



MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

EPIPHANY

JANUARY 4, 2026 • 10:30 AM

Reaching Out to ... Welcome. Worship. Share. Serve.

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



GATHERING

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHALKING THE DOOR

Holy God, you have led many people to these doors. Some from near, some from far. Some with immediate needs, some with precious gifts. Some full of questions, some full of knowing. We ask your blessing on all who come to these doors this year. May all find welcome and community here. May all bring with them peace and joy, and may all go out with love and compassion to share. May these marks we make today be an invitation for all who are led here this year, and a constant prayer for the nourishment and safety of this sanctuary. Amen.

GATHERING MUSIC

“Let There be Peace on Earth”

Rev. Jonathan Freeman

Mike & Kathy Havey

Words & Music by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Kate Colussy-Estes

OPENING PRAYER

† CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Shari Freeman

ONE: In the dark morning,

ALL: the stars will shine.

ONE: In the depth of winter,

ALL: the birds still climb.

ONE: At the start of the year, tender and new,

ALL: God is here. God is near.

ONE: Do not rest in your fear.

ALL: God is here.

ONE: So like the stars and the birds,

ALL: Let us worship our God!

† OPENING HYMN (#66)

"We Three Kings of Orient Are"

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Shari Freeman

Ever-loving God, we long for Christmas to usher in a season of peace and joy. However, we know that is not how the world works. Even just days after Christmas, we find ourselves face to face with fear once again.

So today we pray—

forgive us when we allow fear to stop us in our tracks. Forgive us when our own fear prevents us from following your call. Forgive us when fear is louder than love. Show us how to turn our fear into action. Show us how to live like the magi who searched for you in a fearful world. With hope we pray ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: Family of Faith, whether you are brave and courageous or fearful and timid, God's love for you knows no end. So join me in these words of forgiveness:

ALL: Whether fear inspires us to action, or stops us dead in our tracks, God's love for us is boundless. We are seen. We are surrounded with grace. We are sent to serve. Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE (#411, v.1)

"Arise, Your Light Is Come!"

Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
Show forth the glory of your God, Which shines on you today.

Words: Ruth Duck. Music: William H. Walter

CHILDREN'S MOMENT

(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

Guy Lever

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 60:1-6
Matthew 2:1-12

Rev. Colussy-Estes

SERMON

“Fear Doesn’t Stop Us”

RESPONSE

† HYMN (#50)

“Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow”

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*A Sanctified Art*)

We have seen the valley. We have seen a sky without stars. We have seen the longest night, and *still we believe*. We believe in a with-us God. We believe in the hope of tomorrow. We believe that good news is louder than fear. We believe this good news is for all people. So even when our knees shake, even when our voice trembles, even when fear is all around us, we will hold onto that good news. We will reach for each other. We will look for God in our midst. We will sing songs of joy.

We will proclaim:

Unto us, love is born. We have seen the longest night, and we have seen unimaginable love. So still, we believe. Amen.

OFFERTORY

“Adoration of the Magi”

Kathy Havey, Soprano

Words: Harry Robert Wilson. Music: Miklos Rozsa

† DOXOLOGY

“Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow”

Praise God, from whom all bless-ings flow; praise Christ, all
 peo - ple here be - low; praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er -
 more; praise Tri - une God, whom we a - dore.

† PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Guy Lever

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

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.

Rev. Kate Colussy-Estes

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

Rev. Shari Freeman

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

DISTRIBUTION OF STAR WORDS

COMMUNION MUSIC

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

SENDING

† CLOSING HYMN (#56)

“The First Nowell”

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Colussy-Estes

POSTLUDE

“Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring”

arr. Diane Bish

(The primary role of a postlude is to provide a musical transition, connecting the sacred worship experience to the secular world as people leave the church. Feel free to depart during the postlude, or hang around and hear the grand Mount Vernon organ!)

Leading Today's Worship Service

Rev. Kate Colussy-Estes, Interim Senior Pastor

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt, Associate Pastor

Rev. Shari Freeman, Associate Pastor

Jill Hudson, Music Director & Organist

Rev. Jonathan Freeman, Contemporary Musician

Chancel Choir

The artwork we will be using during Advent is
from *A Sanctified Art*

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified
Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

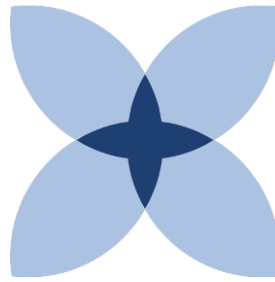
We are located at:
471 Mount Vernon Hwy., NE
Sandy Springs, GA 30328



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

Upcoming Services/Events:



January 11 Baptism of the Lord, Matthew 3:13-27, Rev. Kate Colussy-Estes

January 18 John 1:29-42, Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

Star Words: Please pick up a word when you come forward for communion.



Lunch Bunch: Join us **next** Sunday, January 11 at City BBQ after worship.



The January Communion Offering is for the Food Pantries at 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.



Presbyterian Women: The **Day Circle** will meet on Tuesday, January 13. Jeanne Gilliland will teach lesson 5: *The Gift of the Woman Who Was Poor*. The **Book Circle** will meet on Friday, January 9. Ann Williams will lead a review of *Still Life* (Mystery Fiction) by Louise Penny. **Circle of Grace:** please email Lisa Cumming at lisa.j.cumming@gmail.com if you would like to join our group of women who get together multiple times a year for fellowship and a devotional.



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.

January 4, 2026



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 using a video curriculum about "The Historical Jesus", led by Prof. Bart Ehrman, North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Both classes meet at 9:30 a.m. Contact Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt for more information.



Stephen Ministry: A new year is arriving with new possibility. Stephen Ministry is here to help you walk through changes you want to make to unburden, to recharge, to jump-start, to get new perspective, or to re-create yourself after loss. Call Pat Bartee or 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: Bob Addison, Lorry Clark, Gloria Gillespie, Bruce Hagenau, Shelly Hines, Lois Johnson, Megan Kendall, Charlotte Mills, and ACE, CAC, Los Niños Primero, Clifton Sanctuary, Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia.

Christian Sympathy to the friends and family of Jeanne Gilliland on the death of her sister, Kay Wright on December 23.

Christian Sympathy to the friends and family of Philip and Nichol Jacobs on the death of Philip's father, James Jacobs on December 21. Nichol is one of our soloists in the choir and both of them provide music for our Taizé services.

Attendance 12/24: Sanctuary: 332 Online: 33
12/28: Sanctuary: 86 Online: 17

<u>Dates for your calendar:</u>	
January 19	Church office closed
January 25	Ordination & Installation of new Elders
February 18	Ash Wednesday

	<u>Financial Update</u>	
As of December 23	Actual YTD	2025 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 503,301	\$500,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 65,218	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 6,769	\$ 26,000
Total	\$575,288	\$ 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