



*Grounded in the grace of God,
we are a vibrant Christian community,
disciples of all ages, gathered for worship and nurture,
scattered to serve and to love.*
MPC Mission Statement adopted by the Session March 31, 2008

WORSHIP for THIRD SUNDAY
of ADVENT
DECEMBER 17, 2023

GATHERING

PRELUDE — *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus* - David Cherwien

Yun Kang

WORDS of WELCOME

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

LIGHTING of the ADVENT CANDLES - Hymn 90

DiTulio & Ellis Families

*Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.
Wait for the Lord; be strong; take heart!*

CALL to WORSHIP

Pastor Rachel Rhodes

One: Keep watch!

All: For the One who brings peace is coming.

One: As we wait in anticipation for Christ,

All: We wait for God's revealing joy.

One: Love is coming to dwell among us,

All: Hope draws closer to our hearts.

One: Remain alert, for the world is about to turn.

All: Let us worship God together!

HYMN — *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

1,2,6,7

VENI EMMANUEL

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
the mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show; teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Adrienne Poissant, Pastoral Intern

O God, giver of all good gifts, we come before you as children in need of your wisdom and grace. Our fears and our hopes are braided together in the rhythm of daily life. Our visions of the future depend on our own hands and abilities. Our expectations remain reasonable and within our control. Break into this tangle of fear and hope, bringing peace to our souls. Break into our vision of the future, returning us to your hands. Break into our expectations, awakening us with curiosity and wonder; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

SILENT PRAYERS of CONFESSION *Here each worshiper may offer silent prayers of confession.*

PROMISE of FORGIVENESS

One: God is greater than anything we could ever imagine. God brings beauty out of chaos, reconciliation out of conflict, and life out of death. Trust in the good news of God that we celebrate this season in the gift of Jesus Christ: even now, God is with us! Together let us proclaim the good news of the gospel:

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen!

RESPONSE to GOD'S GRACE — *Glory to the Father*

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

L I T U R G Y o f t h e W O R D

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING — *Psalm 126*

One: When the Lord restored the virtues of Zion, we were like those who dream.

All: Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;

One: Then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

All: The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

One: Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.

All: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

One: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,

All: Shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

ANTHEM — *The Angel Gabriel* - Basque carol, arr. Robert Ross

Chancel Choir

*The angel Gabriel from heaven came,
His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame,
All hail, said he, thou lowly maiden Mary!
Most highly favored Lady, Gloria!*

*For know a blessed mother thou shalt be,
All generations laud and honor thee,
Thy son shall be Emmanuel by seers foretold,
Most highly favored Lady, Gloria!*

*Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head,
"To me be as it pleaseth God," she said,
"my soul shall laud and magnify his holy Name."
Most highly favored Lady, Gloria!*

*Of her, Emmanuel, the Christ, was born
in Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
and Christian folk throughout the world will ever say,
Most highly favored Lady, Gloria!*

--Basque carol, trans. Sabine Baring-Gould

TIME for YOUNG DISCIPLES

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING — *Luke 1:46-55*

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name; indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

The World is About to Turn

Pastor Lester-Abdalla

*My soul gives glory to my God;
my heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness
in many marvelous ways.*

*My God has done great things for me:
yes, holy is God's name.
All people will declare me blessed,
and blessings they shall claim.*

*From age to age to all who fear,
such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near,
dismissing selfish hearts.*

*Love casts the mighty from their thrones,
promotes the insecure,
leaves hungry spirits satisfied;
the rich seem suddenly poor.*

*Praise God, whose loving covenant
supports those in distress,
remembering past promises
with present faithfulness.*

AFFIRMATION of FAITH — from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

We trust in God the Holy Spirit everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls people to all ministries of the Church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God's new heaven and new earth, praying, "Come, Lord Jesus!"

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.

OFFERING

Invitation to Give

Offertory Music — *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* - James MacMillan

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.*

Song Trio
OLD HUNDREDTH

S E N D I N G

HYMN — *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout*

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

*My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?*

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.*

*Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn.*

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.*

*From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice tears every tyrant from his throne.*

*The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn.
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.*

*Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around.*

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn.*

CHARGE and BLESSING

BENEDICTION RESPONSE — *Oh Hear Our Cry, O Lord* - Richard Dirksen

O come; Lord, come; restore and save us now.

POSTLUDE — *Lift Up Your Head* - David Cherwien

ANNOUNCEMENTS

****Please note all announcements for Sunday bulletins are due by noon the Tuesday before they are to be published. Please email announcements to Bulletin@MPCusa.net.***

TODAY'S CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel Flowers are offered to the glory of God and are given by the Moyer family in fond and loving memory of John C. Moyer, "We miss you!" The second arrangement is given in loving memory of Wende by Tim, Emily, Abby, and Caroline Stover.

CONTINUING TODAY, ADVENT SERMON SERIES - "WHILE WE WAIT"

Advent is a season of waiting. We wait for the celebration of the birth of Jesus at Christmas. We wait expectantly for Christ's return to fully bring God's healing rule and reign in our world. And, of course, our lives are filled with waiting: waiting in line, waiting to graduate, waiting for the test results, waiting for an apology, waiting for a promotion. It's easy to see these moments or seasons of waiting as frivolous and unhelpful, getting in the way of what REALLY needs to be done. But Advent is a reminder that God is always at work in the waiting. That in the waiting we have an opportunity to be shaped more and more into the people God wants us to be. How can we be open to what God is doing in our lives while we wait? Join us this Advent as we seek to open our hearts to God's work in the waiting, and look and listen for God's call.

DECEMBER'S FOOD CENTER REQUEST

December's food item request for the Food Center is canned beans. A shopping cart has been put in the Welcome Center to receive your generous donations. Thank you!

LAST CHANCE TO JOIN FAMILY CHOIR FOR CHRISTMAS EVE!

Today is the last day to join to be a part of the Family Choir at the 7:00 p.m. service on Christmas Eve. Anyone from grade 5 to college students to young adults to older adults are welcome to be part of this. Your family can be your biological, adopted, chosen or church family.

Rehearsals are for a half hour immediately after worship in the Sanctuary. You will get your music at rehearsal. Hope to see you there!

TODAY AT 4:00 P.M., ALL-CHURCH CHRISTMAS CAROLING!

Everyone is welcome to join the Youth Ministry as we host a fun evening of caroling around the MPC neighborhoods. We will meet in the church parking lot at 4:00 p.m. and depart on foot for an hour of festive caroling. Please dress for the weather and be prepared to walk about one mile. We will return to the church parking lot to enjoy hot chocolate and Christmas cookies around a warm fire. No RSVP is needed.

CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE

It's that time of year again! Our Angel Tree will be displayed in the Welcome Center beginning November 26. We will provide toiletry bags for the many individuals we serve each week at the Food Center from lower Bucks County and greater Trenton areas. Anyone interested in participating in this ministry is asked to please take a white angel from the tree and fill a one-gallon Ziplock bag (provided) with the following items:

- 2 toothpastes (regular size)
- 2 toothbrushes
- 2 bars of wrapped soap (neutral scent)
- 2 deodorants (neutral scent)

This year, you will also find red and green angels on the tree for those who prefer to make a check or cash donation. Please know that the toiletries bag is preferable. Checks can be made out to The Food Center at MPC and we ask that those donations be placed in the morning offering plate or mailed to the church office.

A "blessing" from MPC is printed on one side of each angel; the items list is printed on the other side. Please include the angel in each Ziplock bag along with the items. We know how generous our congregation is! We ask, however, that you not include extra items in the bag. Instead, perhaps fill another bag.

Bags can be dropped off Monday nights from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Tuesday mornings from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. or before/after the Sunday worship service in the box marked "Angel Tree" in the Welcome Center. All bags need to be delivered no later than December 26 for distribution to our Food Center clients beginning in the New Year! We are so grateful and thankful to all of you for all you do each year to make our Christmas Angel Tree such a success!

HOLIDAY LIGHT SHOW & BONFIRE

All are welcome to join your friends of MPC at Shady Book Farm on Wednesday, December 27 at 5:00 p.m. for a private wagon ride for MPC through the festive light show. Afterwards, join everyone for hotdogs, s'mores, hot cocoa and hot cider around a roaring bonfire. A free-will offering will be accepted at the bonfire. To reserve your space, please RSVP to Nancy McHenry at nancymchenry5@gmail.com. Shady Brook Farm is located at 931 Stony Hill Rd., Yardley, PA.

WORSHIP BACKPACK DONATIONS NEEDED!

We are excited to announce we are revising our Worship Backpacks – but we need your help! If you have any fidget toys or supplies for arts and crafts lying around that you would like to donate, we are happy to accept them. There will be a collection bin outside of the Sanctuary on Sundays for you to place them in. Thank you in advance for your consideration and contribution!

ADULT EDUCATION FOR JANUARY

Jerusalem is the most religious city in the world for Judaism and Christianity. It is mentioned 667 times in the Old Testament and 139 times in the New. It is also significant in Islam. Come and learn the reasons for the city's religious significance and why it is considered to have been, and still is, one of the most controversial cities in the world. The three-Sunday course begins on January 7 and concludes on January 21. They will consist of stand-alone sessions on 1) Early Settlement and the City of David, 2) The City During the Time of Jesus, and 3) The City Since Jesus. Classes meet in the Conference Room located on the second floor.

YEAR END GIVING

Thank you for your continued generosity and support throughout this year. To ensure that your gifts appear on your 2023 Giving Statement for tax purposes, please make sure all gifts are post-marked, delivered to MPC, or given online by December 31, 2023.

A NEW RESOLUTION: SUPPORT OUR FLOWER MINISTRY IN 2024

Flowers donors are needed throughout the year; however, if you would like to give a chancel flower arrangement in January, please contact DeeAnn Martin at 215-493-3865 or email to deemar918@aol.com. Each arrangement is now \$35. This is a \$5 increase and the very first cost increase in over ten years! Flowers by Jennie Lynne has been most gracious to keep the pre-COVID pricing for several years, even as her costs increased. These flowers not only add beauty to our service but also serve as an outreach ministry to our church family. An arrangement may be given in memory of a loved one, in celebration of a special person or event, or in gratitude for a ministry or act of kindness.

2024 OFFERING ENVELOPES

Offering envelopes will be available in the Welcome Center starting today, Sunday, December 17. If you would like them mailed, please contact Laurie Jacobson at the church office at 215-295-4191 ext. 226 or lauriejacobson@mpcusa.org and she will send them to you. Please note that envelopes will not be given to those who have signed up for online giving.



Christmas Eve
at MPC


10:30 a.m. **7:00 p.m.**

Children & Family Service **Choirs, Carols, & Candlelight Service**


This service will be livestreamed.

Introducing mobile giving

iPhone



Android



Scan the appropriate QR code with your phone and find MPC by searching code 'FEDN99' or 'Morrisville Presbyterian Church'

Once set up, you can schedule recurring gifts or make one-time offerings with one click.

Need Help? email Office@mpcusa.org and ask that your questions be forwarded to the stewardship committee.

MPC's CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL & HONORARIUM GIFTS

The following opportunities are available for people desiring to give memorial or honorarium donations this season:

POINSETTIAS

Give the gift of Christmas cheer! Contributions toward poinsettias ensure that homebound members receive a poinsettia delivered to their home this Advent.

MPC MUSIC

Give the gift of music! Contributions to this fund help to supplement the music ministry program of the church. In the past, these funds have been used to invest in handbell equipment and guest musicians, as well as ensure that "Word in Music" Sundays and other special musical offerings are possible.

DEACONS' FOOD BASKETS

Give the gift of food where it's most needed! Several times each year, especially during holiday seasons, our deacons ensure that almost 100 food-insecure families are given the gift of groceries!

Please fill in the information below and return it with your check in the total amount of your selection(s).

GIVE A GIFT THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

Given by: _____

Phone: _____

I/We wish to give the following gift(s) this Christmas season:

_____ Poinsettias: The gift of Christmas cheer!	Please find \$ _____ attached for this fund.
_____ Music Fund: The gift of music at MPC!	Please find \$ _____ attached for this fund.
_____ Deacons' Food Baskets: The gift of groceries!	Please find \$ _____ attached for this fund.

TOTAL GIFT AMOUNT: \$ _____

*****Please print out the following exactly as you would like for it to be printed in the bulletin.*****

(Circle one) "In loving memory of" "In celebration of" "To give thanks for"

Please provide payment separate from your pledged giving.

Make checks payable to MPC with the type of gift noted on the memo line.

**In order to ensure inclusion in the bulletin,
this form must be returned to the church office by
Monday, December 18, 2023**



MPC Weekly Calendar

SUNDAY, December 17

Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m.	Sunday School for all ages	
10:00	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
10:30	Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:30	Worship Service	Livestream
11:30	Fellowship Time	Lounge
	Host: Worship Committee	
11:45	Family Choir	Music Room
4:00 p.m.	All Church Caroling	Fellowship Hall & Offsite

MONDAY, December 18

9:30 a.m.	Ivins Outreach Center	Lounge
5:30 p.m.	Food Packing	Food Center
6:00	Cub Scout Pack 3	Room 220
6:00	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
7:00	Boy Scout Troop 3	Fellowship Hall
7:00	Boy Scout Troop 3 Parent & Board Meeting	Chapel

TUESDAY, December 19

9:00 a.m.	Produce Prep	Food Center
6:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
6:30	Butterfly Essential Wellness Class	Room 220

WEDNESDAY, December 20

9:00 a.m.	Food Center Distribution	Parking Lot
12:30 p.m.	Clothing Center Drop-off	Room 4
6:00	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
6:00	Cub Scout Pack 3	Room 220

THURSDAY, December 21

10:00 a.m.	Clothing Center	Room 4
11:00	Ivins Outreach Center	Lounge
6:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
7:00	Chancel Choir	Music Room

FRIDAY, December 22

6:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
6:30	AA Meeting	Lounge

SATURDAY, December 23

9:00 a.m.	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
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SUNDAY, December 24

Christmas Eve

10:00 a.m.	Boy Scout Christmas Tree Sale	Parking Lot
10:30	Children & Family Worship Service	Sanctuary & Livestream
11:45	Family Choir	Music Room
7:00 p.m.	Carols, Choir, & Candlelight Service	Sanctuary & Livestream

To view upcoming events and meetings, please visit www.mpcusa.org and click on "Calendar" from the home page.

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