



Morningside Messenger

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1411 North Morningside Drive, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30306

TEL 404.876.7396
WEB morningsidepc.org

Inside This Issue

- 2 From the Pastor's Desk
- 3 Inside Morningside
- 4 Mission Ministries
- 5 Calendar
- 6 Discipleship Ministries
- 7 Operations Ministries
- 8 Connections
- 9 Session News
- 10 Back Words

Serving You

Reverend Joanna M. Adams *Pastor*

404.876.7396 ext. 11

(Home) 404.347.8656

joannamadams@bellsouth.net

Reverend Christopher Henry *Associate Pastor*

404.876.7396 ext. 14

Reverend Robert Gray *Assistant to the Pastor*

Walter Huff *Organist / Choirmaster*

Melinda Sandkam *Program Director*

404.876.7396 ext. 15

Kevin Weber *Seminary Intern*

404.831.0451

Nancy Meehan Yao *Children's Worship Leader*

904.806.5795

Rebekah Diehl *Youth Program Coordinator*

404.876.7396 ext. 16

Brittney Jaynes *Children's Choir Director*

770.656.3890

Sherrill Terry *Office Administrator*

404.876.7396 ext. 10

Ann Benson *Office Assistant*

404.876.7396 ext. 20

Randy Young *Facilities Manager*

404.876.7396 ext. 13

JoAnn Kearns *Accountant*

Martha Hartzell *Preschool Director*

404.685.8758

Gus Restrepo *Sexton*

Church Office Hours 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

February 2009 Worship at Morningside

Sunday, Feb. 1, 11 a.m.

Sermon: "Doubt"

Texts: Psalm 121; Mark 9:14-29

Joanna Adams preaching

The sacrament of communion will be celebrated.

The Children's Choir will sing.

Sunday, Feb. 8, 11 a.m.

Sermon: "Remembering Our Way Out of
Babylon"

Texts: Psalm 147:1-11; Isaiah 40:21-31

Christopher Henry preaching

Sunday, Feb. 15, 11 a.m.

Sermon: "Pilgrims on the Road"

Texts: Exodus 13: 17-22; Philippians 3:12-14

Joanna Adams preaching

Building Dedication

Transfiguration Sunday, Feb. 22, 11 a.m.

Sermon: "The Courage to Listen"

Texts: 1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Mark 9: 2-10

Kevin Weber preaching

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 25, 7 p.m.

Meditation: "A Confession to Make"

Texts: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17; Luke 18:9-14

Christopher Henry preaching



Dear Friends,

Beginning more than 2000 years ago, the church has sought through the ages to care for people and to proclaim the gospel in word and deed. Forms change; content never changes. As the book of Hebrews says, "Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever." Morningside is an increasingly effective congregation. Our life together is marked by mutual love and respect, both of which are lived out in our organization and ministry.

Every now and then a fresh look at how things are done around the church can really make a difference. This fall, the Session took a look and rearranged the way the work of the church is organized.

Forgive me for retelling the old story of the fellow who was sent out to evangelize the neighborhood from his church. "Hello," he said to the first person who answered his knock on the door. "I am from the church down the street, and I hope you will come visit us soon."

"I've got no use for organized religion," the person at the door stated emphatically.

"Then, you'll love our church. There's nothing organized about the way we do things!"

There is a lot of good organization here at Morningside, and it gets better every day. We're moving to a team approach—you'll find more details on the next page. Here are the team leaders who will steer our work to keep up with our active, want-to-be-involved congregation in 2009:

Children and Youth Ministries — Team leader Carolyn Morton
Operations Ministries — Team leader John Watson
Discipleship Ministries — Team leader Mardee Rightmyer
Mission Ministries — Team leader Sarah Tomaka

Commitment Ministries — Team leader David Wingert
Evangelism Ministries — Team leaders Leslie Prince and Chip Edgerton

Congregational Nurture Ministries — Team leaders Michael Perez and Sarah Beth Gehl

Worship and the Arts Ministries — Team leader Bill Southwood

I continue to rejoice that I serve "the church on the hill." May the light of Christ continue to move in our little corner of the world. It is my expectation that the light will shine more clearly and effectively because we have had the good sense to organize ourselves according to the best practices we know. Will you pitch in this year? Will you offer your gifts? The Bible speaks of the communion of the saints. Count yourself included, and join the team!

With warm regards from your pastor,

Joanna Adams

Morningsiders Will Create Own Lenten Devotional Study Pages

An opportunity for each of us—regardless of age or stage—to express our own faith in reaction to a biblical text will be a highlight of Morningside's Lenten observation.

Seminary intern Kevin Weber is leading an effort to solicit short narratives, poems and the like for inclusion in a devotional study book. He's looking for 40 contributions, one for each day in the Lenten season. Look in the Narthex for texts and examples and write away. Submissions are due by Feb. 11.

Women's Bible Study meets Wednesday, Feb. 4, beginning with coffee at 9 a.m. Joanna Adams continues the study of the Gospel of Luke, focusing on the parables.

Vision 2012 Leads to Church Reorganization

Ever spent time in a meeting “imaging the future,” “visioning,” “goal-setting” or the like? And learning that only too often after all the brainstorming, input, drafting and refining, the outcome is a dead list of “nice” aspirations filed away somewhere? Not so at MPC! Our plan called Vision 2010 and its new successor Vision 2012 drive astounding changes in the way this church meets the challenges of doing God’s work in our world.

Arising from “listening sessions” led by Kathy Bremer, Leslie Prince and others, both plans built on the ideas of members and other interested parties to look five years into the future. Dreams generating the most support and enthusiasm become our goals. Then, annual action plans to reach each goal are determined by committees and the Session and become our roadmap.

Does the process work? Oh, yes! Vision 2010 worked so well that we met all our goals three years early. So the Session decided, “Let’s do that again.” Last year’s listening sessions drew even more suggestions and your church leadership has been working throughout the fall to build plans.

An unexpected outcome has been a decision to reorganize the church’s structure to better reflect what we actually do. It became clear to our leaders that everything we do constitutes a ministry in service. Some activities were conducted *ad hoc*. Others seemed important but just didn’t quite fit in anywhere. But when we looked through the ‘ministry’ lens, we saw, for example, that programs for children were spread across several different committees in our old structure. Now, Christian education, youth programs, the preschool and family programs are all coordinated within the Children and Youth Ministries Team, led by Carolyn Morton.

Another example: Commitment Ministries come together within a team led by David Wingert, including not only the annual stewardship campaign and *A Time of Promise*, but newly recognized components such as stewardship education, planned giving, and volunteer coordination for all ministries.

Church Operations Ministries now include facilities, finance, human resources and information technology. Discipleship Ministries comprise adult Christian education, leadership training, small-group coordination and the learning center/library.

Mission Ministries has grown to encompass not only community outreach, but also environmental action, advocacy, special offerings, global concerns and peacemaking. And Evangelism reaches beyond greeters and visitor contact to cover inquirers’ classes, communications and the website.

Another group of functions come together under Congregational Nurture Ministries: care initiatives, weekly and special events, funeral receptions, meeting support and regular events. The final large team, Worship and the Arts, is led by Bill Southwood. In this group are committees for sanctuary and sacraments, ushers, liturgical arts, arts programming and our three guilds: Flower, Pew and Wedding. Finally, David York acts as a committee of one for Denominational Relations with the presbytery and PC(USA).

All these teams need members; many of the subcommittees need leaders. Much more information will be forthcoming as MPC moves into position to tackle the challenges we’ve all laid out for Vision 2012.

Get Ready for Lent in Your Jammies with Shrove Tuesday Pancakes

Everyone from the church and our preschool is invited to a fun evening with pancakes for dinner, Tuesday, Feb. 24. As we did last year in celebration of Shrove Tuesday, we'll flip flapjacks 5:30-6:45 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. Kids can join in the fun by wearing their favorite PJs as we wrap up our February collection of new pajamas, undies and socks for children sizes up to junior 3 for girls and 20 for boys.

The clothing items will be donated to Threads, a program of All Saints' Episcopal Church. Threads' mission is to clothe children from infancy through fifth grade with dignity by offering a chance to 'shop' a choice of new or gently used seasonal clothing in current styles that fit. It's a place for children and their parents to pick out play or school clothes in a relaxed, attractive

environment where they are served as if they were in a retail clothing store. We plan to continue to support Threads throughout the year by collecting gently worn children's wear.

We also will continue last year's Lenten coin collection to support the clown program at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. The children will have a chance to decorate their coin boxes and enjoy the entertainment of a clown. The preschool community will turn in their collections to our Bible storyteller Lily the Lamb Apr. 1-2, while church children are invited to bring theirs to church on Palm Sunday, Apr. 5.

Watch for opportunities to sign up to stir batter, cook or provide other support for this fun evening.

MPC Group Will Return to Pearlinton during Lent

Rebuilding just doesn't happen overnight. Fortunately, relief organizations such as Presbyterian Disaster Assistance realize this and plan long-term for building needs – the average plan to meet a major disaster such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita is seven years.

With this in mind, Morningside volunteers will return to Pearlinton, MS this Lenten season to continue our work with a community that is gaining ground bit by bit. This mission trip is open to adults and will cost \$80 for four nights at the Presbyterian Village near

Pearlinton. The trip is planned for Mar. 16-20 and we need to fill 15 spots by Feb. 15. Everyone who has participated in this mission in previous years has nothing but praise for the PDA organization and the spirit of both the community and the working groups alike.

Join the group to finalize details Sunday, Feb. 1 after worship. For more information, contact Richard Brownlee (rsbrownlee1046@att.net or 404 876.3572) or see details including a link to the registration form on our website.

Mission Minis

- ⇒ Morningside still needs volunteers to spend the night at Shearith Israel Women's Shelter Feb. 7, 11 and 14 from 6 p.m. to 6:30 a.m. to support the staff. Sign up in the Narthex; shepherds Emilie Paille and Jeanne McCarthy can answer any questions. We're also collecting \$10 gift cards (CVS, Publix, Target, etc.) as a Valentine for each of the 14 shelter residents.
- ⇒ We're seeking one more driver for a regular Meals on Wheels route on the 4th Wednesday each month. This Morningside/Virginia Highland route takes less than an hour. Meals are picked up at First Presbyterian Church in Midtown. For further information, contact Sarah Brownlee at 404 876.3572 or rsbrownlee1046@att.net.
- ⇒ Support the hungry in our community by putting \$2 in the pot on Souper Bowl Sunday, Feb. 1. This annual youth mission is part of a national effort that last year raised more than \$10 million. Our offering will go to the Atlanta Community Food Bank.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9:45 a.m. Church School Classes 11 a.m. Worship; Communion; Children's Choir 12 noon Fellowship 12:15 p.m. Deacons; Commitment Team; Evangelism Team; Supervised Ministry; Mission Trip	7 p.m. Mandolin Society 7:30 p.m. Nicotine Anon	6:30 p.m. Prayer Group; Weight Watchers 7 p.m. Theology on Tap; MLPA Zoning	9:15 a.m. Women's Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Children's Choir 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir; Venture Crew	7 p.m. Handbell Choir 7:30 p.m. MLPA Public Safety		Session Retreat 8:15 a.m. Weight Watchers 9:30 a.m. Weight Watchers
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9:45 a.m. Church School Classes 11 a.m. Worship 12 noon Fellowship 12:15 p.m. Sunday Forum 1 p.m. RHO Readers 6 p.m. Druid Hills Shelter Dinner	7 p.m. Mandolin Society; Morningside Lenox Park Assoc. 7:30 p.m. Nicotine Anon	10 a.m. Common Ground 6:30 p.m. Preschool Committee; Prayer Group; Weight Watchers	6:30 p.m. Children's Choir 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir; Venture Crew	9 a.m. Presbyterian Rally Day 2 p.m. Presbytery Congregational Ministry Team 7 p.m. Handbell Choir	Newsletter deadline 5 p.m. Butz/Pengelly Wedding Rehearsal	Valentine's Day 8:15 a.m. Weight Watchers 8:30 a.m. Workday & Trees Atlanta 9:30 a.m. Weight Watchers 3 p.m. Butz/Pengelly Wedding
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
9:45 a.m. Church School Classes 11 a.m. Worship; Building Dedication 12 noon Fellowship 2 p.m. Guitar Atlanta	7 p.m. Session; Mandolin Society 7:30 p.m. Nicotine Anon	6:30 p.m. Prayer Group; Weight Watchers	6:30 p.m. Children's Choir 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir; Venture Crew	10 a.m. Newsletter Production Team 6:30 p.m. Community Outreach 7 p.m. Handbell Choir		8:15 a.m. Weight Watchers 9 a.m. Presbytery Meeting at Druid Hills Presbyterian 9:30 a.m. Weight Watchers
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
Transfiguration Sunday 9:45 a.m. Church School Classes 11 a.m. Worship 12 noon Fellowship	6:30 p.m. Women's Roundtable 6:45 p.m. Parliamentarians 7 p.m. Mandolin Society 7:30 p.m. Nicotine Anon	5:30 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group; Weight Watchers	Ash Wednesday 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service 7:30 p.m. Venture Crew 8 p.m. Chancel Choir	7 p.m. Handbell Choir		8:15 a.m. Weight Watchers 9:30 a.m. Weight Watchers

Questions of Ethical Land Use Spur Adult Study

In a shrinking world with ever-increasing demand for food and land, many people are concerned about how humans produce food and use the earth. Thousands of years ago, the writers of the Old Testament had the same concern. During February, the Morningside Bible Class will examine the strong relationship between biblical texts and the ethics of land use.

The study will draw not only from the Bible, but also a new book of essays by Prof. Ellen Davis of Duke Divinity School, entitled *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture: An*

Agrarian Reading of the Bible. Each week the class will explore passages in the Old Testament that show pervasive concern for care of the earth and praise for the Creator, engaging in a conversation between these ancient texts and our modern lives. Come explore a fresh perspective on the practices and assumptions that dominate the global food economy.

Associate Pastor Christopher Henry teaches the class in the New Morningside Room, upstairs in Room 201.

Men of Morningside Will Welcome Speaker on 'Emergent Churches'

The next Theology on Tap gathering will look at the Emergent Church movement, which addresses questions of how to live out the Christian faith in a postmodern world. Leading the after-dinner discussion will be Rev. Troy Bronsink, organizing pastor of Neighbors Abbey, an Emerging New Church Development of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta bringing together various types of people seeking the Way of Jesus in Southwest Atlanta.

The program on "The Emergent Church and Evangelism in the 21st Century" will be held at the home of Alan Bremer (785 Cumberland Road, 30306) on Tuesday, Feb. 3, beginning with dinner at 7 p.m. All men are invited to Theology on Tap.

In addition to being a leading Presbyterian voice in this movement, Troy is also national coordinator for Emergent Village and Presbymergent, a worship and arts consultant and a singer-songwriter.

Sunday Forum to Explore Critical Denominational Issues

As the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta prepares for an important vote on ordination standards, we ask "How does Morningside participate in the ministry of our denomination?" In our next in the series of "Sunday Forums: Reflections on Issues of the Day," Elder Mardee Rightmyer, Associate Pastor Christopher Henry and MPC's denominational liaison David York will offer a

"Denominational Update" at 12:15 p.m., Feb. 8, upstairs in the New Morningside Room.

They'll consider such concerns as contentious issues facing the Presbyterian Church (USA) and how these issues are being addressed. How do Presbyterians govern ourselves, adapt to new circumstances and change our collective mind? Come learn more about Presbyterianism in action!

Women Will Hear Speaker on Innovative Teen Communications

Gathering at the home of Lynn Young (277 The Prado NE, 30309), the Women's Roundtable will welcome guest speaker Rachel Alterman Wallack, Feb. 23 at 6:30 p. m. Rachel is executive director of VOX Teen Communications, a newspaper written by and for teenagers. A native Atlantan, Rachel's experience writing for Junior Scholastic and Business Atlanta magazines inspired her to help start VOX with a team of volunteer teens and adults in 1993. Rachel earned a master's de-

gree in social work at night in order to support teens involved in VOX's programs. She's since worked with local non-profits on youth development, youth in governance and organizational leadership, and non-profit organizational development. Save Mar. 23 and Apr. 27 now for even more great speakers, food and fellowship. Let Program Director Melinda Sandkam know if you would like to be added to the Roundtable e-mail list.

MPC Wraps Up 2008 Fiscal Year; Grows 2009 Budget

Operating our church in 2008 required nearly \$623,000. With receipts totaling almost \$634,000, we ended the year with a slight surplus. For 2009, the Session approved a budget of \$717,521 to support our eight new ministry teams, our staff and the first year's amortization of our *A Time of Promise* capital loan.

Crafting the budget required projecting receipts, primarily from pledges and offerings, against requests from the leaders of our various committees within the ministry teams. The 2009 budget represents an increase of 14 percent over total expenditures in 2008. Such an increase represents a bold step in the current economic environment, but is well-supported by the overwhelming response of our congregation to this

year's stewardship campaign. One of the most notable items in the increase is the move to full-time status for our associate pastor.

Growth of the Morningside family in 2008 translated into increased financial support, allowing us to continue to add programs and staff to meet the needs of our growing congregation. Besides being able to afford "all of Chris," we were able to increase our year-end gifts above budgeted levels to organizations that support the needs of those in our community, and to outsource the maintenance of our website. Even after these additional gifts, we ended 2008 with a cash surplus of \$25,000 that provides a bit of a cushion against unexpected challenges as we enter 2009.

Morningside Needs Help to Plant, Grow 'Valentine'

Call it a gift of love! Morningside Presbyterian has received a memorial grant through Trees Atlanta that will allow us to landscape around our new church entrance and patio. Saturday, Feb. 14, has been set as a church-wide gardening workday 'valentine' to help Trees Atlanta plant trees and shrubs in the area.

Because Trees Atlanta has a full calendar of commitments, the workday will take place rain or shine.

Sign up in the Narthex if you can help. Especially needed are men to help with planting fairly large trees and shrubs. Workers should bring shovels, wheelbarrows and their work gloves. Planting will begin at 8:30 a.m. and plans are to finish by noon. Beth Baer chairs the event as well as the ongoing Gardening Group which meets on selected Saturday mornings to keep our grounds looking attractive.

Morningside Green Space

Remember the 3R's for the environment: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle. Here are tips on the first R: Reduce.

- ◇ Simplify your life by keeping only things you use and enjoy regularly. Owning less leads to purchasing less and creating less waste in the future. See the video "The Story of Stuff" to learn how raw materials and products move around the world.
- ◇ Consider creating a 'tree-free' home—for example, use cloth napkins rather than paper, use more cloth kitchen towels and fewer paper towels, purchase bleach-free toilet paper with the highest post-consumer waste content available, reuse printer paper (the backs of drafts make dandy scratch paper, too) and buy paper with the highest post-consumer waste content (Staples sells 100 percent recycled paper!), use a white board for messages and seek out alternatives when constructing/renovating, such as reclaimed lumber, cork and bamboo.
- ◇ Make bulk purchases whenever possible, reducing single-use packaging. Transfer items to your own containers at home.

These are just a few ideas—for more information, go to www.globalstewards.org/ecotips.htm

Board of Deacons Plays Role in Welcoming New Members

Every year, Presbyterians elect both elders and deacons from among the congregation to lead the church. The group of elders, also called the Session, are in charge of the church's governance and ministries. The Board of Deacons or Diaconate, serving under the Session's supervision, are tasked with helping care for the spiritual and emotional needs of our church family. At Morningside, the Diaconate has a special mission in this regard—welcoming and helping new members settle into life at MPC. Joining a new church can be daunting. It's the deacons' job to make the transition easier for our newest sisters and brothers.

Coordinating with our pastors and the Evangelism and Congregational Nurture committees, deacons formally welcome all new members to Morningside. They also ask someone who's been a member for a while to 'sponsor' the newcomer by calling or visiting, inviting new members to events and generally being a friendly, familiar face. As Morningside continues to grow, the Board of Deacons is striving to make sure that everyone—longtimers and newcomers alike—feels a part of the family. In 2009, expect to hear from the Morningside Deacons: Nancy Collins, Nan Cunningham, David Fairleigh, Tim Gargis, Betsy Holland, James Klotz, Collier Maxwell, Bill Means, Brad Odom and Shari Tant.

Morningside Milestones

- Find an opportunity to say hello to our newest members: Browning and Ginny Fergus, Drew Kimball, Kathleen and Ken Pramik and Meg Samuels, all of whom joined Jan. 18.
- Happy news for Ross and Blair Weikel as their first child, Joel Patrick, joined the family Jan. 15.
- All in the Family 1: Congratulations to Sara Hayden, who will be ordained as a minister of the Word and Sacrament in Overland KS on Feb. 28. She's picked a special person to preach her ordination sermon: her husband and our associate pastor, Chris.
- As the weather improves, you might want to consider biking to church services and events. Parking that bike will be easier thanks to the Morningside Presbyterian Preschool's gift of a bike rack.
- It's not too late to 'ring' in the new year. (OK, we promise to stop with the bell puns.) But Morningside's Handbell Choir still needs a few good ringers—whether experienced with the instrument or not. Hour-long rehearsals on Thursdays at 7 p.m.
- All in the Family 2: Joanna is one of *Georgia Trend's* 100 Most Influential Georgians; check out the January issue. And Al Adams is also well recognized, being one of the Georgia Legal Elite and listed in Best Lawyers in America 2009.
- Having increased to 49 children in our cast, the Christmas Pageant was once again the result of many hard working parents and additional volunteers. Special thanks to those who made angel costumes for our growing "host of angels" and to Ted McMahan for creating two new sheep stages for the "little lambs". We expanded the evening to include our annual Carol Sing and thank Mimi Bittick, Sandy Jones and Sarah Brownlee for the

February Birthdays

9 Mike Gay
9 Nancy Collins
2 Shanon Hall
2 Lee Kean
2 Tom Daniel
2 Karen Churchill-Hairston
3 Helen Schroder
5 Marilyn Austin
6 Will Barnette
6 Gene Turner
9 Leslie Grant
10 Andrew Brady
10 Martha Jondle
11 Heather Regnault
12 Gwyndolyn Brady
12 Jim Clegg
12 Peter Dickson
15 John Turner

16 Kayte Pellerito
17 Ross Weikel
18 Todd Jones
22 John Adams
22 Gus Restrepo
23 Charles Bittick
23 Bill Smith
24 Ellie Spears
24 Georgia Marshall
25 Barbara Ray

25 Blair Weikel
26 Deborah Coleman
27 Jim Armstrong
28 Beth Baer
29 Nan Cunningham



Your Session at Work: January 20 Meeting

- Session welcomed a guest, Rev. Tom Livengood, pastor of The Living Room, an emerging alternate church in Grant Park on Georgia Ave. In addition to planning a coffee house and child care center on the property, The Living Room is considering a third community ministry for its 20 to 30 members. A project of the Tri-Presbytery Emerging Church Committee, The Living Room has received support from the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta. **Rev. Joanna Adams** chairs the Tri-Presbytery New Church Development Commission, which oversees work done by emerging churches in addressing underserved populations. For more information, visit www.livingroomatlanta.com.
- *A Time of Promise* capital campaign, under Commitment Ministries, will have its concluding expenses and loan payments managed by the Finance Committee. The Commitment Ministries team will undertake following up on outstanding *TOP* pledges and researching additional fund-raising avenues, according to Commitment Ministries Team Leader **David Wingert**.
- Program Director **Melinda Sandkam** described priorities of the Morningside Preschool's long-range plan: 1) A deepening sense of community, within the church, within the neighborhood and to more distant locations. 2) Improvement of facilities inside and out. 3) Strengthening MPP's staff through continued education and other means. Melinda said the preschool plans to present the entire long-range plan at the February session meeting for approval.
- Clerk of Session **Ruthlyn Newell** and Associate Pastor **Chris Henry** will work together to update the Elder on Call and Deacon on Call responsibilities in light of our new space.
- Finance Committee Co-Chair **Bobbie McCrackin** presented the draft 2009 budget. Session unanimously approved the \$717,521 budget. We also have about \$24,000 to carry over from 2008, which we agreed to hold in reserve for now.
- Congregational Nurture Ministries, led by co-Team Leaders **Michael Perez** and **Sarah Beth Gehl**, will

research whether MPC has reached a size and frequency of meetings and gatherings to warrant contracting for food service. They will observe how continuing to rely on volunteers to provide refreshments and meals for events works out over the next couple of months and then present their findings to Session.

- Seminary Intern **Kevin Weber** is organizing Lenten Devotionals this year (see story on Page 2). Kevin asked the elders to take the lead in participating in this program to encourage others.
- **David Wingert** and **Anne Barnette** have agreed to be the two elder representatives serving on the 2009 Officer Nominating Committee.
- The session approved three guest preachers for 2009, all proposed by **Joanna Adams**: Rev. Samuel L. Adams, Rev. Lisa Largesse and Rev. David Bartlett.

Ruthlyn Newell
Clerk of Session



Elders on Call for February

Michael Perez	Feb. 1-7
Sarah Tomaka	Feb. 8-14
Van Crisco	Feb. 15-21
Chip Edgerton	Feb. 22-28

Deacons on Call for February

James Klotz	Feb. 1-7
Bradley Odom	Feb. 8-14
Shari Tant	Feb. 15-21
Nan Cunningham	Feb. 22-28

February Rally Day Highlights Advocacy Efforts

What has 40 days besides the Lenten and Advent seasons? The Georgia legislative session! Of course, the legislative period stretches out to about three months, and this year in particular, the State Senate and House of Representatives will face even more challenges as the uncertain economy casts its shadow over nearly every facet of state government.

So, what does this have to do with God's work? Clearly, the biblical injunctions to love justice and our neighbor lead us to be concerned about providing resources for health care, education, living wages, care for lower-income senior citizens, the sexual exploitation of minors, issues surrounding capital punishment—and the list continues. The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta maintains a public policy advocate, Wendell Phillips, and highlights the year of advocacy with Presbyterian Rally Day every February.

This year, Rally Day will be Thursday, Feb. 12, and the opening speaker will be our own Associate Pastor Christopher Henry, whose topic is "Why Presbyterians Are Called to Public Advocacy." Morningside Elder Sarah Beth Gehl is also a speaker during the Rally. The day also holds small group sessions and advocacy strategies on the topics of fair wage, juvenile justice, code reform and the economy and budget. There will also be a hymn-sing at the Capitol and individual meetings with legislators. Lunch at Central Presbyterian Church, across the street from the Gold Dome, will feature the keynote presentation on "The Budget as a Moral Document" and recognition of the Presbyterian Citizen of the Year.

Sarah Beth Gehl, who chairs MPC's Advocacy Committee promises we'll hear more about how each of us can become a more effective advocate.