



*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 JANUARY 29, 2023
FOURTH SUNDAY
after the EPIPHANY

GATHERING

PRELUDE — *God of Grace* - Paul Manz

Yun Kang

CHORAL INTROIT — *God Welcomes All*

Chancel Choir

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

CALL to WORSHIP

Tori Paquette

One: Come, let us celebrate the forgiving, reconciling love of God.

All: For once we were lost and felt so far away; now we have been found and welcomed home.

One: Know that God's love is lavished upon you forever.

All: We rejoice at the news of forgiveness and hope!

One: Come, let us celebrate and praise the God of Love.

All: Let us shout with joy and let us worship God together!

HYMN — *God of the Sparrow* (verses 1, 3, 4, & 6)

ROEDER

*God of the sparrow God of the whale
God of the stars*

*How does the creature say Awe
How does the creature say Praise*

*God of the rainbow God of the cross
God the the empty grave*

*How does the creature say Grace
How does the creature say Thanks*

*God of the hungry God of the sick
God of the prodigal*

*How does the creature say Care
How does the creature say Life*

*God of the ages God near at hand
God of the loving heart*

*How do your children say Joy
How do your children say Home*

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

Merciful God, we confess that we have strayed from your ways. Like the Prodigal Son, we have wasted our inheritance. You gave us the earth for our home, but we squander earth's resources and hoard its bounty. You gave us neighbors to love, but we pursue selfish ambitions. You gave us the commandments that lead to human flourishing, but we break your law and forsake your love. Forgive us our sin and bring us to repentance. Draw our wandering hearts back to you that we may find freedom in obedience to your love.

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

PROMISE *of* FORGIVENESS

One: As a parent welcomes home a wayward child, so God embraces all who return in true repentance. 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.*

LITURGY *of* the WORD

PRAYER *for* ILLUMINATION

NEW TESTAMENT READING — *2 Corinthians 5:16-21*

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM — *Out of the Depths* - Luther/J.S. Bach/arr. T.R. Carpenter

*Out of the depths I cry to you; O Lord God, bear me calling.
Incline your ear to my distress in spite of my rebelling.
Do not regard my sinful deeds. Send me the grace my spirit needs;
Without it I am nothing.*

*In you alone, O God we hope, and not in our own merit.
We rest our fears in your good Word; uphold our fainting spirit.
Your promised mercy is my fort, my comfort, and my strong support..
I wait for it with patience.*

*My soul is waiting for you, Lord, as one who longs for morning;
No watcher waits with greater hope than I for your returning.
I hope, as Israel in the the Lord, who sends redemption through the Word.
Praise God for grace and mercy!*

— paraphrase of Psalm 130

TIME *for* YOUNG DISCIPLES

GOSPEL READING — *Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32*

Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable:

"There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to

one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, "How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Irresponsible Grace: When We're Lost and Don't Know It

Pastor Rachel Rhodes

HYMN — *Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling*

SOFTLY AND TENDERLY

*Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling, calling for you and for me.
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching, watching for you and for me.
"Come home, come home! You who are weary, come home."
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, "O sinner, come home!"
Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading, pleading for you and for me?
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies, mercies for you and for me?
"Come home, come home! You who are weary, come home."
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, "O sinner, come home!"
O for the wonderful love he has promised, promised for you and for me!
Though we have sinned, be has mercy and pardon, pardon for you and for me.
"Come home, come home! You who are weary, come home."
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling, calling, "O sinner, come home!"*

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

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal. With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYERS *of* THANKSGIVING *and* SUPPLICATION

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 — *In the Garden* - Charles Miles

Doxology — *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

OLD HUNDREDTH

*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.*

Prayer of Dedication

S E N D I N G

HYMN — *Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy*

RESTORATION

*Come, ye sinners, poor and needy, weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you, full of pity, love and power.
I will arise and go to Jesus: he will embrace me in his arms.
In the arms of my dear Savior, O there are ten thousand charms.*

*Come, ye thirsty, come, and welcome; God's free bounty glorify,
true belief and true repentance, every grace that brings you nigh.
I will arise and go to Jesus: he will embrace me in his arms.
In the arms of my dear Savior, O there are ten thousand charms.*

*Come, ye weary, heavy laden, lost and ruined by the fall;
if you tarry till you're better, you will never come at all.
I will arise and go to Jesus: he will embrace me in his arms.
In the arms of my dear Savior, O there are ten thousand charms.*

*Let not conscience make you linger, nor of fitness fondly dream;
all the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of him.
I will arise and go to Jesus: he will embrace me in his arms.
In the arms of my dear Savior, O there are ten thousand charms.*

CHARGE *and* BLESSING

CHORAL RESPONSE — *Amen*

POSTLUDE — *Praise the Lord with Drums and Cymbals* - Sigfrid Karg-Elert

QUESTION *for* REFLECTION

- How might Jesus be calling you to live differently today?

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.***

NEW SERMON SERIES: *IRRESPONSIBLE GRACE*

In the thick of New Year's resolutions and a society that is always pushing us toward competition and self-improvement, Jesus calls us to reorient our hearts and minds and remember the astounding grace of God, a grace that we do not earn or deserve, but rather a grace offered freely and in great abundance. Join us in the new year as we dive into the parables of Jesus, and through them explore the unbelievable, unparalleled, and perhaps even irresponsible grace of God.

During Sunday School, join Adult Education as we dive into the parables of Jesus during our *Irresponsible Grace* series. Pastor Alex will lead us in a four-week study on the texts that will be preached that day. We hope you will come for Spirit-filled conversation from 9:30 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. in the conference room.

TODAY'S CHANCEL FLOWERS

The chancel flowers are offered to the glory of God and are given by Clark and DeeAnn Martin in loving memory of our son, Timothy. The second arrangement is given by the women of our MPC Presbyterian Women's Board to celebrate the 100th birthday (January 25) of Marion Rea and to honor her many years serving on this board and being a wonderful role model for our women: Marion is truly a woman whose faith has guided her life and we are so blessed to have shared her friendship and her gentle wisdom.

NEW ADULT ED CLASS - *GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT/HEBREW BIBLE*

Come join Adult Education with intern Tori Paquette to get a new glimpse of God in the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible! Often folks feel like God in these earlier writings is a different God than the one we know in the New Testament, yet we believe this God is the same God now and forever. This three-week session will help us flesh out God's character and personality in the Old Testament with fresh eyes. We will be meeting in the Conference Room on Sundays, February 5, 12, and 19 at 9:30 a.m.

NEW YEAR, NEW BIBLE STUDY!

Have you been considering joining Bible Study but haven't wanted to jump in midstream? Now is the perfect time to join us! **Each Wednesday at noon we'll be taking the plunge into the book of Revelation**, and we hope you'll consider joining us for this new adventure in the new year.

EVERYONE is welcome—this includes people who read the Bible and commentaries regularly, as well as people who don't even know what a commentary is. We are learning and growing together and we have a lot of fun doing it! Our Bible Study meets every Wednesday from noon-1:00 p.m. over Zoom so that anyone can join us—from home, from work, from across the country! We hope you'll make this part of your New Year's resolution and carve out a part of your week to study God's word among friends.

Following our Bible Study each week, folks are also welcome to stay for our weekly prayer meeting that meets for about 15-20 minutes. If you would like to attend Brown Bag & Bible Study (or are at least interested enough to check it out for a couple of weeks), please contact Pastor Rachel at rachelrhodes@mpcusa.net. We'd love to have you!

WEEKDAY NURSERY SCHOOL OPEN HOUSES

MPC Weekday Nursery School is enrolling for the 2023-2024 school year now. The nursery school serves children aged 2.7-4 years old. Please join us at one of our Open Houses to learn what we are all about on February 1 from 2:45-4:00 p.m.; March 16 from 6:00 p.m.-7:30 p.m.; and April 1 from 1:00 -3:00 p.m. Visit Weekdaynursery.org for more information!

MPC VOLUNTEER DAY FOR HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Saturday, February 11, has been designated as "MPC Volunteer Day" at the Habitat for Humanity's Hillcrest Avenue building site in Morrisville. Many more days will soon become available. Do you wish to volunteer for this date or perhaps an upcoming date? You may contact Ray Hendrickson at 215 495-3114 or at hrh1453@gmail.com. Habitat builds homes for the most deserving families and in so doing, provides an opportunity for faith groups and congregations to put their faith into action. Let's continue to make MPC one of those congregations. So, make it a fun day, grab a friend and "Habitat" for a day!

DICTIONARY DONATIONS UPDATE

This past week, our total of adult dictionaries passed the 25% milestone on our trek to collect 400 adult/family dictionaries for the Jefferson Intermediate School in Trenton. We have now received more than 100 dictionaries. They will be a resource for families for a lifetime. For more information on how you can help donate new and used dictionaries, please contact Susan Light at 215 801 8185. Thank you.

SUPPORT THE TRENTON AREA SOUP KITCHEN

MPC has supported the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen (TASK) substantially for years. TASK's mission is to feed those who are hungry in the Trenton area and to offer programs that encourage self-sufficiency and improve the quality of life. TASK is so much more than a soup kitchen! They serve nutritious meals, free of charge, no questions asked to anyone who comes seeking nourishment. They also provide education, job training and workforce development that empowers people to pursue their hopes and dreams; and provide case management, access to community resources, and assistance to help neighbors in need. Not only has MPC supported this organization financially, but prior to the pandemic, MPC volunteers travelled to Trenton to prepare meals and support for those in attendance. Might we continue this outreach, both financially and "hands-on"? Contact Ray Hendrickson at hrh1453@gmail.com for additional information or for volunteer opportunities. Visit trentonsoupkitchen.org for more information on TASK.

ONLINE FELLOWSHIP

Did you know that each Sunday afternoon starting at 12:30 p.m., several church members meet via Zoom to check in, share ideas and have a few laughs? We meet for about forty minutes, and you can log on when you are available. If you attend church remotely, are a snowbird and go to a warmer climate during the winter season, or want to share some fellowship time with welcoming and caring church members, please email Karla Jones at kmdjones@verizon.net of your interest. She will add you to the email listing to receive the Zoom link.

Introducing mobile giving


iPhone



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.

Android



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

Upcoming Worship Services



February 12

10:30 a.m.



February 19

10:30 a.m.



February 22

7:00 p.m.

MPC *Weekly Calendar*

SUNDAY, January 29

8:30 a.m.	God's Thunder Rehearsal	Chapel
9:30	Sunday School for all ages	
10:30	Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:30	Worship Service	Livestream
11:30	Fellowship Hour - Hosted by: Deacons	Lounge
11:45	Teen Choir Rehearsal	Music Room

MONDAY, January 30

6:00 p.m.	Cub Scout Pack 3	Room 220
6:30	Mostly Motets	Music Room
7:00	Boy Scout Troop 3	Fellowship Hall
7:00	Boy Scout Troop 3 Parent & Board Meeting	Lounge

TUESDAY, January 31

12:30 p.m.	Staff Meeting	Conference Room
6:00	Cub Scout Pack 3	Fellowship Hall

WEDNESDAY, February 1

9:00 a.m.	Food Center	Parking Lot
Noon	Brown Bag & Bible Study	Zoom
1:00 p.m.	Prayer Meeting	Zoom
2:30	Worship Committee	Zoom
6:00	Cub Scout Pack 3	Room 220
6:00	Youth Club	Fellowship Hall
7:00	Girl Scout Troop 2888	Room 220
7:15	Chancel Chimes	Chapel

THURSDAY, February 2

10:00 a.m.	Clothing Center	Room 4
6:00 p.m.	Oakville Girl Scouts	Fellowship Hall
7:00	Chancel Choir	Music Room

FRIDAY, February 3

6:30 p.m.	AA Meeting	Lounge
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SATURDAY, February 4

SUNDAY, February 5 - Scout Sunday

8:30 a.m.	God's Thunder Rehearsal	Chapel
9:30	Sunday School for all ages	
10:30	Worship Service	Sanctuary
10:30	Worship Service	Livestream
11:30	Fellowship Hour - Hosted by: Boy Scouts	Lounge
11:45	Teen Choir Rehearsal	Music Room
Noon	Deacon Meeting	Conference Room
2:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Banquet	Fellowship Hall

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

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