



Morningside Messenger

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Serving You

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

October 2009 Worship at Morningside

October 4, 2009

World Communion Sunday

Sermon: "Putting Aside Childish Ways"

Texts: I Corinthians 1:10-11; I Corinthians 13:11

Joanna Adams preaching

The sacrament of communion will be celebrated.

Sunday Forum

October 11, 2009

Sermon: "Regaining Consciousness"

Texts: Luke 18:18-28; Exodus 20:1-6

Joanna Adams preaching

New Member Sunday

October 18, 2009

Sermon: "Don't Give Up on the Family"

Texts: Genesis 1:26-31; Psalm 78:1-8

Joanna Adams preaching

The sacrament of baptism will be celebrated.

Sunday Forum

October 25, 2009

Sermon: "Demanding Goodness from God"

Texts: Job 42:1-6, 10; Mark 10:46-52

Joanna Adams preaching



Dear Friends,

Two topics are on my mind this October:

- The first relates to the last in our series of conversations with friends from other faiths, when Laurie Patton, Charles Howard Candler Professor and Professor of Early Indian Religions at Emory University, will be our guest at an after-worship forum on Sunday, Oct. 18. Under her leadership as Chair of the Department of Religion, the department reached a new level of world-wide respect. She is author of seven books, was a Fulbright Scholar and has received Emory's highest award for teaching. (See related story on Page 6.) Over the years, Laurie and I have worked together on several projects. I find her to be both an intellectually brilliant and an extraordinarily loving human being.

Her subject will be Hinduism, and you'll not want to miss hearing her and being in dialogue with her. I rejoice that Morningside is a place where we are enriched by our own Christian faith tradition and enlightened by people who follow a different spiritual path. Emory ethicist James Fowler wrote of the importance of creating "zones of liberation from the social, political, economic, and ideological shades we place on human community... [The world needs people who are] ready for fellowship with all other people... Those who arrive at the highest level of faith maturity – and they are rare among us – are those not threatened by difference but who delight in difference and learn from it." Could it be that "zones of fellowship" are what will finally save our world from hatred and war?

- The other thing on my mind is mission and how so many of you are out there in the world doing so many things that help our neighbors, from sorting food at the Food Bank to being a "sleeper" at the Shearith Israel Night Shelter during cold months. Folk singer Pete Seeger once built a schooner called the *Clearwater*. He used it to take people on Hudson River excursions to enlist their support for cleaning up the river and its beaches. Although it was a small endeavor, Seeger likened it to a seesaw with one end anchored to the ground by a basket of rocks, while activists were at the other end using teaspoons to slowly fill a basket with sand. Some day the balance will tip and the rocks will be sent flying into the air. People will ask: "How did that happen so quickly?" It was because of "us and our damned little teaspoons."

Let's get our teaspoons and have at it this fall!

Blessings from your pastor,

Joanna

Joanna Adams



These '16th Century Genevans' at September's elementary-age Big Fun Day celebrate the 500th birthday of John Calvin--lawyer, city manager and great theologian whose ideas form much of the basis for our Presbyterian faith tradition.

Treasurer Offers First Half Financial Survey

Although the ‘September monsoon’ washed out the monthly Session meeting, church Treasurer Randy Parrish prepared a report on the church’s first-half financial status. The bottom line? We’re weathering a difficult economic environment rather well, assuming summer pledges are caught up.

He noted that unlike in past years, receipts have varied widely month-to-month, making it difficult to forecast a trend. Ministry team leaders have helped by carefully controlling expenses.

Pledges for our capital campaign, *A Time of Promise*, lag somewhat. As of June 30, we had \$260,000 in uncollected pledges, with a loan balance of \$976,000. We are amortizing the loan out of our annual budget. It’s still possible to make new pledges and gifts to *A Time of Promise*.

Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor to Preach at Morningside

In a significant honor for our pastor and for Morningside, noted preacher, teacher and writer the Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor cleared her calendar to be able to preach here Sunday, Nov. 8, something she especially wanted to do in celebration of Joanna Adams’ ministry.

Rev. Taylor is the author of 12 books including, most recently, *An Altar in the World*, and teaches religion at Piedmont College and spirituality at Columbia Theological Seminary. She has preached and lectured to Christian communities all over the world.



Morningside Milestones

- ☐ Everyone loves a birthday party, and we’ll celebrate MPC’s eighty-fourth with an extra-special congregational luncheon Nov. 8. Program Director Melinda Sandkam has a list of bite-sized tasks that could use your hands, for as you know, many hands make light work.
- ☐ A third-year student at Columbia Theological Seminary, Alicia Wilson now leads the second/third graders during worship on Sundays. Alicia hails from Salisbury, NC and is a Furman graduate. Her plans for the year include quarterly outings with the kids, starting Oct. 4 with lunch followed by policing the litter at the Morningside Nature Preserve after worship.
- ☐ Fall time is Funderball time! The annual Morningside Preschool fundraiser invites you to line up a sitter and join in an evening under the stars at the Warren City Club Saturday, Oct. 17, from 7-9 p.m. Food, drink and a silent auction of charming keepsakes are promised. For more, contact Dawn Bell (dm_bell@yahoo.com).
- ☐ Seeing double? No, it was twins Katherine Grace and Elizabeth Sarah Jern being baptized Sept. 13, as they joined the church with their mother, Lisa. Others joining our church family that day were Julie and Ben Kennedy and Mindy Potter. Seek them out and welcome them in!

October Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1 Charlotte Spears | 5 David Wingert | 15 Sanda Means | 24 Cate Branon |
| 1 Whitney Maloy | 7 Jo Faddis | 15 Alex Regnault | 25 Riley Ruby |
| 1 Shelley Senterfitt | 8 Duncan Spears | 16 Addison Berreth | 26 Pam Sharpe |
| 2 Carson Myers | 8 Melisa Prevost | 16 Ann Brady | 27 Robin Hackney |
| 2 Duncan Walker | 9 Jane Simpson | 16 Philip Hawkins | 28 Merwin Peake |
| 2 Frances Bresnahan | 10 Megan Nelson | 17 Joanna Adams | 30 Pat Antenucci |
| 2 Alan Godfrey | 14 Lily Woolley | 18 William Grigley | 30 James Beasley |
| 3 Jeannette McClure | 13 Amy Jarratt | 18 Donna Scalf | 31 Don Grant |
| 4 Tia Bartis | 13 David Yntema | 20 Jessica Adams | 31 Jeff Peters |
| 4 Don Zahnle | 14 Rachel Scalf | 21 Betty Blaine | |
| 5 Miranda Brownlee | 15 Joseph Brady | 22 Julie Green | |

Elder, Deacon Selection Critical to Setting Church Path

In our Presbyterian tradition, we believe that the Holy Spirit works best in our church through the will of the people as represented by its elders and deacons. To serve as an elder or deacon means “to lead in the faithful, exciting call of Christ to be God’s people in this world” (*The Presbyterian Outlook*). It is not a popularity vote, but the Holy Spirit working through the congregation to select leaders for a particular time in the life of our church. Leadership has never been more important than now, as our time with Joanna draws to a close; we look to a future with hope and a deep sense of commitment to Christ and his mission. As Rev. Chris Henry said in his Sermon, *Church and the iPod Generation*, “The church is at its best when it is on the move, looking and pointing beyond itself to the places where God is leading us forward.”

As you think about possible nominations for both elder and deacon, please keep in mind what the *Book of Order* states about church leaders in Section G-6, “In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and love of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.”

Specifically, “Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the church and in the world.” The section goes on to describe the specific responsibilities of elders. The first duty of elders, individually and together, is to strengthen and nurture the faith and life of the congregation. Another duty is to encourage the people in worship and service. This naturally flows into the next call for elders—to equip and renew those in the congregation in God’s mission to the world, focusing on the ground-level problems of the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the oppressed. Elders also should cultivate their ability to teach the Bible and lead in worship.

Regarding the role of deacon, the *Book of Order* states, “The office of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of sympathy, witness, and service after the example of Jesus Christ. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, warm sympathies, and sound judgment should be chosen for this office.” It is a ministry of caring; a ministry of love; a ministry of compassion; and a ministry of prayer, and community of service.

The Officer Nominating Committee has begun the process of nominating elders, deacons, and next year’s congregational representatives to the Officer Nominating Committee. This year’s committee is composed of Beth Baer, Anne Barnette, Collier Maxwell, Art Sweum, and David Wingert. Please look for the Officer Nomination Forms in the Oct. 4 and 11 Bulletins (MPC will be nominating members of story on Page 9.). Before submitting someone’s name, please be sure that the person is willing to serve a three-year term.

As our congregation continues to grow, please understand that submitting a name for nomination does not mean that the person ultimately will be nominated. Church officer nomination forms can be given to the church office or placed in the offering plates or the white boxes in the Narthex and Welcome Center no later than Sunday, Oct. 18. In addition, please watch for reminders in *Life@Morningside* of the congregational meeting on Sunday, Nov. 8, to elect officers as well as conduct other church business that needs your approval.

Anne Barnette
Chair, Officer Nominating Committee

Don't
Miss
This!

Coming Attractions! Sunday, November 8

- ☐ Special guest preacher
Rev. Barbara Brown Taylor
- ☐ Officer and PNC elections
- ☐ MPC’s 84th birthday
congregational luncheon

Goblins Will Gather at Church, in Garden

Although it's geared mostly to families, regardless of your age or whether you prefer to dress as a scary spectre or your favorite apostle, you're invited to a special outing after church on Sunday, Oct. 25. It involves lunch, costumes and a trip to the Atlanta Botanical Gardens "Goblins in the Garden" party.

Those who are planning to attend will gather for a soup-and-sandwich lunch in Fellowship Hall (regular Fellowship Hour will be held upstairs), and after the kids change into their costumes, it's off to the garden for trick-or-treating, a costume parade, pony rides, story time and the Ride-on-Train. In addition, there'll be time to check out the Scarecrows in the Garden display.

Organizer Vickie Hunter is looking for help providing soup or sandwiches, as well as an RSVP for headcount. E-mail her at marshvickhunter@comcast.net. Admission to the botanical garden costs \$15 for adults and \$12 for children.

Camp Games Not Just for Summer, Also for Supper

You and your kids, whether they sing in one of the children's choirs or not, are welcome for an 'easy dinner' with Camp Calvin Program Director Paul Humphreys, Wednesday, Oct. 14, at 5:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall.

Paul will lead some fun camp games with the kids—younger ones until Cherub Choir begins at 6 p.m. and then continue with the older crowd until Treble Choir starts at 6:30. Reserve via the church office. Dinner will be \$5 for children, \$8 for adults, \$15 for families.

Newcomers Offered Chance to Lunch, Learn

New members and those considering joining MPC can find out more about our church and denomination at our quarterly Lunch and Learn, Sunday, Oct. 11, in Room 107 after worship.

The Revs. Joanna Adams and Chris Henry lead a discussion of what it means to be a Presbyterian and what it means to follow the way of Jesus in today's world. Plus, a wealth of good information on how to get connected in service and fellowship at Morningside. RSVP to Deacon Nancy Collins at ncollins0209@gmail.com and be sure to let her know if you need childcare by Tuesday, Oct. 6.

Readers Reshuffle October Plans

This month only, RHO Readers will meet on the third Sunday, Oct. 18, at 1 p.m. Considering the season, our book is the horror classic, *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James. As one participant remarked, "At least it's short Henry James!"

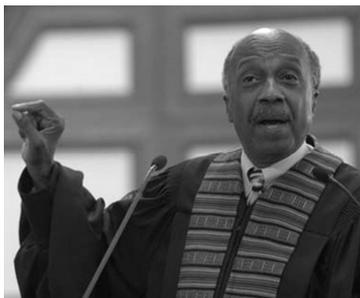
The conversation and reading group welcomes anyone to drop in for one meeting or to become a regular attendee. Selections for the upcoming months include for November, the satirical classic *Miss Mapp* by E. F. Benson and for January, *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* by David Wroblewski. There's no December meeting. Daisy Ottmann is the contact for more information.

Children's Programs Name New Leaders

Along with adding Alicia Wilson to our staff of teachers for the children's worship hour, members Rachel Spears and Jill Davis are now chairing the teams for children in mission and children in worship, respectively. Jill also is the lead Children's Choir Mom. Watch for opportunities to support their efforts to provide mission projects for our kids and to help them learn about worship.

Distinguished Guests Will Lead Sunday Forums

October will bring distinguished guests to our ongoing series of Sunday Forums at Morningside. On Oct. 4, Rev. Dr. Joe Roberts, pastor emeritus of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta and Wade Huie



Professor of Preaching at Columbia Theological Seminary, will join in discourse with Morningside's pastor, Joanna Adams, about contemporary race relations in the church and beyond. These two pastors and community leaders have worked side by side on significant issues in our city and in the church for more than 30 years. Be sure to be there for "Black and White in America."

Next, we welcome Dr. Laurie Patton, who is Charles Howard Candler Professor and Professor of Early Indian Religions at Emory University, on Oct. 18. Dr. Patton has served as chair of the Department of Religion at

Emory and has received the university's highest award for teaching, the Emory Williams Award. Her scholarly interests are in the interpretation of early Indian ritual and narrative, comparative mythology, literary theory in the study of religion, and women and Hinduism in contemporary India. She has also been Joanna's long-time friend and colleague. This Sunday Forum will be the culmination of our 2009 series, Morningside in Conversation with Other Faiths. Dr. Patton will reflect on the relationship of various faith traditions in contemporary American society and on the significant questions facing people of faith today.



These timely and important conversations take place from 12:15 to 1:15 p.m. in Room 201 and childcare is available

Programs Planned for Men, Women—and Both

The Men of Morningside will gather for "Theology on Tap" Tuesday, Oct. 6 at 7 p.m. at the home of Todd McDonald (835 Rowland Street, Clarkston, 30021). After supper, Assoc. Pastor Chris Henry will lead a discussion on the role of religious faith and theology in the current debate over health care in our nation. We will share our own perspectives on this timely and important issue and also examine the diverse positions of thoughtful Christians. For more information, contact Chris.

The following morning, Oct. 7 at 9:15, in Room 201 Pastor Joanna Adams will lead an exploration of Pontius Pilate's famous jest, "What is truth?" (John 18:38), in her series of studies of important questions in the Bible. Come early for coffee and pastry! Childcare is provided.

It's not too late to join the evening study of the Gospel of Matthew, open to everyone. The group meets in participants' homes for exactly one hour, beginning at 7 p.m. on alternate Wednesdays. The dates are Oct. 7 and 21 and Nov. 4 and 18. Link Marx (linkmarx@yahoo.com or 404 323.9174) is the shepherd.

Adults Complete Romans Study, Welcome Stroup

Through the month of October, the Morningside Bible Class continues its journey through Paul's letter to the Romans. The final part of the book represents Paul's most complete picture of Christian ethics, which is built on the theological foundation laid earlier in the letter. Come learn about the "good life" according to the Apostle Paul. We'll continue to explore the ways in which this ancient letter has spoken to the church through the centuries and continues to speak in our time.

Guest teacher Nov. 1 will be the Rev. Dr. George Stroup, the J.B. Green Professor of Theology at Columbia Theological Seminary, where he has taught for more than two decades. Dr. Stroup, an expert in the life and theology of John Calvin, whose 500th birthday we celebrated earlier this year, will lead a discussion of "Calvin and the Bible." Plan to attend! The class meets Sundays at 9:45am in Room 201 and is taught by Assoc. Pastor Chris Henry.

MPC Volunteers Gear Up as Shelters Open for Season

The calendar says it's fall, and our partners at the Druid Hills men's and Shearith Israel women's shelters open their doors this month to serve the community. Morningside supports both these missions to the homeless, as well as year-round assistance to Clifton Sanctuary Ministries. The men of Clifton will hold their annual graduation dinner Sunday, Oct. 4. To join the Morningside table and hear Rev. Chris Henry's keynote, contact Tony Fishpaw (tony@firstfidelityatl.com or 404 597.5485).

MPC has provided and served supper at the Druid Hills shelter on the second Sunday evening of the month for years. Shepherds Mardee Rightmyer and Julie Green already have three groups lined up to serve through the fall: the men of Theology on Tap, Oct. 11, Young Adults on Nov. 8 and the families of the children's choirs on Dec. 13. Coming together to feed the shelter clients helps bring a group together for both fun and mission. Contact Mardee or Julie for your group to claim a second Sunday evening in 2010.

Amy DeBaets and Brian Mills are the new shepherds for our involvement with Shearith Israel, following in the (literally) award-winning footsteps of Jeanne McCarthy and Emilie Paille. The kids who took part in September's Big Fun Day decorated 'stained glass' jars to collect coins throughout the fall that will be used to buy gloves, scarves and hats for the women at the shelter. Our biggest commitment is to provide 'sleepers' who serve and enjoy dinner with the residents and spend the night. Watch for sign-up information soon.

Meanwhile, the Mitten Tree near the preschool entrance through Oct. 23 holds out its branches for mittens, gloves, scarves and hats for preschool-age kids. Your donations will go to Our House in Decatur, a preschool for children facing homelessness, before the first frost. In another Big Fun Day activity, the kids created book plates for donated books for the Our House tots.

Global Concerns, Mission Teams Define Roles

Peacemaking is a global concern, of course; it is also a part of advocacy and special offerings. Defining the roles of our Peacemaking and Global Concerns committees has been an ongoing project. Now, specific peacemaking efforts will fall under Global Concerns, which also will include building a relationship with a congregation in another part of the world. Incidentally, our annual Peacemaking Offering will be on Oct. 4, World Communion Sunday.

Mission trips will include both national and international efforts. For 2010, new leaders—Brad Odom, Duncan Spears and Tony Fishpaw—are planning an educational/working trip in March and a working trip in the fall. Brad's taking on research for the March trip to be announced by the end of October, Tony will assist in marketing our efforts, and Duncan will lead researching the fall trip. Both trips will be in the \$100 range for participants with budgets to cover the cost of gas for drivers.

Service Alert! Watch for More Info

AIDS Walk

Oct. 18, 2 p.m.

Lisa and Shannon Harris are organizing the Young Adults to provide more walkers this year. Come out and walk or donate to support your MPC team! See our page at www.aidswalkatlanta.com/morningsidepc.

Atlanta Community Food Bank

Oct. 17, 9 a.m.- noon

It's our quarterly food sort. The Double Digits will be part of the productive and fun event.

Elders on Call for October

Sarah Tomaka	October 4-October 10
Van Crisco	October 11-October 17
Chip Edgerton	October 18-October 24
Anne Barnette	October 25-October 31

Deacons on Call for October

Brad Odom	October 4-October 10
Collier Maxwell	October 11-October 17
Tim Gargis	October 18-October 24
Bill Means	October 25-October 31

Team Outlines Responsibilities, Solicits Nominations

The Session's newly appointed MPC Transition Team is at work on three important tasks: (1) to conduct listening sessions with the congregation as we contemplate what God has in store for the future of Morningside; (2) to solicit nominations from the congregation and recommend to the congregation a slate of candidates for the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC), to be elected Nov. 8; and (3) to serve as an ad hoc advisory board to Rev. Chris Henry when he assumes the responsibilities of Acting Head of Staff Jan. 11, 2010.

Members of the Transition Team include Kathy Bremer, Sarah Brownlee, Anna Garcia, Sarah Beth Gehl, Philip Hawkins, Bill Humphries, Ruthlyn Newell, Brad Odom, Leslie Prince and John Watson, and me, serving as chair.

We've started on the first two tasks. A second congregational listening session will follow worship Sunday, Oct. 25, in Room 201. Several small group get-togethers over the next month also have scheduled input sessions. Please attend any one of them and let us know your thoughts on Morningside's future. If you can't be at a listening session or prefer to communicate your ideas one-on-one, please contact any member of the Transition Team in person, by phone or e-mail.

The Transition Team will develop a slate of candidates from congregational nominations for the PNC, which should be representative of the entire congregation. This process is similar to and concurrent with the work of the Officer Nominating Committee (see story on Page 4) and must be completed before Oct. 18. To nominate someone, fill out the PNC nomination form in the Oct 4 and 11 Bulletins. You can also nominate someone by giving his/her name to a member of the Transition Team or place your nomination in the yellow boxes in the Narthex and Welcome Center.

Remember to make sure the person you nominate is willing to serve on the PNC until the completion of the search. Our Book of Order offers this guidance on the qualities of an ideal PNC member:

- demonstrates a commitment to Morningside,
- has deep and abiding faith,
- is a secure and independent thinker,
- is trustworthy with sensitive information,
- is good listener who works well within a group,
- is able to make work on the PNC a top priority,
- is dedicated to the Presbyterian search process and trusts in the movement of God's Spirit as a part of that process.

While the length of the search for a pastor is always unpredictable, we anticipate that it will take from six to 12 months. The information gathered from the listening sessions will be synthesized to put together the Church Information Form (CIF). The CIF officially announces our search and gives potential candidates information about MPC. The PNC will finalize and publish the CIF when it begins its work in January 2010. The ultimate goal of the Transition Team is to do as much of the work as we can between now and then, so the PNC can begin the search in a prompt and orderly fashion.

What an exciting time to be a part of the MPC community!

Your friend,
Michael Perez (michaelperez.atl@gmail.com)
Chair, Transition Team

Share Your Ideas!

Take part in a listening session

Sunday, October 28

at a small-group meeting

by phone, mail or in person

to a member of the Transition Team

Young Voices Ring Out at MPC on Sunday Afternoons



As many of you know, as part of our mission to be a good neighbor and gathering space for our community, Morningside makes our facilities available to groups at a reasonable rent.

A new organization you will be seeing around the church on Sunday afternoons is Harmony: Atlanta's International Youth Chorus. Directed by Joyce Carr, Harmony offers 100 youths--ages six to 18 from diverse racial, cultural, religious and socio-economic backgrounds--the opportunity to develop self-discipline, teamwork, tolerance and mutual respect as they strive for choral excellence.

Harmony has performed with The National Children's Choir at Carnegie Hall, at Atlanta's Symphony Hall for Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Jimmy Carter, at four UNICEF benefit galas, and at the Piccolo Spoleto International Music Festival in Charleston, SC.