



*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 DECEMBER 11, 2022  
THIRD SUNDAY  
OF ADVENT

*Our liturgy today has been written by Pastor Rachel Rhodes as part of the Zick Preaching Scholars, joining with pastors from five other Presbyterian congregations to put together an Advent series for 2022.*

## GATHERING

**PRELUDE** — *Cradle Song* - Malcolm Archer

Yun Kang

### CALL to WORSHIP

Brown Bag & Bible Study

One: We are a people who walk in darkness.

**All: We long for Christ's light.**

One: We are a weary people.

**All: We long for a story filled with gladness.**

One: We are a people yearning for good news of great joy!

**All: Comfort us. Awaken us. Help us watch for the coming of Christ.**

**HYMN** — *Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

HYFRYDOL

*Come, thou long expected Jesus,  
born to set thy people free;  
from our fears and sins release us;  
let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation,  
hope of all the earth thou art;  
dear desire of every nation,  
joy of every longing heart.*

*Born thy people to deliver,  
born a child and yet a king,  
Born to reign in us forever,  
now thy gracious kingdom bring.  
By thine own eternal Spirit  
rule in all our hearts alone;  
By thine all sufficient merit  
raise us to thy glorious throne.*

### PRAYER of CONFESSION -

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

God of Advent Joy, we confess that in the race of this season, we often seek the latest gadget or fashion and dare to call it "joy". We look for "joy" in shopping malls and clearance bins, rather than seeking after the earth-melting, heart-molding, soul-transforming joy that YOU call us to experience in this life of discipleship. Forgive us, God of mercy. Astound us once again with your gladness. Restore to us the joy of your salvation. Empower us for the abundant life you yearn for us to know and live. Prepare our feet to walk in your way. Prepare our hearts to receive you.

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

### PROMISE of FORGIVENESS

One: People of God, the promise of the gospel is this: weeping may last for the night, but joy always comes in the morning. And so, with Advent joy, let us rest in the assurance of God's grace and together 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

Tori Paquette

### OLD TESTAMENT READING — *Isaiah 35:1-10*

One: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

All: **Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, 'Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God.**

One: He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.

All: **For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.**

One: A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there.

All: **And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.**

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

### ANTHEM — *E'en so, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come - Paul Manz*

Chancel Choir

*Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sins,  
Who loved us all and shed his blood that we might be saved.  
Sing Holy, Holy to our Lord the Lord, Almighty God who was, and is, and is to come.  
Sing Holy, Holy Lord. Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell within  
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below for Christ is coming, is coming soon.  
E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come and night shall be no more  
They need no light nor lamp nor sun, for Christ will be their All!*

--adapted from Revelation 22 by Ruth Manz

### TIME for YOUNG DISCIPLES

### GOSPEL READING — *Luke 3:7-18*

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

One: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

## SERMON

*Hope in the Doing*

Pastor Rachel Rhodes

## HYMN — *Guide My Feet*

GUIDE MY FEET

*Guide my feet while I run this race;  
guide my feet while I run this race;  
guide my feet while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!*

*Hold my hand while I run this race;  
hold my hand while I run this race;  
hold my hand while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!*

*Stand by me while I run this race;  
stand by me while I run this race;  
stand by me while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!*

*I'm your child while I run this race;  
I'm your child while I run this race;  
I'm your child while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!*

*Search my heart while I run this race;  
search my heart while I run this race;  
search my heart while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!*

*Guide my feet while I run this race;  
guide my feet while I run this race;  
guide my feet while I run this race,  
for I don't want to run this race in vain!*

## AFFIRMATION of FAITH — written by Rev. Teri Peterson, the Presbyterian Church of Palatine, IL

We trust God, whose Love and Justice are revealed over and over through creation, community, and story, through the voices of prophets and the lives of ordinary people, through a helpless newborn baby.

We trust Jesus the Christ, embodiment of God's word, born a refugee, raised in poverty, dependent on the kindness of others. His obedience to God's call brought him together with the most unlikely characters, and his insistence on God's radical love for all led him to the cross.

Yet God's love was more powerful than human force, and on the third day love walked out of the tomb, alive and free in the world.

We trust the Holy Spirit, breath of all life, who blows where she will, calling us to the same path Jesus walked, and leading us all in the holy dance of life in the kingdom of God.

Even as days grow dark, even in the midst of uncertainty, even now: the fire of God's love burns bright, the wind of the spirit cannot be contained, streams of living water flow in the desert, and all earth cries glory, as we wait the dawn of God's new day.

## 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 — *O Little Town of Bethlehem* - Lewis Redner

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** — *Today We All Are Called to Be Disciples*

KINGSFOLD

*Today we all are called to be disciples of the Lord,  
to help to set the captive free, make plowshare out of sword,  
to feed the hungry, quench their thirst, make love and peace our fast,  
to serve the poor and homeless first, our ease and comfort last.  
God made the world and at its birth ordained our human race  
to live as stewards of the earth, responding to God's grace.  
But we are vain and sadly proud; we sow not peace but strife.  
Our discord spreads a deadly cloud that threatens all of life.  
Pray justice may come rolling down as in a mighty stream,  
with righteousness in field and town to cleanse us and redeem.  
For God is longing to restore an earth where conflicts cease,  
a world that was created for a harmony of peace.  
May we in service to our God act out the living word,  
and walk the road the saints have trod till all have seen and heard.  
As stewards of the earth may we give thanks in one accord  
to God who calls us all to be disciples of the Lord.*

### CHARGE *and* BLESSING

**CHORAL BENEDICTION** — *Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burnin' for the Day is Drawing Nigh*

Traditional spiritual arranged by Kirby Shaw

*Children, don't get weary till your work is done.*

*Keep your lamps trimmed and burnin' for the day is drawing nigh.*

**POSTLUDE** — *Now Sing We, Now Rejoice* - Paul Manz

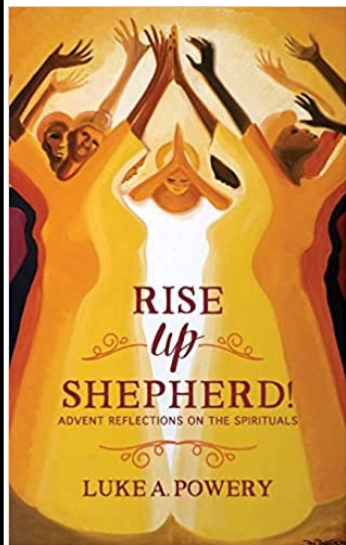
### QUESTION *for* REFLECTION

- What concrete action do you need to take in the world to live out your baptism more fully?

## ***New Sermon Series for Advent***

### ***Rise Up Shepherd!***

We have a unique opportunity this Advent! As part of the Zick Preaching Scholars, Rachel has joined with pastors from five other Presbyterian congregations to put together an Advent series for 2022. These pastors serve congregations in California, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Wisconsin. Each of the pastors will be sharing in the planning and writing of liturgy for the Sundays, and the group has contracted the Rev. Dr. Luke Powery, Dean of the Chapel at Duke University, to provide a series of study videos that we will be incorporating into our Advent Adult Education Series. Additionally, we will be using Dr. Powery's Advent Devotional, *Rise Up Shepherd!: Advent Reflections on the Spirituals*, as a guide for personal spiritual reflection. Copies will be available in the Communication Center.



The Zick Preaching Scholars is a program sponsored by George and Cathy Manning in memory of her parents John and Mary Zick, longtime members of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City. The group is facilitated by former Fifth Avenue senior pastor, the Rev. Dr. Tom Tewell.

Members of this cohort include:

- The Rev. Dr. Jay Howell, Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, Tennessee
- The Rev. Dr. Andy Morgan, Fountain City Presbyterian Church, Knoxville, Tennessee
- The Rev. Dr. Jessica Patchett, Christ Presbyterian Church, Madison, Wisconsin
- The Rev. Rachel Achtemeier Rhodes, Morrisville Presbyterian Church, Morrisville, Pennsylvania
- The Rev. Jessica Vaughan-Lower, San Marino Community Church, San Marino, California
- The Rev. Andrew Whaley, Raleigh Court Presbyterian Church, Roanoke, Virginia

## **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](mailto:Bulletin@MPCusa.net).***

### **TODAY'S CHANCEL FLOWERS**

The chancel flowers are offered to the glory of God and are given in loving memory of Wende by Tim, Emily, Abby and Caroline Stover. The second arrangement is given in gratitude for the many ministries of MPC that have served our church family and our community with such dedication and caring throughout this past year.

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL & CHILDCARE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE**

There will be no Sunday School for all groups on December 25 and January 1, 2023.

The Nursery will be open on both Christmas Day and New Years Day for parents to utilize if needed. No childcare staff will be provided.

### **FELLOWSHIP HOUR RETURNS**

Fellowship Hour returns today, and is hosted by the Deacons. Please come, visit, enjoy a light snack, and stop by to hear and learn more about our host group.

### **ALL-CHURCH CHRISTMAS CAROLING - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18, 4:00 - 6:00 P.M.**

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.

### **REBECCA CIRCLE MEETS TOMORROW!**

All women of MPC are invited to come to Rebecca Circle tomorrow, Monday, December 13, at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. We will enjoy a Christmas Reflection, make a craft and share some dessert. Bring a friend! For info contact Jen Jones at 215 962-3655.

## **CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE**

The Deacons are happy to announce we will be bringing back the Church Angel Tree for the Christmas Holiday! We are once again working with the Food Center to prepare toiletry bags for the many individuals we serve each week from the Lower Bucks County and greater Trenton area. We are asking anyone interested in taking an Angel from the tree, to fill a one-gallon Ziplock bag with the following items:

- 2 Toothpastes (regular size)
- 2 Bars of Wrapped Soap (neutral scent)
- 2 Toothbrushes
- 2 Deodorants (neutral scent)

A "blessing" from MPC is printed on one side of each Angel, the item list printed on the other side. Please include the Angel in each Ziplock bag with the items. We know how generous our congregation is, and ask that you not include extra items; 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 Communication Center. We ask that all bags be delivered no later than December 27, for distribution to our Food Center clients beginning in the New Year! We are so grateful and thankful to all of you, and for all you do each year to make our Christmas Angel Tree such a success!

If you have any questions, please email Patti Sheffer at [patricia.sheffer@yahoo.com](mailto:patricia.sheffer@yahoo.com).




## **Christmas Joy Offering: Supporting Past, Present, and Future Leaders**


Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we turn our eyes to Bethlehem and celebrate the wondrous gift of Jesus Christ, our Savior. By giving to the [Christmas Joy Offering](#), you honor this gift by providing assistance to current and retired church workers in their time of need and developing our future leaders at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Specifically,

- 50% of your gifts provide assistance for current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial need.
- 50% of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

This offering will be collected by December 18 through a check with "Christmas Joy Offering" written on the memo line, or through our [Online Giving Portal](#) on the MPC website with "Christmas Joy Offering" written in the Notes section. As always, thank you for your generous support to this special offering and others of the [PCUSA](#)!

**iPhone**  


**Introducing  
mobile giving**  
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](mailto:Office@mpcusa.org) and ask that your questions be forwarded to the stewardship committee.



### **FREE HOLIDAY CONCERT**

The [Philadelphia Bronze](#), a highly accomplished handbell choir playing 5 - 7 octaves of bells, will again present a concert in our sanctuary this Saturday, December 17, at 4:00 p.m. This concert is free and promises to be spectacular.

### **BOY SCOUT TROOP 3 CHRISTMAS TREE SALES, THE TRADITION CONTINUES!**

Troop 3's annual Christmas Tree sale has opened! We are thankful for each of you that has let our Scouts be part of your family's Christmas tradition, and look forward to welcoming you back this year. Sale hours are: weekdays 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., Saturdays 9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m., Sundays 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

### **CHANCEL FLOWERS NEEDED FOR JANUARY**

If you would like to give flowers on a Sunday in January, please contact DeeAnn Martin at 215-493-3865 or email [deemar918@aol.com](mailto:deemar918@aol.com). An arrangement costs \$30 and may be given in memory of a loved one, in celebration of a person or special event, or in gratitude for a ministry or act of kindness. Not only do these flowers add beauty to our worship service, but they also serve as an outreach ministry to our church family.

### **CLOTHING CENTER REQUEST**

The Clothing Center is requesting that until further notice, please hold any future donations until mid-January.

### **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](mailto:kmdjones@verizon.net) of your interest. She will add you to the email listing to receive the Zoom link.

### **DICTIONARIES AND THESAURUSES WANTED**

So far the Book Distribution has collected forty-nine hardcover and thirteen paperback adult dictionaries for the Jefferson Elementary School in Trenton. We will continue our Reference Book Drive until we have donated 400 adult dictionaries to the families whose children attend Jefferson. We are also collecting children's dictionaries and thesauruses for adults and children and have collected another sixty-six of these reference books. We appreciate MPC's generosity in donating reference books. Please consider asking your friends if they have extra reference books and if they would put a notice in their church's bulletin requesting dictionaries. Please contact Susan Light at 215 801 8185 for further information. 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 to 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](mailto:hrh1453@gmail.com) for additional information or for volunteer opportunities. Visit [trentonsoupkitchen.org](http://trentonsoupkitchen.org) for more information on TASK.

## **Christmas Eve Worship Services**



**4:00 p.m.**

Children & Family Service

**7:00 p.m.**

Choirs, Carols & Candlelight Service

*The 7:00 p.m. service will be livestreamed.*

**10:00 p.m.**

Carols, Communion, & Candlelight Service

**Then join us on Christmas Day at 10:30 a.m.  
as we celebrate the birth of our Lord.**

## MPC Weekly Calendar

### SUNDAY, December 11 - 3rd Sunday of Advent

|              |                            |                   |
|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 8:30 a.m.    | God's Thunder              | Chapel            |
| 9:30         | Sunday School for all ages |                   |
| 10:00        | Boy Scout Troop 3          | Parking Lot       |
|              | Christmas Tree Sales       |                   |
| <b>10:30</b> | <b>Worship Service</b>     | <b>Sanctuary</b>  |
| <b>10:30</b> | <b>Worship Service</b>     | <b>Livestream</b> |
| 11:30        | Fellowship Hour            | Lounge            |
|              | Host: Deacons              |                   |
| 11:45        | Family Choir Rehearsal     | Music Room        |
| 1:00 p.m.    | Friends & Family           | Sanctuary         |
|              | Holiday Concert            |                   |

### MONDAY, December 12

|           |                         |                 |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Noon      | Deborah Circle          | Lounge          |
| 6:00 p.m. | Boy Scout Troop 3       | Parking Lot     |
|           | Christmas Tree Sales    |                 |
| 6:00      | Cub Scout Pack 3        | Room 220        |
| 6:30      | Mostly Motets           | Music Room      |
| 6:30      | Rebecca Circle          | Conference Room |
| 7:00      | Boy Scout Troop 3       | Fellowship Hall |
| 7:00      | Boy Scout Troop 3       | Lounge          |
|           | Parent & Board Meetings |                 |
| 7:00      | Trustees Meeting        | Room 208        |

### TUESDAY, December 13

|            |                      |                 |
|------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 12:30 p.m. | Staff Meeting        | Conference Room |
| 6:00       | Boy Scout Troop 3    | Parking Lot     |
|            | Christmas Tree Sales |                 |
| 6:00       | Cub Scout Pack 3     | Fellowship Hall |

### WEDNESDAY, December 14

|           |                         |                 |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 9:00 a.m. | Food Center             | Parking Lot     |
| Noon      | Brown Bag & Bible Study | Zoom            |
| 1:00 p.m. | Prayer Meeting          | Zoom            |
| 6:00      | Boy Scout Troop 3       | Parking Lot     |
|           | Christmas Tree Sales    |                 |
| 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, December 15

|            |                      |                 |
|------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| 10:00 a.m. | Clothing Center      | Room 4          |
| 6:00 p.m.  | Boy Scout Troop 3    | Parking Lot     |
|            | Christmas Tree Sales |                 |
| 6:00       | Oakville Girl Scouts | Fellowship Hall |
| 7:00       | Chancel Choir        |                 |

### FRIDAY, December 16

|           |                      |             |
|-----------|----------------------|-------------|
| 6:00 p.m. | Boy Scout Troop 3    | Parking Lot |
|           | Christmas Tree Sales |             |
| 7:00      | AA Meeting           | Lounge      |

### SATURDAY, December 17

|           |                             |                 |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| 8:00 a.m. | Deacon Food Basket          | Fellowship Hall |
|           | Distribution                |                 |
| 9:00      | Boy Scout Troop 3           | Parking Lot     |
|           | Christmas Tree Sale         |                 |
| 4:00 p.m. | Philadelphia Bronze Concert | Sanctuary       |

### SUNDAY, December 18 - 4th Sunday of Advent

|              |                            |                   |
|--------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 8:30 a.m.    | God's Thunder              | Chapel            |
| 9:30         | Sunday School for all ages |                   |
| 10:00        | Boy Scout Troop 3          | Parking Lot       |
|              | Christmas Tree Sales       |                   |
| <b>10:30</b> | <b>Worship Service</b>     | <b>Sanctuary</b>  |
| <b>10:30</b> | <b>Worship Service</b>     | <b>Livestream</b> |
| 11:30        | Fellowship Hour            | Lounge            |
|              | Host: Education Committee  |                   |
| 11:45        | Family Choir Rehearsal     | Music Room        |
| 4:00 p.m.    | All-Church Caroling        | Parking Lot       |

To view upcoming events and meetings,  
please visit [www.mpcusa.org](http://www.mpcusa.org) and click on  
“Calendar” from the home page.

## CONTACT US

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