

# MOUNT VERNON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

FEBRUARY 22, 2026 • 10:30 AM

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

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



*"Who Will You Listen To?" Digital Painting by Lauren Wright Pittman*

## GATHERING

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**GATHERING MUSIC**

**"Isaiah 43"**

Rev. Jonathan Freeman & Nichol Jacobs

*Words & Music: Billy Sprague*

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Rev. Kate Colussy-Estes

**OPENING PRAYER**

† **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt

ONE: Listen!

**ALL: There is hope to be found here.**

ONE: Listen!

**ALL: God calls you by name here.**

ONE: Listen!

**ALL: There is love that abides here.**

ONE: This world is full of chatter, so may we do our best to listen.

**ALL: God is speaking.**

ONE: Let us worship.

**ALL: Amen.**

† OPENING HYMN (#81)

“Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days”

† PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Toney-Schmitt

Holy God, too often we treat your Word like a radio station—something we can tune in and out of when it’s convenient. Our minds are full of ads, emails, news updates, and notifications. In the midst of this clutter, we tend to gravitate toward the voices that think like us—easily ignoring the voices being silenced, easily ignoring your voice. Forgive us for failing to listen. Forgive us for getting caught in distractions. Forgive us for forgetting what your voice sounds like. Drain the distractions from our minds and help us turn once again toward you. With earnest hearts we pray ... *(silent confession)* ... Amen.

† ASSURANCE OF PARDON

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

ALL: Thanks be to God.

† RESPONSE (#333)

“Seek Ye First”

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness,

And all these things shall be added unto you.

Allelu, allelulia!

Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek and you shall find,

Knock and the door shall be opened unto you.

Allelu, alleluia!

*Text & Music: Karen Lafferty ©1972, Maranatha! Music*

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

Sam McClurg

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

Matthew 4:1-11

Rev. Colussy-Estes

SERMON

“Who Will You Listen To?”

## RESPONSE

† HYMN (*see insert*)

**“When We Are Tested”**

† AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (*The Theological Declaration of Barmen, 8.22-8.25*)

Rev. Shari Freeman

**“Fear God. Honor the emperor.” (I Peter 2:17.)**

Scripture tells us that, in the as yet unredeemed world in which the Church also exists, the State has by divine appointment the task of providing for justice and peace. (It fulfills this task) by means of the threat and exercise of force, according to the measure of human judgment and human ability. The church acknowledges the benefit of this divine appointment in gratitude and reverence before him. It calls to mind the Kingdom of God, God’s commandment and righteousness, and thereby the responsibility both of rulers and of the ruled. It trusts and obeys the power of the Word by which God upholds all things.

We reject the false doctrine, as though the State, over and beyond its special commission, should and could become the single and totalitarian order of human life, thus fulfilling the church’s vocation as well.

We reject the false doctrine, as though the church, over and beyond its special commission, should and could appropriate the characteristics, the tasks, and the dignity of the State, thus itself becoming an organ of the State.

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE & 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.

OFFERTORY

**“Be Not Afraid”**

Chancel Choir  
*by: Craig Courtney*

*(If you would like to contribute financially to Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church or its mission, ushers will be stationed at the doors of the narthex to accept your gifts.)*

† DOXOLOGY (2x)

**“God Welcomes All”**

God welcomes all, strangers and friends;  
God’s love is strong and it never ends.

† PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Sam McClurg

## SENDING

† CLOSING HYMN (#80) "Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley"

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Colussy-Estes

POSTLUDE

"Prelude in D Minor"

*by: JS Bach*

### 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**

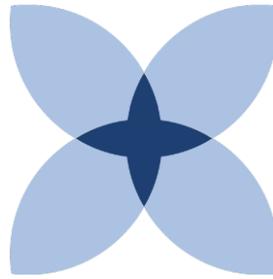
We are located at:  
471 Mount Vernon Hwy., NE  
Sandy Springs, GA 30328



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:



- February 22** Book Soring, 4pm in Gailey Hall  
Small Groups Begin, 5pm
- February 24** Taizé, 7pm in the Sanctuary
- March 1** "How do we begin again?", John 3:1-17, Rev. Isaac Toney-Schmitt
- March 8** "Will you give me a drink?", John 4:5-42, Rev. Shari Freeman

**Spring Small Groups** begin today February 22 and end on March 29! Sign-ups and devotionals are available in the narthex before and after worship. This season we plan to have three different small groups : a group that meets on the church campus, a group that meets in a home, and a group catered to young adults. All three groups will use the same devotional titled *Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith*. The scripture passages and questions in the devotional will pair with the scripture and questions focused on in worship. Join us for a deeper dive into our faith!

**The February Communion Offering** is for the Clifton Night Shelter. Clifton Sanctuary Ministry provides a transformational experience for homeless men through comprehensive life skills training, purposeful and assertive case management, collaborative community partnerships, and dedicated volunteers. For more information, please go to [www.cliftonsanctuary.com](http://www.cliftonsanctuary.com).

**Senior Water Color Class:** Join us on February 25 from 1-4pm in Gailey Hall.

**Annual Congregational Meeting:** Sunday, March 8

**Worship Note:** For the next few weeks we will be using sections from the *Theological Declaration of Barmen*. Written by a group of church leaders in Germany to help Christians withstand the challenges of the Nazi party. While some churches took the union of Christianity, nationalism and militarism for granted, others resisted. Among those determined leaders were Hans Amussen, Karl Koch, Karl Iraruer, Martin Niemoller (author of the *First They Came* poem) and theologian Karl Barth. The declaration contains six propositions, each quoting from Scripture, stating the implications of the day and rejecting false doctrine. The declaration proclaims the church's freedom in Jesus Christ who is Lord of every area of life. The church obeys him as God's one and only Word who determines its order, ministry and relation to the state.

SMALL  
GROUPS

CLIFTON  
SANCTUARY  
MINISTRIES



ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING

February 22, 2026



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

Giving



**Construction:** The City of Sandy Springs will be working on our entrance on the Johnson Ferry side for the next several weeks. We advise you to enter/exit the parking lot on the Mount Vernon side.



**Presbyterian Women:** The **Day Circle** will meet on March 10. Barbara Brooks will teach Lesson 7: *The Woman Who Was Bent Over*. The **Book Circle** will meet on March 13. Sarah Chalpan will lead a review of *The Frozen River* (historical mystery, biographical fiction). **Circle of Grace's spring schedule:** March 8 at Meg Christian's home, April 19, at Debbie Barcliff's home, May 3 at Dale Morine's home. Please email Lisa Cumming at [lisa.j.cumming@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.j.cumming@gmail.com) if you questions.



**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.



**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:** Stephen Ministers take this verse from Galatians 6:3 to heart and are continually honing their relational skills beyond the required training. They are inspired to be able to truly listen and hear, to find strategies that lift and promote growth, and to enrich their own spiritual lives so that God can be heard through them. It is a way these laypeople have chosen to be used by God. Please utilize them. 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 [barbara@babrooks.com](mailto:barbara@babrooks.com) or call her at 404.422.5175.

**Prayer Concerns:** Carol Beckman, Susan Fields, Bruce Hagenau, George Hammett, Lois Johnson, Megan Kendall, Kathryn Mackie, Jay & Amy McCord, Una Milne, Judith Roe, our homebound & isolated members, ACE, CAC, Los Niños Primero, Clifton Sanctuary, Israel/Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, and Zambia.

**Attendance 2/15:** Sanctuary: 64 Online: 28

**\*\*\* All 2025 Giving Statements were emailed January 31, 2026**

*If you would like to contribute financially to Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church or its mission, offering plates are in the Narthex.*

<u>Financial Update</u>		
As of February 19	Actual YTD	2026 Budget
Pledge Member Giving	\$ 116,797	\$460,000
Member Giving Non-Pledge	\$ 17,137	\$ 60,000
Non-Member Giving & Loose Offering	\$ 443	\$ 7,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 134,377</b>	<b>\$ 527,500</b>

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](mailto:debbie@mvpchurch.org)