



MorningsideMessenger

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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

February 2011 Worship at Morningside

February 6, 2011

Sermon: "Vocation"

Texts: Matthew 5:14-16; Isaiah 58:1-9

Baron Mullis preaching

The sacrament of communion will be celebrated.

Congregational Lunch following worship

February 13, 2011

Sermon: "You Have Heard It Was Said"

Matthew 5:21-37; Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Baron Mullis preaching

New Member Sunday

February 20, 2011

Sermon: "Rules for Living"

Texts: Leviticus 19:1-2; 9-18;

I Corinthians 3:10-11; 16-23

Baron Mullis preaching

February 27, 2011

Sermon: "Enough for Today"

Texts: Matthew 6:24-34; Isaiah 49: 8-16a

Baron Mullis preaching

Dear Friends,

This is the last of the liminal letters... I'm writing this before we've met, but by the time you get it, we'll be on our way: meeting each other, getting to know one another, discerning how we can do our best ministry together. That's exciting.



But liminal time is exciting too... there's something incredibly creative about being between times, between the things that normally order our days. As I wrote this, Atlanta was under a sheet of ice and more or less shut down. (So was Charlotte, for what it's worth!) I imagine you all unexpectedly got a lot of time together with your family, friends and neighbors while you waited for the thaw... so did I!

But, there was one thing that stood out to me from my liminal time, between calls, between homes, between cities, and it is this: our calling to be the people God calls us to be doesn't take a break. I had an abrupt reminder of this after the building two doors down from me caught fire last night. Even though I'm not going to be a neighbor in Charlotte any longer, even though I'm about as short a short-timer as can be, the calling to offer kindness, to help in any way I can; to be a visible sign of God's grace is not in any way diminished.

So, I had to think of how I could offer hospitality in the short term. With no other ideas and one foot out the door, I walked down the sidewalk and offered to a family cleaning out their former home that I'd go get coffee or carry boxes if they needed. They didn't. They only wanted my prayers. And so I left praying for them.

Liminal space: the time between our settled times. We can find ourselves there with no notice whatsoever... or with plenty of notice... the question is: what will we do with it?

Shalom,

Baron Mullis

Adult Class Will Consider Crisis in Creation

A 'roadshow' of experts on environmental challenges will present a four-week series Sunday mornings concerning aspects of the current crisis facing God's creation. The speakers are sponsored by MPC's Environmental Action Committee led by Sarah Tomaka.

Kicking off the series on Feb. 13 will be Dabney Dixon, a chemistry professor at Georgia State, with a presentation titled "The House of Prayer for All People: Scientific Perspectives and God's Creation."

The following week, Anne Harper, development director with GreenLaw, will talk about their work in environmental justice; then Rebecca Watts-Hull will talk about Mothers and Others for Clean Air and share some of the work North Decatur Presbyterian has done for Creation Care. The series ends Mar. 6 with Rev. Dr. Bill Brown, Old Testament professor from Columbia Theological Seminary, who will present "Earth's Story in the Old Testament."

Group Studies Offer Non-Sunday School

If you're like many people who feel unfamiliar with scripture, you can of course take time to read the Bible. Or commentaries--we have many in our own MPC library. You can attend a Sunday morning class. And there's another option. We call it Small Group Bible Study.

One group has been up and running for a couple of years. It meets in a member's home every other Wednesday evening from 7 to 8 p.m. Led by Link Marx, the group has just begun a study of The Book of Acts.

Anyone can join this group--or start their own. All it takes is a like-minded bunch and a mutually convenient meeting time. Many, many study guides are available for four-to-six session modules. The topic doesn't even have to be biblical--last summer a group considered the rule of St. Benedict as a guide for living.

If you'd like to join the group studying Acts, be in touch with Link (fmarx25@yahoo.com). He can also give advice about starting and managing a group, and Baron also will be happy to discuss possible study subjects.

Upcoming Activities Call for Hearts, Hands

We have several congregational lunches every year as a great opportunity to chat and chew and get to know one another better. Our first of these expanded fellowship hours for the year will be Feb. 6 in Fellowship Hall immediately after worship. The food will be catered, so let the church office know via email, phone or RSVP card placed in the offering plate of your plans to attend. Also, Brad Odom (jbradleyodom@gmail.com) is coordinating set up, serving and clean up so please tell him if you can lend a hand.

Every February, church members from all over the state gather at Central Presbyterian, across the street from the state capital for Presbyterian Rally Day. This year's event focuses on healthcare, immigration and the state budget. Breakfast and meetings with state representatives are part of the agenda. This year, Rally Day is Feb. 10. RSVP to Karen Turney at Central at kt2654@gmail.com or contact Sarah Beth Gehl sbcoffey@gmail.com.

On Feb. 12 our Presbytery celebrates progress in new church development with a dinner. MPC is sponsoring a table at the event, which includes glimpses into other cultures with which we share our faith. Let Melinda Sandkam know if you'd like a seat at our table. Dinner and worship begin at 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Presbyterian.

We're not seeking volunteers for the first day of our new Habitat build so that roll-up-your-sleeves types can be useful here at Morningside for a property work day. Miguel Garcia is coordinating the chores and volunteers. Contact him at garcia.miguel@comcast.net or sign up in the Welcome Center to help spruce up our building and grounds.

MPC invites you to attend the Atlanta Opera's production of "Porgy and Bess" with our group on Friday, Mar. 4 at 8 p.m. We have reserved Orchestra side seats on the main level. The cost is \$34.41 per ticket. E-mail Sarah Brownlee at rsbrownlee1046@att.net to hold a ticket and make checks out to MPC.

Looking ahead, get ready to 'flip' Mar. 8 as Evangelism Initiatives hosts our next Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. This has become quite a tradition for preschool families as well as our own church membership. It takes many hands to make hot cakes, so mark your calendars to help and contact chair Jennifer James at jennjames@comcast.net. Dinner begins at 5:30 p.m. and we need volunteers before, during and after. Of course, on Wednesday, Mar. 9 we will have our solemn Ash Wednesday worship service marking the beginning of Lent with the imposition of ashes.

Morningside Milestones

- It's the time of year when all good Presbyterian churches report their statistics to our denomination headquarters in Louisville, KY. Here's how we ended up 2010. We have 470 active members and six on the inactive roll. Last year we gained 31 members and only three moved on to other churches. Our congregation is almost perfectly balanced between men and women. We're a young bunch: our largest age group is between 26 and 45 and we've got 83 kids from infants through first grade—we're going to need more Sunday school teachers!
- We're going to grow some more—our next New Member Sunday will be Feb. 13 and we already have a list of individuals waiting to join our church family. Call the church office to speak with Baron if you'd like to join.
- We celebrated the life and witness of our member and sister in Christ, Julia Baldwin Taylor, in a memorial service Jan. 24. The mother of Julie Taylor Green and Rev. Catherine Taylor, she was a reader, a fan and passionate for social justice. Our sympathies are with Julie and Mardee Rightmyer and their family and friends.
- Want the most up-to-date info about church activities? Log on to www.morningsidepc.org. Current activities are on the homepage (that's the first page) and events a little farther out are under the "News and Events" tab under "Upcoming Events." You also can learn more about our small groups, classes and hear our choir and sermons on the site. Check it out!
- Thirty-nine adults and seven kids attended our second Montreat Retreat in November. Concensus was this should be a permanent fixture on our church calendar.

MPC Aims to Keep Our ‘Hearts in Haiti’ This Year

One year ago, Haiti was struck by a catastrophic magnitude 7.0 M earthquake, with an epicenter near the town of Léogâne, approximately 16 miles west of Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. Two weeks later at least 52 aftershocks measuring 4.5 or greater had been recorded. An estimated three million people were affected by the quake; the Haitian government reported that some 230,000 people had died, 300,000 had been injured and one million made homeless. They also estimated that 250,000 residences and 30,000 commercial buildings had collapsed or were severely damaged.

Haiti's woes were compounded by damage to infrastructure, including roads to move in relief supplies and equipment, ineffective government and storms and floods. In addition, the country faced a major cholera outbreak in the fall that has killed thousands and further overwhelmed medical facilities. Hundreds of thousands still live in makeshift tents.

In October, 14 members from MPC traveled to Haiti's St. Joseph's Home for Boys and Wings of Hope, and the devastation became a reality for them. They helped clear

away rubble from two of the three destroyed buildings at St. Joseph's, so that rebuilding could begin. Our whole community supported their trip by sending 850 pounds of items with them in "second suitcases" and supporting the travelers and the people of Haiti with their prayers.

2011 is full of potential to grow the relationship between the Hearts for Haiti organization and MPC: Haiti's Resurrection Dance Theater will visit Atlanta Apr. 13-20, and we plan to attend as a group; we've established a scholarship fund for future pilgrims to Haiti thanks to a generous donation, and we're already planning a return trip this fall.

You can help by joining the Global Concerns Committee of the Mission Ministry. Even if you can't travel to Haiti, you can still be part of the team that brings us closer to our friends in need – through communications, prayers, collections and much more that will support the good work of Hearts for Haiti. Contact Global Concerns Chair Bryan Davis at bdavis@mindspring.com to let him know of your interest as we set a February meeting date.

Check Out These Needs for Your Goods, Services

- Place your \$10 Target, CVS, Publix, etc. gift cards to give the ladies at Shearith Israel Shelter for Valentines' Day in the *heart* bag on the Mission bulletin board by Sunday, Feb. 6.
- Join us in providing lunch Tuesday, Feb. 8, for 45 men attending the Common Ground program at AIDS Alliance for Faith & Health. If you still have a pan from January's ice-cancelled lunch, please e-mail Lynn Daniel (lgd1@bellsouth.net) if you can or can't bring the requested item to the church on Tuesday, Feb. 8. Please tell her by Feb. 3, so she'll know what dishes to put out for Pick-a-Pan Sunday, Feb. 6.
- Shepherd Shirley Adair will provide supplies to assemble non-perishable bags of food for those in need. This Bread for the Journey project will take place in Fellowship Hall after worship Sunday, Feb. 13. Please help out during Fellowship Hour.
- Sign up [now](#) on the Mission board to provide a dish on Sunday, Feb. 13, for the 30 men staying at Druid Hills Night Shelter. Contact Shepherd Curt Barrett with questions (emailcurt@mindspring.com or 404-310-4665).
- Pajamas! They just seem to fly out the door at the Threads store, a clothing ministry of All Saint's Episcopal Church. Our church will help provide new pajamas, underwear and socks Feb. 13—Mar. 8. Collection baskets in the Welcome Center will be available for your donations for infant through fifth grade sizes. Boys' clothes are always in shorter supply than girls' clothes. Parents, your preschool or school-age child would love to help you make selections. Contact Gail Kitchens at gailkitchens@gmail.com with any questions.
- Revised dates for our Habitat Build are Feb. 26 through Apr. 2. On Mar. 5, we need to provide lunch for all 50 volunteers. Sign up with Lynsley Tyler (lynley@bellsouth.net) or on the bulletin board.

February 6 Makes Super Bowl ‘Souper’

More than 20 years ago, Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group: “Lord, as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us to be mindful of those without even a bowl of soup to eat.” Since that day, more than \$71 million has been raised for local charities across the country. The Double Digits (4th-7th graders) of Morningside invite everyone to

bring \$2 to give to the Souper Bowl offering on Sunday, February 6. The Double Digits will be collecting your \$2 in soup pots as you exit the sanctuary following worship. MPC will give its offering to Atlanta Community Food Bank which in turn supports many of the outreach organizations that we work with such as Intown Collaborative Ministries and Clifton Sanctuary Ministries.

Baron Mullis Makes Time to Make Rounds of Group Meetings



Meeting MPCers where we gather, Baron Mullis has been spending informal time getting to know us as individuals. Here, he joins the One Gray Hair group for lunch and Rev. Robert Gray's interpretation of the life and works of Scottish poet Robert Burns.

Baron has also turned up at a choir rehearsal, Women's Roundtable, MPC Couples, and on Feb. 1 will attend Theology on Tap at the home of Greg Morton (7 p.m. at 2973 W. Roxboro Rd., 30324). He'll visit with the Young Adults Feb. 5 (see below).

There will be many more opportunities to get acquainted with our new senior pastor. Also, remember all our small groups welcome newcomers besides Baron! Check out scheduled meetings on our website, in Life@Morningside and in the weekly e-mail broadcast.

Young Adults Mix & Mingle February 5

Join us for a casual gathering at the home of Tony Fishpaw and Kent Balch (1391 Rock Springs Circle, 30306) on Saturday, Feb. 5, at 6:30 p.m. We'll welcome Baron Mullis, so don't miss this opportunity to get to know our

new pastor. Please bring an appetizer to share and your favorite beverage. RSVP to tonyfishpaw@me.com.

RHO Readers Change Meeting Time

Our coed book discussion group, the RHO Readers, moved their meeting time up to 12:45 p.m. on the third Sunday every month. On Feb. 20, the topic will be

Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, led by Anne Menefee. Everyone is welcome! Questions? Call Daisy Ottmann (404.812.9725).

Elders on Call for February

John Watson	February 6-12
Tony Fishpaw	February 13-19
Shannon Harris	February 20-26
Bradley Odom	February 27-March 5

Deacons on Call for February

Duncan Spears	February 6-12
Link Marx	February 13-19
Shari Tant	February 20-26
Brenda Fishpaw	February 27-March 5

Your Session at Work: January 18 Meeting

Every one of Session's ministry teams is at work on plans for the year, setting meetings and priorities and filling sub-team leadership roles. One major ministry still seeking a leader is Discipleship. **Philip Hawkins**, with the assistance of **John Watson**, has filled in for the first of the year and assured adult classes will be offered until Lent. (See story on Page 2 about our special guest teachers for this month.)

Finance Committee chairs **Bobbie McCrackin** and **Randy Parrish** presented the year-end report for 2010. Thanks to final pledge payments and generous one-time gifts reflecting members' confidence in the future of our congregation, MPC ended the year by meeting our budget. The fine work of our Commitment Ministries Team led by **Tom Daniel** allowed the Finance team to restore some proposed budget cuts for this year. Children and Youth Ministries will receive their original proposed budgeted amount and the reductions in Mission Ministries have been restored. Session feels pleased to start Baron Mullis' ministry with us in strong financial condition.

Session also briefly discussed the importance of members' Time and Talent forms for filling various teams and committees, such as greeters, counters, lay liturgists, writers, artists and office help. Members will continue to be encouraged to fill out the forms and turn

them in to the church office for distribution to the teams.

Morningside currently needs a part-time director for the Children's Choir. Members can help us find qualified candidates, who must have children's choir experience and piano skills. The job entails preparing practices and performances in close collaboration with Walter Huff. Interested candidates should send their resumes to music@morningsidepc.org. We're an equal opportunity employer.

Sue Ballay and **Brad Odom**, who will be MPC's voting commissioners at the next meeting of the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta, Feb. 19, reported on a preliminary meeting held in January. This unusual step reflects the importance of issues to come up for a vote at this meeting. See Page 8 for more detail. Baron Mullis' acceptance into our presbytery also will be on the agenda.

Session warmly thanked Rev. David Weitnauer for serving as moderator during this time of transition.

Daisy Ottmann for

Clerk of Session



February Birthdays

2 Shanon Burgess
2 Lee Kean
2 Tom Daniel
2 Karen Churchill-Hairston
3 Helen Schroder

6 Kerri Markovic
6 Will Barnette
6 Gene Turner
7 William Kitchens
9 Mike Gay
9 Nancy Collins
9 Leslie Grant
10 Andrew Brady
10 Martha Krenson
11 Heather Regnault
12 Gwyndolyn Brady
12 Domenick Treschitta
12 Jim Clegg
12 Peter Dickson

15 John Turner
16 Kayte Pellerito
18 Todd Jones
20 Becky Schreiber
22 John Adams
22 Gus Restrepo
23 Elsie Adams
23 Charles Bittick
23 Bill Smith
24 Ellie Spears
24 Georgia Marshall
25 Barbara Ray
26 Deborah Coleman
27 Jim Armstrong

27 Curt Barrett
28 Beth Baer
29 Nancy Cunningham

Presbytery of Greater Atlanta Prepares for Crucial Vote

Our denomination—Presbyterian Church (USA)—has several major initiatives that will be voted upon by individual presbyteries across the country this year. The body to which Morningside Presbyterian belongs—the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta—will vote on these issues on Feb. 19.

One of the initiatives changes part of the PC(USA) constitution. It rewrites the section of our Book of Order that deals with church government to make it less of a set of rules and more of a true ‘constitution,’ or set of guidelines.

A second item of business would add a new confession to the second part of our constitution, the Book of Confessions. The Adult Bible Class has been studying the place of the current 11 confessions in their historical and theological context. The proposed addition, the Confession of Belhar, was written in 1986 in South Africa in response to apartheid. Its contribution to our tenets of faith is affirmation of unity and reconciliation under

Christ and rejection of racial and color separation, while promoting social justice. To learn more, attend the Sunday class at 9:45 a.m. in Room 201 on Feb. 6, led by Jack and James Klotz.

The third agenda item is to act on a recommendation of the church’s General Assembly of 2010 that would change the language in the section of the Book of Order that describes ordination standards for elders, deacons and ministers. Basically, it would direct each governing body to assess a candidate for ordination individually on his or her ability and commitment to fulfill the requirements set forth in our constitution. It drops specific references to marriage and chastity.

Morningside is allowed two voting ‘commissioners’ at the meeting. Our commissioners will be elders Sue Balay and Brad Odom. In addition, our senior pastor, Baron Mullis, also has a vote. Presbytery meetings are open to all. The Feb. 19 meeting will be held at Trinity Presbyterian Church.