



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

SEPTEMBER 7, 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

"Oceans (Where Feet May Fail)"

Rev. Jonathan Freeman

I will call upon Your Name, keep my eyes above the waves,
My soul will rest in Your embrace, I am Yours and You are mine

Authors Joel Houston, Matt Crocker, Salomon Ligthelm. ©2012 Hillsong Music.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Shari Freeman

MINUTE FOR MISSION

Sujay Galen & Camille Kesler, Executive Director, AMIS Atlanta

OPENING PRAYER

† CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Wandering in the darkness of the night,

ALL: **God is with us.**

ONE: During the storms of life,

ALL: **God is with us.**

ONE: When fear and doubt creep in,

ALL: **God is with us.**

ONE: When we walk the uncharted road,

ALL: **God is with us. Let us worship God!**

Today's Call to
Worship and Prayer
of Confession were
written by Mary Lea
Woods. Thanks
Mary Lea!

† OPENING HYMN (#420)

"God of Grace and God of Glory"

God of grace and God of glory, on Thy people pour Thy power;
Crown Thine ancient church's story; bring its bud to glorious flower.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the facing of this hour, for the facing of this hour.

Lo! The hosts of evil round us scorn Thy Christ, assail Thy ways!
From the fears that long have bound us free our hearts to faith and praise.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, for the living of these days, for the living of these days.

Cure Thy children's warring madness, bend our pride to Thy control;
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal, lest we miss Thy kingdom's goal.

Set our feet on lofty places; gird our lives that they may be
Armored with all Christ-like graces, pledged to set all captives free.
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage, that we fail not them nor Thee! That we fail not them nor Thee!

Words: Harry Fosdick. Music: John Hughes.

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Shari Freeman

God who walks on water, as we gather before you, we remember the miracles woven throughout scripture. Yet even with the knowledge of your divine power and unwavering presence, when life becomes difficult, we sometimes feel alone and abandoned. We wonder, "Why me, Lord?"

The countless "Don't be afraid" reassurances in the Bible speak volumes about our struggle with fear and insecurity. It is hard to live into these words of reassurance when real or imagined fear builds up inside us. Fear can cloud our perspective and prevent us from seeing and feeling your loving presence, and we forget the unwavering nature of your care for us.

As we navigate the roads ahead, help us deepen our connection with you through study, prayer, and the nurturing bonds of our community of faith. Take us by the hand and lead us through your guidance and boundless grace. May we always feel your presence, your peace, and your unwavering love ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE

"O God, You Are My God"

O God, you are my God, and I will ever praise you.

O God, you are my God, and I will ever praise you.

I will seek you in the morning, and I will learn to walk in your ways.

And step by step you'll lead me, and I will follow you all of my days.

Words and Music: David Strasser. ©1991 Universal Music - Brentwood Benson Publishing.

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

Rev. Shari Freeman

*(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. Shari Freeman

SCRIPTURE

Matthew 14:22-33

HOMILY

"Navigating Roads: The Miraculous Road"

RESPONSE

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*from the Westminster Larger Catechism, 7.213-7.214*)

ONE: Which is the First Commandment?

ALL: The First Commandment is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

ONE: What are the duties required in the First Commandment?

ALL: The duties required in the First Commandment are: the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly; by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

While we believe that God has no gender, the Westminster Larger Catechism, written in England in 1647, uses male pronouns for God.

OFFERTORY

"Let Us Rejoice"

Chancel Choir

Words & Music by Cindy Ovokaitys.

† DOXOLOGY (#592) **"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

Bruce Morine

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Rev. Shari Freeman

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

Rev. Jonathan Freeman

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

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.

PRAYERS 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

POST COMMUNION PRAYER

SENDING

† CLOSING HYMN (#404)

“Precious Lord, Take My Hand”

Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, help me stand; I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;
Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light;
take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

When my way grows drear, precious Lord, linger near; when my life is almost gone,
Hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall;
Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me home.

Words: Thomas Dorsey. Music: George Allen. ©1938 Hill & Range Songs.

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Shari Freeman

POSTLUDE

“Prelude in F”

It is uncertain who composed this music. The manuscript has Johann Sebastian Bach's name on the cover with a question mark.

Navigating Roads: The Road to Palmdale

It was 1973. We were four single mothers and coworkers in an insurance office in Encino, CA. Bonnie, Virginia, and I were going through difficult divorces. Marian was recently widowed. Virginia's mother was having a jewelry party in Palmdale, so we decided to go that Saturday. Marian volunteered to drive as she had the biggest vehicle, an older Cadillac. We all piled in, Marian driving, me in the front passenger seat, and Virginia and Bonnie in the back.

As we rode the 30-mile trip, we unwound, chatted, and were enjoying the ride, when suddenly we hit a patch of black ice. We slid across two lanes and stopped facing a long drop-off. It was a long way down. If I ever felt the hand of God, it was at this moment. And I give Marian credit for her skillful driving. All I could think of was those six children without their mothers. It was a wakeup call; I needed to get my life together.

We all moved on with our lives, I remarried, and we had another son. Marian and I were close friends until her death two years ago. Occasionally, we'd talk about that day. I traveled the same road to Palmdale seven years ago with my younger son's family.

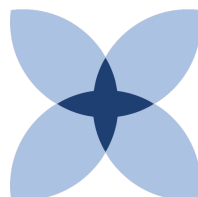
The road is wider now with guardrails. And I could not help but remember that day. Thank you, Jesus. - Gail Hakim

Leading Today's Worship Service

Rev. Shari Freeman, Associate Pastor of Spiritual Care

Jill Hudson, Music Director & Organist

Rev. Jonathan Freeman, Contemporary Musician & Liturgist
Chancel Choir

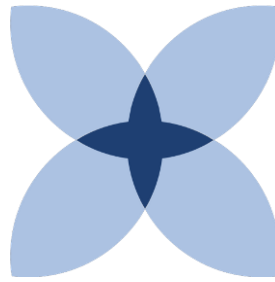


We are located at:
471 Mount Vernon Hwy., NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328

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:



September 14 "Navigating Roads: The Return", Luke 15:11-32, Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

September 21 "Navigating Roads: Path to Peace", Psalm 23 and Isaiah 43:16-21,
Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

September 23 Taizé, 7pm in the Sanctuary



Small Groups: Get ready for one of our Fall Small Group Sessions! Small Groups begin on Sunday, Sept. 14. The group meeting at the church will discuss the book *"Appreciate These Things: Eight Ways of Cultivating Compassion"* by Jill Duffield. The group meeting at the Southards' house will discuss the *"Walking the Bible"* video series. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for the upcoming schedule for the young adult small group. Sign-up in the Narthex!



NEW! Little Blessings Room: The Little Blessings Room (located in the Session Room) is available for parents to go with their 0-3 year olds during the Worship Service. The worship service is live-streamed into the room and there are chairs for nursing and holding babies and toys for toddlers.



Mount Vernon Presbyterian Foundation invites you to lunch catered by Fox Brothers BBQ next Sunday, Sept 14, in Fellowship Hall directly after church. We'll share information on the great work the Foundation is doing and how you can easily get involved.



In **September**, we are shopping for the Community Assistance Center. CAC provides basic needs assistance for Dunwoody and Sandy Springs neighbors to prevent homelessness and hunger while promoting self-sufficiency and empowering them to thrive. For more information, please go to www.ourcac.org.

September 7, 2025



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

Giving



Presbyterian Women: The **Day Circle** will meet on September 9 at 10:30 in the Session Room. Beth Abernethy will teach Lesson One: *Mary Magdalene, the Tower* in the 2025-2026 Bible study guide, *Finding Resilience, Joy, and our Identity in Jesus Christ*. The **Book Circle** will meet on September 12 at 10:00 in the Session Room. Beth Abernethy will lead a review of *The Only Woman in the Room* (Historical fiction) By Marie Benedict. **Circle of Grace** will meet September 7 from 5-6:30pm. For more information contact Lisa Cumming at lisa.j.cumming@gmail.com



Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: This is an ongoing fund that helps with any disaster. To find out all that they support, go to their website at <https://pcusa.org/search?query=presbyterian%20disaster%20assistance&page=1>. You can also donate on this site.



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. Shari Freeman for more information.



Stephen Ministry: Your church Stephen Ministry team is here to help you manage and master a difficult time in your life. Sometimes, all it takes is new perspective and clarity, offered by a non-judgmental person who calmly listens and helps you to see your own way forward. Please call on us by contacting Pat Bartee, Stephen Leader, or Shari.



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: Bob Addison, Carolyn Bowen, Sarah Chalpan, Allison Eustis, Gerald Fudge, Lorry Clark, Malinda Holmes, Penny Kiel, Megan Kendall, Marion Satterfield, and the Interim Pastor Nominating Committee, Los Niños Primero, Clifton Sanctuary, Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia.

Attendance 8/31: Sanctuary: 57 Online: 19

Dates for your calendar:

September 14 Small Groups begin

September 14 Foundation Lunch, Fox Bros. BBQ

September 28 Outdoor Service, Blessing of the Animals

October 19 Pumpkin Palooza

Financial Update

As of August 31	Actual YTD	2025 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 381,196	\$500,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 52,252	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 5,399	\$ 26,000
Total	\$438,847	\$ 586,000

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



**Announcement for Called Congregational Meeting
September 28, 2025**

There will be a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, September 28, 2025, immediately following the worship service in the sanctuary for the purpose of conducting the following business:

- Receive the report of the Nominating Committee of new elders to be elected by the congregation to begin service on Session beginning with ordination and installation in January 2026, (requires a vote by the congregation)
- Receive changes to the Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church By-Laws recommended by the Session. The changes requested by the Session are:
 - ◇ Replace the old mission statement with the new mission statement
 - ◇ Change the number of Sundays required for notification of a called congregational meeting from four Sundays to two. (requires a vote by the congregation)