



Morningside Messenger

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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December 2011-Worship at Morningside

December 4, 2011

Second Sunday of Advent

Joanna Adams preaching

"Optometry for Exiles"

Text: Isaiah 40:1-11

Cherub and Treble Choirs Singing

The sacrament of communion will be celebrated.

December 11, 2011

Third Sunday of Advent

Special Music Sunday

Antonio Vivaldi's *Gloria*

Presented by Morningside Chancel Choir

Megan Mashburn, Tami Giusto and Kate Murray-soloists

December 18, 2011

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Baron Mullis preaching

"Here Am I"

Text: Luke 1:26-38

The sacrament of baptism will be celebrated.

December 24, 2011

4 p.m., Christmas Eve

Family Friendly Service with Handbells,
Young Liturgists and a story by Baron Mullis
(nursery provided)

December 24, 2011

8 p.m., Christmas Eve

Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols at 8 p.m.
(childcare available; doors open at 7:15 p.m.)

December 25, 2011

11 a.m., Christmas

Baron Mullis preaching

"Good News of Great Joy"

Text: Luke 2:1-20

(no children's programs; nursery will be available)

Dear Friends,

Okay, so I know better than to suggest a Christmas season without gifts! Even though the adults in my family dispensed with the gift exchange in favor of a collective Heifer International donation years ago, we have doggedly continued to spoil the children rotten. I am unapologetic and unrepentant on this matter.



However, with that disclaimer, let's consider Advent. Several of you have forwarded me clips of a video about what is called, "the advent conspiracy." If you haven't heard of it, Google it— it'll come right up. The tagline says, "Restore the scandal of Christmas by substituting compassion for consumption."

So, I have a challenge for you: think about what Christmas means. I know it can sound pat to point out the obvious, but take some time and really think about it. It certainly wasn't an easy season to its first participants! Any unwed pregnant teenager would probably say that's not so easy. A man accepting and raising an infant whose very presence is a daily reminder that he's not the father: not so easy. Shepherds sleeping outdoors getting awakened by heavenly voices – that sounds great, until you realize that it's terrifying. Foreign dignitaries realize they must flee the country by another route to avoid returning to the court of a tyrannical despot: not so easy. Oh, and taxes.

The whole story is far grittier, far more earthy, than the mall decorations suggest. There really is something of a scandal about the way that God entered the world. God's entry into the world was not exactly typical godly behavior.

Here's my second challenge for you: as we navigate Advent, remember that Lent is coming. We're celebrating a baby in December, but before we get to a resurrection on Easter, there is troubled terrain to travel.

Ahhhh... so my work is now complete. Into your holiday joy I've suggested a little darkness must fall. But isn't that life? And that's the life that God decided to take on to be close to us, to "reach across the abyss of our sin," as

I so often pray after communion. And please don't mistake my intent – I believe God rejoices in our joy and takes delight in our delight – because the God we worship is a God who wants a relationship with us. But that's the point. God wants a relationship with us.

Just something to think about while we're running around in December.

Thanks for reading,

Special Class Will Deepen Appreciation of Special Music

Walter Huff and our Chancel Choir annually enhance our Advent season with an extended presentation of music during worship. This year, they will present Vivaldi's "Gloria" oratorio on Sunday, Dec. 11.

If that weren't wonderful enough, member and choral director Elizabeth Rice and the Rev. Mary Miller Brueggemann will enhance our experience by presenting two sessions exploring this majestic work in text and musically. Come to Room 201 at 9:45 a.m. Sundays Dec. 4 and 11, for this study to deepen your appreciation and understanding of this holiday gift of music.

Elder on Call

Jay Myers	December 4-10
Doug Self	December 11-17
Art Sweum	December 18-23
Sue Ballay	December 24-31

Deacon on Call

Bill Smith	December 4-10
Van Jensen	December 11-17
Jill Klotz	December 18-23
Brenda Fishpaw	December 24-31

Preschool Sets Anniversary Party Date

Morningside Presbyterian Preschool may be 10 years old, but the “Birthday Bash” planned for Saturday, Feb. 11, won’t be anything like a typical 10-year-old’s birthday party.

Chair Joanna Birch and her team are still working on details, but the event calls for cocktail attire and will be held at Druid Hills Country Club from 7:30 to 11 p.m. There’ll be supper and both live and silent auctions. And valet parking is free!

Watch for more details, including how to donate auction items, ticket price and how to RSVP, later this month. You also can follow the plans on MPP’s Facebook page.

In other preschool news, there’ll be open houses for prospective preschool parents Dec. 1 and January 10 at 9:30 a.m. RSVP to Preschool Director, Sarah Tomaka, at 404.685.8758.

What’s That You Say? MPC Sounds Better?

As part of our ongoing efforts to make all parts of the Morningside Presbyterian experience accessible to everyone, we’ve addressed the sound in our Sanctuary. Can you hear our beautiful services and Baron’s excellent sermons? Lloyd Prince, David Cox and Facilities Manager Randy Young have been working hard over the past year improving our sound system with new speakers and, most recently, two mikes at the pulpit.

Operations Team Leader John Watson says, “Even with these improvements, as someone with impaired hearing, I still miss parts of the sermon. Recently, I tried one of the receivers (assisted listening devices) Morningside pro-

vides and for the first time, I could hear every word of Baron’s sermon.

Please speak to me, one of the ushers, or the Elder on Call for assistance if you would like to try one of these devices. Our goal is to have our services accessible to everyone. Email me (atwatson@mindspring) or call (404.377.4205) and let me know your experience. We may need more devices or other improvements.

This holiday season, we’re also improving the lighting at the back of the chancel to better highlight our outstanding floral arrangements.”

Morningside Milestones

- Bands of junior angels or just our Children’s Choirs? Both the Cherub and Treble choirs will sing Sunday, Dec. 4, and on Dec. 11 both choirs will sing and serve dinner to the men at Journey (formerly the Druid Hills Night Shelter—see story on Page 4).
- Want Ads: Six Star Refugee Partnership is still seeking tutors for a third grader. Be in touch with Betsy Armstrong (bjarmstrong@bellsouth.net) or Holly Campbell (hollycampbell1@gmail.com) if you can help. Buyers wanted for Christmas cards to support Intown Community Ministries—on sale during Fellowship Hour or contact Shelly Senterfitt (ssenterfitt@skfamilylaw.com). Canned goods for hungry people—we have until Dec. 11 to fill up those Atlanta Community Food Bank Barrels. Most-needed items are posted on the canisters and on our home page at www.morningsidepc.org. We’re looking for hats, gloves, scarves—even coats—for the women residents at the Shearith Israel shelter. Bring them to the Christmas Pageant!
- Plan ahead for Big Fun: Our next date for our Saturday program for elementary-age kids will be Feb. 4 and will include parents, too. Featured will be a deep exploration of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.
- Thanks to “Pennies for Pages” collections at monthly meetings and the big used-book sale in September, the RHO Readers raised \$420 for their literacy charities: The Global Village School in Decatur and The Fugees Academy in Clarkston. Who says readers are inactive?
- We extend our sympathies to Rich Boggs and family on the death of his mother.

Personal Story: New ‘Journey’ Is Old Morningside Friend

Situated on the grounds of Druid Hills Presbyterian Church is Journey, just 10 blocks south of Morningside Presbyterian Church. Many have known it by another name (Druid Hills Night Shelter) for a very long time, 30 years in fact. Its name change is so very fitting and in keeping with other great 2011 milestones like budding into a year-round non-profit 501(c)3 on Jan. 1 and celebrating 30 years of service to the Atlanta metro area in September.

Journey is a temporary residence for up to 30 homeless men whose average stay is around three months. Its new Executive Director, BreNita McCord, shared that the new name reflects the experience each man is having.

As we all find our way in this human experience some have more challenges than others. The staff and board believe it is part of their journey to serve the men that find their way to hope and a future by way of Journey. Its mission statement reads “To encourage, empower and establish homeless men on their journey to self-reliance through employment, education, housing and counseling services.” The goals of Journey are to serve as an emergency residential community for homeless men seeking employment, and to provide the necessary services that will enable the men to become self-sufficient.

Nearly 30 churches and organizations partner to help keep it humming while shelter residents are referred by Samaritan House, Crossroads Community Ministries, Intown Collaborative Ministries, and Central Outreach and Advocacy Center. One of our deacons, Bill Smith, serves as its permanent night manager.

Where does Morningside Presbyterian fit in the picture? It’s a journey-partner MPC is very glad to be part of, and it is a mission gem you will enjoy experiencing.

MPC volunteers prepare dinner items, bring them to the shelter and serve them on the second Sunday of every month. We have a good time fellowshiping with

old and new friends (volunteers and shelter residents alike) and it’s pure joy knowing the guys don’t need to worry where their next meal is coming from. After serving, volunteers are encouraged to share time with the residents during the meal and get to know them better. Doing so can sometimes serendipitously lead to networking opportunities for them. The shelter also welcomes volunteers who can help with job skills assessment, resumé writing, job search, readiness/interview coaching, and money management—all geared toward equipping each resident with the tools to maximize his marketability in today’s job environment. Shelter staff are available to facilitate this opportunity if you’re interested.



Journey often needs bed linens (any size), towels, wash cloths, first aid supplies, small bars of soap, toothpaste, shampoo, cold medicines (like “Theraflu”), small containers of lotion, socks and round-trip MARTA passes.

Many of you took part in a special time this summer when two of our own MPC members “graduated” from Journey into their own apartments. You graciously supplied furniture, furnishings, kitchenware, small appliances, linens, cleaning supplies and many other basics for setting up their new homes. The response was overwhelming and a glorious example of God’s presence in our church community.

If you’d like to know more about Druid Hills Night Shelter or want to become involved, please contact me at emailcurt@mindspring.com or 404.310.4665. To jump right in, the monthly dinner sign-up sheet is posted on the MPC Mission bulletin board near the church office.

Curt Barrett
Journey Shepherd

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9 a.m. MPP 9:30 a.m. MPP Parent Tours 9:30 a.m. Presbytery Meeting (Douglasville) 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group 7 p.m. Handbell Choir; MLPA	2 9 a.m. MPP	3
4 <i>2nd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Worship with Communion 12 noon Fellowship 12:30 p.m. Kids Ice Skating 2 p.m. Venture Crew 5 p.m. Youth Christmas Party	5 9 a.m. MPP 5 p.m. Free Holiday Babysitting 7 p.m. Mandolin Society	6 9 a.m. MPP 4:30 p.m. Tai Chi 6:30 p.m. Weight Watchers 7 p.m. Theology on Tap; MLPA Zoning	7 9 a.m. MPP 6 p.m. Cherub and Treble Choirs 6:30 p.m. Child and Youth Protection Policy Meeting 7 p.m. Small Group Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	8 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group 7 p.m. Lydia Circle; Handbell Choir 7:30 p.m. MLPA Security	9 9 a.m. MPP 7 p.m. Couples Group	10
11 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Special Music Sunday Worship 12 noon Fellowship 1 p.m. Elder Training 2 p.m. Venture Crew 5-7 p.m. Youth Group Service Project 6:30 p.m. Children's Choirs Sing and Serve at Journey	12 9 a.m. MPP 7 p.m. Mandolin Society 7:30 p.m. MLPA	13 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Weight Watchers; Preschool Committee 7:30 p.m. MPC Outing to All Saints Episcopal Church-Christmas Concert	14 9 a.m. MPP 9:15 a.m. MPP Carols and Coffee 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	15 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group 7 p.m. Handbell Choir	16 9 a.m. MPP 8:30 p.m. Young Adults Ice Skate at Park Tavern	17 <i>Virginia Highlands Christmas Run</i> 9 a.m. Christmas Pageant Dress Rehearsal
18 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Worship with Baptism 12 noon Fellowship 12:15 p.m. Deacons Meeting 5 p.m. Christmas Pageant followed by Chili and Soup Dinner and Carol Sing	19 9 a.m. MPP 6 p.m. Session Dinner and Meeting 7 p.m. Mandolin Society	20 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Weight Watchers	21 4 p.m. Children's Christmas Eve Rehearsal 7 p.m. Small Group Bible Study 7 p.m. Chancel Choir	22 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group 7 p.m. Handbell Choir	23 <i>Church Office Closed in observance of Christmas Holidays</i>	24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> 4 p.m. Family and Children's Christmas Eve Service 8 p.m. Candlelight Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols
25 <i>Christmas Day</i> 10:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 11 a.m. Family Worship	26 <i>Church Office Closed in observance of Christmas Holidays</i>	27 6:30 p.m. Weight Watchers	28	29 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group	30	31 

Last-Minute Needs Testify to Growth in Pageant Cast, Crew, Set

Over the past decade, MPC has built quite a deep closet of costumes and also many great props and set pieces that work year-to-year for our Christmas pageant, as well as Vacation Bible School, Big Fun Days and other events. However, each year we lose a few items to wear and tear and find some new needs. If you could help with even one item, your time will be welcome.

For this year's production, we need to adapt very large boxes for our first scene. We need to spruce up our three magi crowns and replace one magi gift. We have seven new little angels this year—calling for four more small angel costumes. We need to replace the door on our inn. These are just a few of the items that must come together in order to share our pageant on Dec. 18. See Melinda Sandkam to help.

Time Again to Sleep to Serve Shelter

This year MPC will provide overnight volunteers to support the women's shelter at Shearith Israel for 10 days in January: Saturday, Jan. 7, through Monday, Jan. 16.

An overnight volunteer stays at the shelter 6 p.m. to 6:45 a.m., supporting a staff member. A typical night includes serving dinner (provided by others), cleaning up and packing any leftovers for the next day's lunch, visit-

ing with the ladies, sleeping, and then setting out and cleaning up breakfast items in the morning. In years past we have provided two "sleepers" a night. This year the shelter is requiring only one sleeper, although you are welcome to double up with a friend. For questions or to reserve your favorite night, be in touch with our new shepherd for this outreach, Becky Medearis (704.277.1258 or Becky.M.Medearis@Wellsfargo.com).

Seasonal Social Schedule Offers Plethora of Programs

* Theology on Tap invites all men to join host Lloyd Prince Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 7 p.m. for dinner and discussion of Baron's topic, "How do you know what to do when you don't know what to do?". The Princes are at 91 Lakeview Drive NE, 30317. RSVP to the church office (office@morningsidepc.org).

* That gift (under \$15) from Christmases Past could be the star of a light-hearted White Elephant exchange as Lydia Circle, a group of young female professionals and moms, welcomes members and visitors of MPC to join them on Thursday, Dec. 8, from 7-9 p.m. at the home of Tara Parrish (1206 Cumberland Road, 30306). Email Tara Parrish (taraparrish@bellsouth.net) to RSVP and for any other details.

* It's a party for pairs at the home of the Antenuccis (5420 Trentham Ct., Dunwoody 30338), Friday, Dec. 9, at 7 p.m. All couples are welcome and bring along a dish to share. RSVP to the Bremers (kdbremer@bellsouth.net).

* Those of us who purchased tickets to the 7:30 p.m. All Saints Episcopal Church Christmas Concert Tuesday, Dec. 13, are invited to meet at Livingston's at The Georgian Terrace to dine beforehand.

* Tune up for our carol sing by joining the preschool community for Carols & Coffee Wednesday, Dec. 14 at 9:15 a.m. in Fellowship Hall.

* Our Young Adults will celebrate the holidays on ice at the ice skating rink at Park Tavern on Friday, Dec. 16. Skating tickets are \$15 per session and may be purchased

at www.parktavern.com/about/the-rink/. Please purchase tickets in advance for the 8:30 p.m. session if you plan to join us, and RSVP to Lisa Harris (lisa.s.harris@gmail.com) for more details on where to meet before we skate.



Your Session at Work: November 21 Meeting

- **Jill Davis**, Children and Youth Ministries Team Leader, reported that the next Big Fun Day will be Feb. 4. During this special opportunity children and their parents will deeply explore the sacrament of communion, guided by **Pastor Baron Mullis**. The team needs the support of the congregation to make this program as meaningful as possible for our children.
- For the past two years, Morningside has provided support to St. Joseph’s Home for Boys in Haiti in the form of visits and financial contributions. The Mission Ministries Team Leader, **Sarah Beth Gehl**, brought to the attention of session allegations of child abuse against founder and executive director Michael Geilenfeld. The session approved a resolution proposed by **John Watson**: The session of Morningside Presbyterian Church is concerned about allegations of abuse at St. Joseph’s Home for Boys and is prayerfully seeking ways to support children in need in Haiti.

Session also entertained and acted on the following three motions:

1. MPC shall not make a public response or call for an investigation into this matter. The motion, proposed by **Daisy Ottmann**, was unanimously approved.

2. MPC shall suspend financial contributions to St. Joseph’s Home for Boys pending further disclosure of information. The motion, proposed by **Daisy Ottmann**, passed unanimously.

3. MPC shall suspend further trips to St. Joseph’s Home for Boys pending further disclosure of information. The motion, proposed by **Jill Davis**, failed.

- The session unanimously elected **Randy Parrish** as treasurer and **Ruthlyn Newell** as clerk of session for 2012. Jan. 22 will be MPC’s annual meeting, immediately following worship. Please mark your calendars.
- **Baron Mullis** announced he has agreed to serve on the Committee on Ministry for the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta.
- Clerk of Session **Ruthlyn Newell** noted that as of Nov. 21, Morningside has 491 members.

Ruthlyn Newell
Clerk of Session



December Birthdays

- 1 Richard Blanchard
- 1 Melissa Lawson
- 1 Olivia Hunter
- 2 Cathie Gay
- 3 Dawn Bell

- 4 Angie Keller
- 6 Tamara Nix
- 6 Ted McMahan
- 8 Baker Hubbard
- 9 Derek Matthews
- 10 Taylor Marshall
- 11 Lance Jackson
- 11 Wendy Godfrey
- 12 Sharon Pace
- 13 Tony Menefee
- 13 Linda Sweum
- 13 Tom Tomaka
- 14 Larry Strickland
- 17 Philippe Regnault

- 20 David Ecton
- 20 Shannon Lazzaro
- 21 Tami Giusto
- 23 Ali Howell
- 23 Doug Self
- 25 Nicholas Lazzaro
- 27 Anna Nuckols
- 27 Brooks Nuckols
- 27 Nancy Anderson
- 29 Ken Pramik
- 30 Eleanor Attwood
- 30 Billy Palmer
- 30 Annie McNeill

Lessons, Carols, Chili, Sheep—MPC Celebrates Season All Month

Invite a friend or neighbor to join you as our Advent unfolds into Christmas. A few highlights:

★ Walter Huff and our Chancel Choir offer a ‘musical sermon,’ Antonio Vivaldi’s “Gloria” oratorio in worship Sunday morning, Dec. 11, at 11 a.m. Vivaldi, a master of the Italian Baroque style, is perhaps best known for his “Four Seasons” series of violin concertos. The “Gloria” choral masterpiece will feature soloists Megan Mashburn, Tami Giusto and Kate Murray.

★ We welcome our entire community to our annual Christmas pageant to be followed by a chili and soup dinner and carol sing led by Walter Huff in Fellowship Hall, beginning at 5 p.m. Dec. 18. Allow time for parking and finding a seat, so that you won’t miss a minute of the play put on by 50 Morningside kids ranging in age from our seven-month-old baby Jesus to our fifth-grade helpers. At the end of the pageant, we’ll transform the space with tables and bring out the pots of soup and chili. If you are able to provide a pot, sign up on the bulletin board

next to church office or contact Mary Chapman (chapman.maryv@gmail.com). The MPC youth will serve dinner as their activity for the evening. As we finish tasting the many options, Walter Huff will then lead us in singing many beloved songs of the season.

★ Our family-friendly Christmas Eve service at 4 p.m. features a story from Dr. Baron Mullis, our Handbell Choir and young liturgists, followed at 8 p.m. by our traditional Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols. Doors open at 7:15 p.m. for the later service and nursery care will be provided for both services.

★ On Christmas Day, we’ll provide Coffee and Conversation beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Welcome Center, with worship for all ages at 11 a.m. There will be no Sunday classes or children’s programs but our nursery will be open.