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Inside This Issue

- 2 From the Pastor's Desk
- 3 Inside Morningside
- 4 Connections
- 5 Calendar
- 6 Spotlight on Liberia
- 7 Discipleship Ministries
- 8 BackWords

Serving You

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Gus Restrepo *Sexton*
Church Office Hours 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

August 2009 Worship at Morningside

August 2, 2009

Sermon: "Get Yourself an Attitude!"

Text: Philippians 4:10-20

Joanna Adams preaching

The sacrament of communion will be celebrated.

August 9, 2009

Sermon: "Help! And Other Short, Useful Prayers"

Text: Matthew 14:22-36

Guest Preacher

Lisa Larges, Minister Coordinator

That All May Freely Serve

August 16, 2009

Sermon: "PBPGINFWMY"

Texts: Jeremiah 18:1-11; II Corinthians 4:6-11

Joanna Adams preaching

August 23, 2009

Sermon: "Hold that Twitter!"

Texts: Exodus 20:8-11; John 14:25-30

Joanna Adams preaching

August 30, 2009

Sermon: "What Makes Us Happy?"

Texts: Psalm 34:1-9; James 1:17-27

Joanna Adams preaching

From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends,



Five years ago, when I returned to Atlanta from Chicago, I told myself that it might be time to seek a less demanding ministry, one that did not include preparing and delivering a sermon for most of the Sundays of the year. I thought about how nice it would be not to be worrying about the next sermon while I brushed my teeth or scrambled an egg. I thought about how Al and I might enjoy a Saturday night out without my looking so often at my watch.

It turned out that God had a different plan in mind, and for that, I am more grateful than words can express. Standing in the Morningside pulpit, I have been blessed with many moments when I sensed that I was serving as a vessel of divine grace. I am grateful for the power of the story of creation and redemption that has been passed on from generation to generation through the preaching ministry of the church and grateful to play my little part in passing the story along. I would not trade my calling or these years at Morningside for anything in the world. As of the first of August, I have 19 more sermons to preach as your Senior Pastor. None will be from the assigned lectionary text; rather, they will be based on Biblical passages on which I have always wanted to preach. I look forward to sharing those messages with you.

Over the years I have served congregations in decidedly different contexts and at different points in their histories, but there are two things they all have shared. The first is that they all wanted to hear a message of substance. The second is that the Holy Spirit was in their midst, and it wasn't all up to me. Even on those Sundays when I have wanted to put a sack over my head because the sermon was so embarrassing, the Holy Spirit was still there doing the heavy lifting and communicating the grace of Christ and the love of God in, through, and in spite of me.

I think of a young Catholic couple whom I met years ago at a night shelter where they and I volunteered. Over time, they came to know one of the guests quite well. He'd had pneumonia twice that winter and was constantly engaged in a battle with alcoholism. When he got sick again, my young friends took Randy to their house to live with them and their two little children. It seemed risky to me. "Why?" I asked. They answered, "We think Jesus really meant it when he said, 'I was a stranger, and you welcomed me.'"

There you have it: The power of words. The power of the Word. The presence of God in the real world where we live. On these realities, I have bet my life.

"Preacher" is not the easiest vocation in the world, but I cannot imagine a richer or more meaningful life.

Your pastor,

Joanna

Joanna Adams

Elders on Call for August

Dave Wingert	Aug. 2-8
Bobbie McCrackin	Aug. 9-15
Mardee Rightmyer	Aug. 16-22
John Watson	Aug. 23-29
Jim Armstrong	Aug. 30-Sept. 5

Deacons on Call for August

Nancy Collins	Aug. 2-8
Shari Tant	Aug. 9-15
Tim Gargis	Aug. 16-22
Brad Odom	Aug. 23-29
Bill Means	Aug. 30-Sept. 5

MPC Prepares for Pastoral Transitions

With heartfelt respect and gratitude for what will be more than five years of service to Morningside Presbyterian and this community, MPC's congregation is preparing to say goodbye to our Senior Pastor, The Rev. Joanna M. Adams, as she plans her retirement early next year.

Joanna's final Sunday in the pulpit will be Jan. 10, 2010, after more than 30 years as an ordained Minister of the Word and Sacrament in our denomination.

Session convened a special meeting July 5 to accept Joanna's retirement request and passed the following two motions, in keeping with Presbyterian practices:

1. The session of Morningside Presbyterian Church with deep regret accepts the request of Rev. Joanna M. Adams to join her in requesting that the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta dissolve her call as Head of Staff of Morningside Presbyterian Church and honorably retire her effective Feb. 1, 2010.
2. The session of Morningside Presbyterian Church agrees to offer the role of Acting Head of Staff to Rev. Chris Henry, to be effective at the time of Rev. Adams's official retirement. This role will be in place until such a time that the Pastor Nominating Committee calls a new pastor – which is anticipated within a year of Rev. Adams's retirement. Congregational approval of changes in the terms of Rev. Henry's call will be brought forward in a congregational meeting to take place later in 2009.

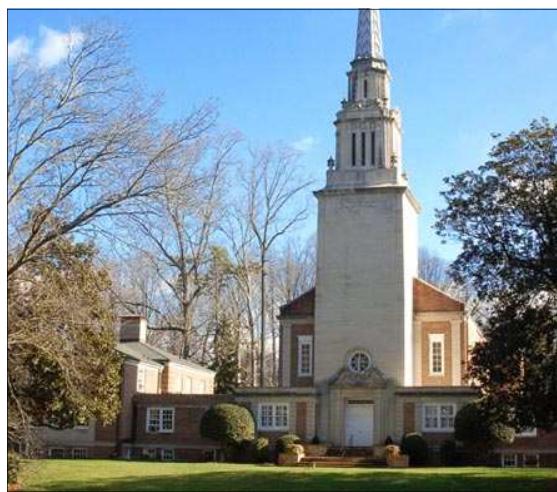
Chris has accepted this offer. The next steps will be to nominate and elect the Pastor Nominating Committee along with other church officers in November, finalize Rev. Henry's terms of call – and start planning the celebrations for Joanna.

Morningside Milestones

- The Morningside Presbyterian Preschool opens its new year with a new director, Sarah Tomaka. Sarah has long served the preschool as a committee member and chair and strong advocate for MPP as a member of

our Session. An artist, communicator and teacher, she brings a wealth of experience to the director's chair.

- Familiar faces are now member faces: we welcomed long-time visitors Bob and Cindy Metzler and our former facilities manager (and father, father-in-law and grandfather to the Morton family) Link Marx to our Christian fellowship.
- Design is divine! Our interior design sale raised more than \$6,000 for the *A Time of Promise* capital campaign and church renewal projects. See Leslie Prince or Carolyn Morton if you missed the sale and still need a lamp, wall art, a table....
- July celebrations included the baptism of Lily Brooks Woolley, daughter of Charles and Tish and granddaughter of Charlsie, and the wedding of Jennifer Pittman and Curt Sanders. Our deepest wishes for joy to all!



Summer Ends Ahead of Calendar with Sunday School Kickoff

The Dog Days are only for dogs these days! Kids go back to the classroom this month and it's no exception for Morningside's Sunday School classes for all young ages. We will once again begin the year with an event for everyone on the front lawn Sunday, Aug. 16, beginning at 9:45 a.m. There'll be a light breakfast and some games for all, with the highlight being the second annual "bridge crossing" to new age groups.

Another feature will be tours of the classrooms. Included will be changes in location for the children's hour during worship services. Kindergarten and first-graders will remain in Room 001; second- and third-graders will move to Room 003 and the fourth-through-sixth-grade Double Digits will move next door to Room 005 which they helped paint this spring.

Also for youngsters, but not those in our congregation, is the annual offering collection Aug. 30 to benefit Thornwell Home for Children in South Carolina. Recipient of one of our four special offerings, Thornwell provides a loving home and guidance for needy children.

August Collection Addresses Men's Needs

This month our Narthex collection bins will welcome men's new T-shirts in sizes large and extra-large, socks and reading glasses. Running Aug. 2-23, the collection will aid homeless and nearly homeless men in our community.

The clothing drive is sponsored by Intown Community Assistance (ICA) in partnership with Mercy Church. Currently ICA is working through a visioning process to redefine its calling as a mission effort in the 30306 and 30307 areas. Shepherd for the drive is Nancy Collins (770.842.3959 or ncollins0209@gmail.com).

Morningside Green Space

Wind up your summer with the last of our Green Treasure scavenger hunts:

#5 Arabia Mountain Heritage Area

3787 Klondike Road, Lithonia, www.arabiaalliance.org

Discover geocaching at Arabia Mountain's treasure hunt for adventure seekers and nature lovers using GPS devices. Find hidden containers (geocaches) outdoors. There are 786,748 active geocaches worldwide. Arabia has 14 that interpret nature and promote environmental awareness and appreciation. Start by going to www.geocaching.com and typing in the Arabia zipcode: 30038. Warning: This activity is addictive.

#6 Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center

2020 Clean Water Drive, Buford, www.gwinnettehc.org

Count the rain chains. Ramble down the Ivy Creek Greenway to see the historic bridge piers. Examine pitcher plants in our new bog near the granite stairs at the left side of the building. Come inside and touch the porous concrete at the Water Wise at Work display. Come get "rained on" and learn about the water cycle in the Discover H2O Interactive Exhibit.

August Birthdays

3 Bill Southwood	8 Martha Hartzell	16 Cathy Keaveney	22 Sarah Chatel	30 Jill Klotz
4 Julia Jarratt	8 John McNeill	16 Jackie Cleveland	24 Bryan Busch	31 Scott Bremer
5 Shannon Harris	12 Annie Kimball	17 Katie Davis	25 Bonnie Daneker	31 Charlsie Woolley
5 Nancy Coomes	12 Jake Jones	19 Mimi Bittick	26 Nowell Berreth	31 Dale Ray
5 Sandy Jones	13 Jennye Guy	19 Nick Lazzaro	27 Debbie Fox	
5 Pete Mounts	13 Charlie Menefee	20 Caroline Parrish	29 Cha Holmes	
6 Lucy Grant	13 Robert Gray	22 Bill Means	29 Randy Parrish	

Liberian School Provides Meaningful Experience

(Elder Emilie Paille visited the African nation of Liberia as part of a teaching/learning delegation from Mercer University, where she is a professor. This is her account of the experience.)

At 7:20 every morning in Virginia, Liberia, students between the ages of three and 22 begin to gather in front of Ricks Institute. At 7:30 sharp, they stand in long lines, facing the flag pole. A group of upper classmen are ready to raise the flag. One of them blows a whistle; another fastens the flag to the chain. Ricks students salute and repeat the pledge to the Liberian flag, which slowly rises to the top of the pole. The student body, still at attention, sings the Ricks Institute song and then the Liberian National Anthem. On the road beyond the flag pole, residents of the Ricks Compound stand and wait or pass by, many with large bundles of potato greens or buckets of water on their heads. Goats may gambol past and chickens may peck their way through. The Anthem ends, the lines of students turn to face the school building and file up the ramp and into the auditorium for the morning assembly. The school day at Ricks begins.

I spent the month of June as visiting faculty at Ricks Institute. Dr. Rick Wilson, chair of the Christianity Department at Mercer in Macon, and I led the Mercer team, consisting of an associate dean, 10 Mercer students, and four experienced teachers. We were all a part of the university's unique Mercer on Mission program, which blends service with study while living with and working with people in other cultures. Dr. Wilson's class, "Peace and Reconciliation in Post-War Liberia," began prior to our departure and continued in country. My class was a field experience class.

At Ricks, Mercer students and mentor teachers worked side-by-side in assigned classrooms with Liberian teachers in kindergarten through sixth grade. Several evenings each week, we led topic seminars, and on Saturdays we painted their classrooms, preparing the walls for white boards to replace the chalkboards. Our teacher candidates were able to "practice" teaching in Ricks classrooms, experiencing first hand being "another culture," struggling to understand Liberian English dialect and Liberian ways of teaching while Liberian teachers did the exact same thing, struggled to understand our American, Southern dialects and the different ideas we brought with us. But it worked. American college students learned to fit in and Liberian teachers learned to adapt. Strong friendships formed.

Ricks Institute is an oasis of green about 15 miles outside of the capitol, Monrovia, a city in a country struggling to recover from a long civil war. The school is a compound of 1200 acres where faculty and staff and others live, work, and grow their food. These warm, generous Liberians showed up at our door, bringing pineapples cut from their gardens, mangoes struck down from a tree, lettuce (roots attached) fresh from the soil.

Most students walk to school on the foot paths that cross the campus. Education is free for kindergarten through sixth grade, but students must pay for seventh through twelfth grade education and many older students live in the dormitory there. All students wear uniforms; misbehavior is not tolerated. Everyone participates in the morning assembly, singing hymns, listening to daily devotionals and brief programs and to announcements. Students are called to the front of the auditorium during assembly: the girls basketball team to be praised for the game they won; young men who have earned scholarships to be applauded; 14 athletic young men swaggered to sing songs which I can almost still hear; and students names are called out, "Go back to the dorm and make up your bed."

What lies ahead? I hope for continued collaboration between Ricks Institute and the Tift College of Education. Our month in Liberia flew by. The Liberians welcomed us with generosity, warmth, and appreciation. I doubt that they ever realized that they gave us far more than they received.

Emilie Paille

MPC Welcomes Guest Preacher Lisa Larges to Pulpit

Our congregation welcomes to the pulpit on Aug. 9 Lisa Larges, Minister Coordinator of *That All May Freely Serve*, an organization of Presbyterians founded in 1992 to advocate for an inclusive and welcoming church and for the ordination of all qualified candidates for ministry in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Lisa's call to serve the church came at an early age. A graduate of St. Olaf College, she began studies at San Francisco Theological Seminary, graduating with honors in 1989. A lifelong Presbyterian, Lisa became a candidate for ministry in the Twin Cities Presbytery in 1985. The Presbytery affirmed her call to ministry as an open lesbian, but that affirmation was overturned in 1992 by the highest Presbyterian judicial court.

Lisa has continued to seek ordination as a Minister of Word and Sacrament for more than 20 years. In a groundbreaking decision, the Presbytery of San Francisco has recently approved Lisa to move forward—a sign of hope for her ordination. Lisa makes her home in San Francisco and travels throughout the country as an evangelist for God's love, welcome and justice. She's a member of Noe Valley Ministry, a Presbyterian church in San Francisco.

Bible Class Turns from Prayer Study to Views on Letter to Romans

The Morningside Bible Class concludes its current series based on Professor Walter Brueggemann's book, *Great Prayers of the Old Testament* Aug. 9. The final two weeks include prayers from important and often neglected Old Testament characters such as Ezra and Nehemiah, as well as the stirring prayers of Daniel and Job.

A series titled "Reading Romans with Reformers" begins Aug. 16. On July 10 Presbyterians and Reformed Christians all over the world celebrated the 500th anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, the founder of our theological tradition. For Calvin, as for church reformers from St. Augustine to Martin Luther to Karl Barth, the epicenter and high-water mark of the Bible is found in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The letter, written some time in the middle of the First Century, was the Apostle Paul's theological masterpiece addressing justification, salvation, and the nature of God.

This fall we will read Romans with one another and alongside the great reflections and commentaries of our predecessors in the Reformed Tradition. Drawing particularly on the work of Calvin and Barth, who each wrote about Romans early in their careers, we will explore the ways in which this ancient letter has spoken to the church through the centuries and continues to do so in our time. The Morningside Bible Class meets each Sunday at 9:45am in Room 201 and is taught by Assoc. Pastor Chris Henry.



*Students and
teachers at
Ricks Institute
in Liberia
welcomed a
delegation from
Mercer University
including
Emilie Paille.
Read her account
on Page 6.*



Dinner, Free Frampton Concert Create Evening of Entertainment

Get ready for a trip from Gershwin to Bach—and back—featuring the powerhouse piano of member Mac Frampton, international touring and recording artist, in a free concert here at MPC Wednesday, Aug. 19, at 7:30 p.m.

Holder of a doctorate in Musical Arts from the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music and a semifinalist in the prestigious Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, Mac's jazz and pop arrangements received accolades from Cliburn himself. He went on to establish himself as a "rock-alternative" performer steeped in classical technique.

Prior to the concert, everyone is invited to gather for supper at 6:30 p.m. Brookhaven's noted Terra Terroir restaurant will provide pre-ordered meals. Visit www.morningsidepc.org to see the menu, make and pay for your selections and pick them up in Fellowship Hall. Dinners must be ordered and prepaid no later than 5 p.m. Mon., Aug. 17.

Women's Groups Begin Fall Meeting Schedule

After a brief summer break, both Lydia's Circle and the Women's Roundtable resume meeting in August. Lydia's Circle emphasizes social and service connections for young mothers and professional women and will meet Thursday, Aug. 23, at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Cathy Keaveney (714 Sherwood Rd., 30324). RSVP care of Tara Parrish (taraparrish@bellsouth.net).

Watch Life@Morningside for confirmation of an exciting speaker for the Aug. 24 dinner meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the home of Lynn Young (277 The Prado NE, 30306). It may be someone you've seen on CNN!