirs, James Lynch In honor of Moira, Etta & James

(over)

Ed Taylor

In memory of Charles & Shirley Taylor

In honor of Rachel & Chelsea Taylor

Isaac & Christina Toney-Schmitt

In memory of Laurel Schmitt

Barbara Wasson

In memory of Doug & Polly Jenkins

Sally Williams

In memory of Dick Williams, my parents

James Wolters

In memory of Jim & Justine Wolters

Page Woodall

In honor of Laura Miller