



*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 23, 2022  
THIRD SUNDAY  
after EPIPHANY

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## GATHERING

**PRELUDE** — *Great Is Thy Faithfulness* - William Runyan

Yun Kang

**CALL to WORSHIP**

Donna Damiani

One: In Jesus Christ, there is a new creation.

**All: Everything old has passed away. Everything has become new.**

One: This newness is from God, who has reconciled us through Jesus Christ.

**All: Rejoice and be glad! Everything has become new. Let us worship God together!**

**HYMN** — *O Christ, the Great Foundation*

AURELIA

*O Christ, the great foundation on which your people stand  
to preach your true salvation in every age and land:  
pour out your Holy Spirit to make us strong and pure,  
to keep the faith unbroken as long as worlds endure.*

*This is the moment glorious when he who once was dead  
shall lead his church victorious, their champion and their head.  
The Lord of all creation his heavenly kingdom brings;  
the final consummation, the glory of all things.*

**PRAYER of CONFESSION** -

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

Merciful God, when we keep silence about our sin, we waste away with regret and guilt; we feel your hand upon us, and our strength dries up. And so we acknowledge our sin to you, holding nothing back, for you are a hiding place for us; we trust in you to preserve us. We confess, O God, how often we cling to the old things, when you are always trying to do new things among us and within us. We confess, O God, how often we reject the new things you are doing because the old things feel safer and more comfortable. Forgive us, O God, for the ways we reject you and the gifts you offer us through new life. Reclaim us, by your grace, and fashion us to be a people who seek you alone.

**SILENT PRAYERS of CONFESSION**

*Here each worshiper may offer silent prayers of confession.*

**PROMISE of FORGIVENESS**

One: Hear the good news: Steadfast love surrounds those who put their trust in God, for God forgives the guilt of their sin. Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven! Be glad in God! And let us rest in the assurance of God's grace and God's love 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

### OLD TESTAMENT LESSON — *Psalm 32*

One: Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

**All: Happy are those to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

One: While I kept silence, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.

**All: Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord', and you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

One: Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters shall not reach them.

**All: You are a hiding-place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.**

One: I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not stay near you.

**All: Many are the torments of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.**

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

### NEW TESTAMENT LESSON — *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.**

### SERMON

*Everything New*

Reverend Lauren J. McFeaters

### HYMN — *There Is Now a New Creation*

STUTTGART

*There is now a new creation through the grace of Jesus Christ,  
peace and reconciliation with the God of endless life.*

*There is now a new creation through the grace of Jesus Christ.  
Sing, with thanks and adoration, to the God of endless life!*

### AFFIRMATION of FAITH — *Apostles' Creed*

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## 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.

## S E N D I N G

**HYMN** — *Where Charity and Love Prevail*

TWENTY-FOURTH

*Where charity and love prevail, there God is ever found;  
brought here together by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.*

*Love can exclude no race or creed if honored be God's name;  
our common life embraces all whose Maker is the same.*

**POSTLUDE** — *When in Our Music God Is Glorified* - Charles Stanford

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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*\*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).*

### **WELCOME, REV. LAUREN MCFEATERS!**

We welcome to our pulpit today the Reverend Lauren J. McFeaters, the Associate Pastor of Nassau Presbyterian Church in Princeton, NJ. A number of months ago, Rev. Rachel Rhodes was invited to preach at Nassau Presbyterian Church, and the idea arose to participate in a “Pulpit Exchange” since Nassau is just down the road! So this morning, while Rev. Rhodes is preaching at Nassau Presbyterian Church, we have the distinct honor of welcoming Rev. Lauren McFeaters to MPC.

At Nassau, Rev. McFeaters’ pastoral responsibilities lie in congregational nurture through counseling, membership, worship, and the ministry of the deacons. She is a certified pastoral counselor and a Fellow of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors, and loves conversations about faith, theater, and film. Before attending Princeton Seminary, Lauren was an actress in New York City. Lauren is married to Michael Brothers, a faculty member at Princeton Theological Seminary, and together they have a daughter, Josie. What a gift it is to share in ministry with other churches in our area!

### **JOIN US IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN!**

Now is the perfect time to join us! We are taking the plunge into the Gospel of John, 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. And at least for the month of January, we will be meeting over Zoom. 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](mailto:rachelrhodes@mpcusa.net). We’d love to have you!

### **ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CONTINUES!**

Priesthood of All Believers: Even though we cannot gather in person, we will not let that keep us from gathering all together! Adult Sunday School will continue to meet every Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. over Zoom to discuss the Bible passages selected for that day’s sermon. In the past, folks have mentioned how fruitful of an experience it can be to discern the work of the Holy Spirit in Bible Study and Worship on the same day. We hope you will join us each week as we continue to gather for worship and nurture in this way. Please email Pastor Alex at [alexlester-abdalla@mpcusa.net](mailto:alexlester-abdalla@mpcusa.net) for the Zoom link if you are interested.

**BOOK DISTRIBUTION UPDATED NEEDS AND REQUESTS:**

Cold weather is bringing changes, but we are still finding ways to continue to distribute books. We have depleted the reserves of dictionaries and Bibles so if you have copies of either item, we can distribute them immediately. Currently, 90% of the books taken are those read by children under the age of 5. Almost no books (except Harry Potter and Lemony Snicket) for children above the third grade are taken. We have great interest in children's books on dinosaurs, trucks, "Disney Princesses" (including Pinkalicious, Dora, etc.). New coloring books are always welcome. Adults take current best sellers (published within the past couple of years), cookbooks, religious books, and Civil War books.

If you have books that fall outside of the above categories, you will find Good Stuff on Route 1 will usually take them. The Salvation Army and Good Will, a short distance away from Good Stuff, also take books.

For the time being, please do not drop off large used toys. There is no place to store them while we wait for the weather to warm up and the handling of them is too time consuming for the current volunteers. If we decide to add toys we will need a separate volunteer to handle this category. If you are interested in working with donated toys, please contact Susan Light at susanklight@gmail.com. Thank you for your generous and cheerful support.

**MPC STEWARDSHIP UPDATE**

Thanks to your support of MPC, we surpassed pledge budget estimates for 2021 by nearly \$30,000. The momentum of stewardship at our church pushes us into 2022 as we continue to receive pledge cards. God is working in us, God is tugging at our hearts. We know this because 35% of members increased their pledge for 2022; 4% of members doubled their pledge; nearly 100% of members who joined MPC in the last three years pledged; and the average pledge increased by over \$200. These funds will enable us to sustain spirit-giving, hope-giving, life-giving ministries into the future. Thanks be to God! When we all respond to God in gratitude for all God has given us, it will always be enough. Amen and Amen and Amen.

*MPC Weekly Calendar\**

<b>SUNDAY, January 23</b> 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School via Zoom <b>10:30 Worship Service Livestream</b>	<b>THURSDAY, January 27</b> 10:00 a.m. Clothing Center Room 4 Noon Alcoholics Anonymous Room 220
<b>MONDAY, January 24</b> 7:00 p.m. Session Meeting via Zoom	<b>FRIDAY, January 28</b> 7:00 p.m. AA Meeting Room 220
<b>TUESDAY, January 25</b> 6:30 p.m. Alcoholics Anonymous Room 220	<b>SATURDAY, January 29</b> Noon Youth Club Fellowship Hall
<b>WEDNESDAY, January 26</b> Noon Brown Bag & Bible Study via Zoom	<b>SUNDAY, January 30</b> 9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School via Zoom <b>10:30 Worship Service Livestream</b>

**\* Please note that some events listed on the calendar may be cancelled, moved to another location, or be held virtually due to COVID restrictions at MPC. Please contact the leaders of the organizations for updated information. Please visit [www.mpcusa.org](http://www.mpcusa.org) for the latest information regarding worship and activities within the building.**

**CONTACT US**

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