



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

MARCH 30, 2025 • 10:30 AM

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

† For those who are able, please stand.

GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELLS

GATHERING MUSIC

“Open The Eyes of My Heart”

Rev. Jonathan Freeman

Open the eyes of my heart, Lord
Open the eyes of my heart
I want to see You
I want to see You

To see You high and lifted up
Shinin' in the light of Your glory
Pour out Your power and love
As we sing holy, holy, holy

We encourage
you to sing
along to the
gathering song
as we prepare
our hearts to
worship God!

Text and Music: Paul Baloche. ©1997 Integrity's Hosanna! Music.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Barrett Abernethy

OPENING PRAYER

† CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Don't be a jerk!

ALL: **Don't wish for a city's destruction then whine when God chooses to forgive that city.**

ONE: Thousands of miles away, overboard in the sea, inside a fish, in the town square, and outside the town walls,

ALL: **Jonah tries his best to avoid God's call to him.**

ONE: But God does not forget him. God calls him to be like God; forgiving and compassionate.

ALL: **With God, we can practice forgiveness and compassion too. Let us worship God!**

† OPENING HYMN (# 324)

“Open My Eyes That I May See”

Open my eyes, that I may see glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
Place in my hands the wonderful key that shall unclasp and set me free.

Refrain:

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my eyes (ears, heart), illumine me,
Spirit divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear, everything false will disappear. (*refrain*)

Open my mouth, and let me bear, gladly the warm truth everywhere;
Open my heart and let me prepare love with Thy children thus to share. (*refrain*)

Text and Music: Clara H. Scott.

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

God of Boundless Compassion, we are quick to judge one another. Because of our lived experience we think that we know who is good and who is bad. We think that we know who is able to change their ways and who will never change. We even think that we know who deserves forgiveness and who does not! Like Jonah, our opinions of others often reflect back onto ourselves. Like Jonah, we tend to wander from what you have called us to do. Like Jonah, we grumble and complain when forgiveness clashes with our understanding of justice. God of Boundless Compassion, stay by our side in spite of our actions. Mold us into understanding people, filled with forgiveness and compassion for everyone we encounter ... (*silent confession*) ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: **Thanks be to God.**

† RESPONSE (#85)

“What Wondrous Love is This”

What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
What wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
To bear the heavy cross for my soul, for my soul,
To bear the heavy cross for my soul!

Text: American Folk Hymn. Music: Walker's Southern Harmony. ©1965 Abingdon Press

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. 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

SCRIPTURE

Jonah 4:1-11

HOMILY

“Don’t Be A Jerk: Jonah”

The idea for this sermon series came courtesy of fellow PC(USA) pastor, Rev. Michael East, who serves First Presbyterian, Norman, OK.

RESPONSE

† **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** *(A Brief Statement of Faith, 11.3)*

We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father. In sovereign love God created the world good and makes everyone equally in God’s image, male and female, of every race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God’s commandments, we violate the image of God in others and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our care. We deserve God’s condemnation. Yet God acts with justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love, the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage. Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal home, God is faithful still.

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

“Lord of the Small”

Chancel Choir

Praise to the Lord of the small, broken things,
Who sees the poor sparrow that cannot take wing,
Who loves the lame child, and the wretch in the street,
Who comforts their sorrows and washes their feet.

Text: Johanna Anderson. Music: Dan Forrest.

These lyrics, written in memory of a 12 year old girl, speak to the Lenten call of living into the frailty of human brokenness. “Some flames burn long yet dim . Others burn quickly but, in spite of their brevity, burn all the more brightly.”

† **DOXOLOGY**

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

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.

Text: Thomas Ken Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Geneva Psalter

† **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Barbara Brooks

SENDING

† CLOSING HYMN *(see insert)*

"I'll Fly Away"

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Abernethy

POSTLUDE

"Rejoice, the Lord is King"

Arr: Marvin Gaspard. Tune: DARWALL'S 148th, John Darwall.

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, Contemporary Musician

Chancel Choir

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

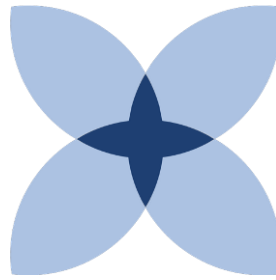
We are located at:
471 Mount Vernon Hwy., NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328



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

MVPC Announcements....

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:



April 6

"Don't Be a Jerk: Paul," 1 Corinthians 11:1-9, 16; 14:34,
Rev. Barrett Abernethy preaching

April 13

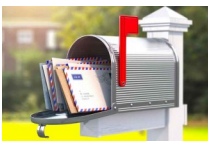
"Don't Be a Jerk: Jesus," Mark 11:1-17, Rev. Barrett Abernethy preaching
Palm Sunday Worship & Luncheon (with Easter Egg Hunt)



The March Communion Offering is for the Columbia Theological Seminary (CTS) Student Food Pantry. Many CTS students, especially international students, do not have vehicles for easy transportation, so the food pantry is a great help. The food pantry is sponsored by the seminary, the Columbia Friendship Circle, and local congregations. For more information about CTS Student Life, please visit <https://www.ctsnet.edu/student-life/>



Book Sorting: *NEW DATE* Join us Sunday, April 6 at 4:30 p.m. in Gailey Hall.



Mail Delivery: We are experiencing delays in receiving mail. Please update your records to our P.O. Box where we have no delays: P.O. Box 76051, Sandy Springs, GA 30358

March 30, 2025



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



Giving



Presbyterian Women: The **Day Circle** will meet on Tuesday, April 8. Beth Abernethy will teach Lesson 8: *Testimony of an Apostle, Mary Magdalene*. The **Book Circle** will meet on Friday, April 11. Mary Kilgore will lead a review of *The Art Forger* by B. A. Shapiro.

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 Old Testament"*, Prof. Robert D. Miller, The Catholic University of America. Both classes meet at 9:30 a.m. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for more information.



Stephen Ministry: Stephen Ministers are trained to help you unload pain, disappointment, and anger in a non-judgmental, confidential setting, so you can become free to solve the issues you face. If we can help you, please call Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, or call a pastor to get connected.



Do you feel a need for prayer? Have our Prayer Vine pray for you! Email your requests to barbara@babrooks.com or call her at 404.422.5175.



Prayer Concerns: Jeannie Chettleburgh, Lorry Clark, Mike Damron, Joann Egan, Sherri Galloway, Malinda Holmes, Karen Morine, and the people of Clifton Sanctuary, Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia

We mourn the death of **Tom Nolan** (*stepfather of Steve Ray*), who died on March 19.

We mourn the death of **Jim Wingate**, our former Music Director, who died on March 1. The funeral will be Saturday, April 5 at 10 a.m. at Northminster Presbyterian Church.

Attendance 3/23: 86, Online 25

Dates for your calendar:

April 17	Maundy Thursday Communion Service Sanctuary, 6:30pm
April 20	Sunrise Worship (6:45am), Sanctuary Worship (10:30am)

Financial Update

As of March 27	Actual YTD	2025 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 187,841	\$500,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 13,710	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 1,604	\$ 26,000
Total	\$203,155	\$ 586,000

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