



Morningside Messenger

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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December

Worship at Morningside

December 2, 2012—First Sunday of Advent

Baron Mullis preaching

"Christ Is Lord"

Texts: Psalm 25:1-10; Luke 21:25-36

The sacrament of communion will be celebrated.

Cherub / Treble Choirs singing

December 9, 2012—Second Sunday of Advent

Special Music Sunday

Great Music of Christmas

Selections by Bach, Handel, Holst, Rutter, and others

Presented by Morningside Chancel Choir

Guest soloists: Carrie Kahl and Kristin Vienneau

Mark Mashburn, trumpet

December 16, 2012—Third Sunday of Advent

Baron Mullis preaching

"What to do?"

Texts: Zephaniah 3:14-20; Luke 3:7-18

December 23, 2012—Fourth Sunday of Advent

Baron Mullis preaching

"Magnificat"

Texts: Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-55

The sacrament of baptism will be celebrated.

December 24, 2012—Christmas Eve

4 p.m.—Family Friendly Service with Handbells,

Young Liturgists and a story by Baron Mullis (nursery provided)

8 p.m.—Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols at 8 p.m.

(childcare available; doors open at 7:15 p.m.)

December 30, 2012—First Sunday after Christmas

Drew Stockstill preaching

"Beyond the Manger"

Texts: 1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Luke 2:41-52



Dear Friends,

While you're reading this in early December, when I set fingertips to keys to write to you, it was just a few days before Thanksgiving.

It really is one of my favorite holiday seasons. Actually, I love the whole thing, from Thanksgiving through New Year's. I know it gets hectic at times, and there is a minor element of "once more into the breach" when it becomes clear that scheduling is getting tighter and tighter and finding the right gifts and counting the calories of all the rich food, but I will just go ahead and admit it: I love the whole thing: tight schedule and all.

I love the casseroles on the Thanksgiving table. (That's the best I can do... I don't really like turkey so much.) I love the Christmas music. I love the parties that are thrown just because the house is decorated. And I love the worship.

For me, actually, the worship is central. I expect it is for most of you. When we gather in the darkened sanctuary and hear the choir begin the strains of music that lead us through the lessons and carols of our Christmas Eve service from the Old Testament Prophecy to the birth of our Lord, I feel warmth and goodwill.

It's almost as if singing about goodwill toward all makes it a reality.

There is something to be said about the act of worship in the midst of all of this. Worship isn't just about getting fed spiritually, though that's a key part. Worship is about giving praise to God.

Worship is about the acknowledgement that the transcendent God, creator of the earth, the sun and moon, the whole universe, and if there is anything beyond the universe, that too, *that* transcendent God wanted to be with us.

God wanted to be with us so much that God came to be with us.

And God is with us still, "closer to us than our very breath," goes the words of the confession.

I suppose that leaves us back at thanksgiving, because that is about the only response we can make. Giving thanks to God through this whole season is an act of praise, and that, according to the Psalmist, is our right worship.

Thanks for reading, I'm grateful to share these holidays with you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Baron". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Baron

Explore Advent Tradition with Drew, Fellow Adults

One movement among so-call 'mainstream' Protestants is to reclaim the seasons and traditions of the Christian liturgical year. Two of the most significant are Advent—the season of waiting—and Lent—the season of atonement.

Whether or not you have an understanding of or connection to Advent, come explore the meaning and history of the season with Rev. Drew Stockstill the first four Sunday mornings in December at 9:45 a.m. in Room 201. Hint: It's a great thing to do while your kids are in pageant practice and it will give you something new to discuss with them.

Meditation Group Forming

Scripture tells us to "Be still and know the Lord" (Psalm 46:10), to "Renew our minds" (Romans 12:1-2), and to "Become new creations" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Meditation is an ancient and widespread practice for calming the mind and clearing our perception. It is an effective, some would say indispensable, stepping stone into a deeper spiritual life and has been practiced in Christianity, as well as other traditions, for millennia.

Members and guests of Morningside Presbyterian Church now have the opportunity to take up this valuable practice in a group setting that provides instruction, warm support, and benign discipline. We will begin Sunday, Jan. 6 at 7:30 p.m. in the Welcome Center. Any questions, email Ken Sharpe (kensharpe@bellsouth.net).

MPCers Prepare Special Gift for Parents, Kids

Kids love the pizza, stories and games—but the real gift goes to their parents on Morningside’s evening of Free Holiday Babysitting: three hours to dine, shop or just take a deep breath during this hectic time of year.

Our Free Holiday Babysitting runs 5- 8 p.m. Monday, Dec. 3. You MUST register your child to participate (jennjames@comcast.net). Since this is a gift from our

congregation, plenty of volunteers are needed for the period 4:40-8:15 p.m. or for either of two shifts during that time to make sure the 102 children we serve have enough adult caregivers. It’s not too late to let Jennifer James know you can help.



Morningside’s Website Adds New Capability

This article is only kinda sorta about our website. It’s really about commitment. As Commitment Team Co-chair Peter Cobb says, “We’ve finally got our system up to the latter half of the 20th Century!” Yes, we can now pay our pledges and offer other gifts securely on-line at www.morningsidepc.org. Just follow the instructions on the site.

About those pledges—as of Sunday, Nov. 25, we had received 148 pledges for a total of \$649,290 which reflects new pledges of \$74,786 and an increase over last year’s pledges. Commitment Team volunteers are reaching out, especially to new members and those who have not yet renewed past pledges, to remind them that we base our budget—and thus our outreach, programs and service objectives for the year—on pledges received. We thank

everyone helping MPC run our race, but we are still well short of our 2013 giving goal—our “finish line” for 2013.

Another important aspect of commitment to our church is the ‘time and talent’ form, which has been updated and simplified this year. If you haven’t filled one out, please do so—even if you’re planning to continue your current committee and volunteer assignments. Some teams, for example, our lay readers, start fresh each year and the committee chair uses those forms to build the new team. You can find the form on line and in the Welcome Center and you may leave your completed information in the church office or in the offering plate. A ministry leader will then contact you to discuss your particular interest and where you can serve most happily.

Morningside Milestones

- Hurray for our latest group of new Morningsiders: Peyton and Jon Chambers, Bridget Johns, Amy Kayler, Megan Mashburn, David Mogge, Alexander Nowotny, Katrina Weis and Sarah Wilde—plus the six youngsters they also bring into our church family.
- Don’t forget the hungry this season—we’ve got those big blue barrels around the church to be filled by Dec. 14 for the Atlanta Community Food Bank. There’s a list on each barrel and on our website of the most-needed items.
- Congratulations to Rebecca and William Kier on the birth of their son, Cooper William, Nov. 2, and to Leigh Del Grosso and John Benzinger on the birth of their son, Lucas William, on Nov. 27. And Nathaniel Quigley Gehl, son of Sarah and Tom, and Piper Grace Burgess, daughter of Nathan and Shanon, who are the newest baptized Morningsiders.
- Best wishes to Catherine Scholl and Johan Segring on their Nov. 3 marriage.
- Please be in prayer for and sympathy with the McMahan family, especially Ted, whose mother joined the Church Eternal on Nov. 9, shortly following the deaths of Ted’s brother and father.
- Others in our midst who mourn recent losses are Cliff Burt, whose mother Juanita passed away on Thanksgiving Day, George and Bonnie Daneker on the death of George’s mother and also Peter Cobb and his family on the death of Peter’s mother Barbara on Nov. 16.
- Our giving RHO Readers through donations of books for our second annual Buy the Book sale and their (a lot more than) Pennies for Pages contributions raised \$400 this year to be divided between the Global Village School and the Fugees Academy, both serving kids new to the USA.
- Speaking of giving! A hearty shout out to our kids who used some of their time on Big Fun Day to make that awesome pumpkin ice cream served at the Thanksgiving Gathering. (They made the corn muffins, too.)

Lydia Circle Offers Casual Gatherings, Mission Opportunities

Lydia Circle is Morningside's social and service group of young female professionals and moms. The group provides an opportunity to connect over fellowship, food and congregational care platforms. Lydia Circle was started in 2009 and has grown into a quarterly forum for casual, yet meaningful, interaction.

Attendees get together at a member's home to meet and nurture friendships with other Morningside community women of similar life-stage. On Dec. 13, Lydia Circle will hold its quarterly gathering at the home of Lele Ruby. The gathering will include the group's traditional White Elephant Gift Exchange among attendees.

"Lydia Circle has been a wonderful way for me to meet other moms and women from Morningside Presbyterian," says Carrie Branon. "It is often difficult to socialize and chat with friends on Sundays at church because we are all busy chasing our children. Our gatherings provide a fun and relaxing way to get together without children. At our meetings, I look forward to seeing close friends and to meeting new people who come to the gathering for the first time. It is always an interesting mix of women and fun conversations. I always leave feeling so glad I went."

Carrie and Tara Parrish are co-shepherds for the group and strive to find and maintain opportunities that allow young women to connect and support one another and Morningside Presbyterian. And, being mindful of how busy young women and moms are, keeping the gatherings simple and without lots of preparation is a priority.

Many Lydia Circle women are actively involved in Morningside's Meals for Moms Mission. The program supports new moms and dads in the congregation with a

home-delivered-meal schedule during the infant's first weeks at home. Numerous Morningside families have benefited from and enjoyed this valuable work.

Lydia Circle also plans casual outings between quarterly meetings. Recent evenings included attending "Motherhood The Musical" at 14th Street Playhouse and enjoying Thursday Evening Cocktails in the Garden at Atlanta Botanical Gardens. Over Halloween, Lydia Circle donated more than 85 costumes to Our House. Robin Hackney says, "Lydia Circle is a fun way to meet and stay in touch with other members that are in the same stage of life as myself."

Active participant Tamara Nix comments, "Lydia Circle



*Lydia Circle members
Kelly Garrison, Robin Hackney and Tish Woolley
enjoy a recent meeting.*

provides women at MPC another nourishing aspect of our church community in a fun and casual setting. This year we hope to reach out to new members of the congregation as a way for them to develop relationships that then continue during times of worship and other activities in the life of our church. I am proud to call this great group of women friends as I know they will always support and encourage me both in times of celebration and in times of need."

Lydia Circle meets from

7-9 p.m. on the second Thursday in Dec., March and Sept. On Dec. 13, the group will meet at the home of Lele Ruby (1797 Meadowdale Ave. NE, 30306). On Mar. 14, Amanda Lewis and Mary Hardy Holaway will host the quarterly gathering. Contact Tara Parrish (taraparrish@bellsouth.net) to RSVP and for any other details.

Contributing writer, Jeff Peters

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9 a.m. AA Meeting <i>Atlanta Food Bank Collection</i>
2 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Worship with Communion & Children's Choirs Singing 12 noon Fellowship 12:30 p.m. Deacon/Elder Training 2 p.m. Venture Crew 5 p.m. Youth Group 6:30 p.m. All Saints Rehearsal <i>Atlanta Food Bank Collection</i>	3 9 a.m. MPP 5 p.m.-8 p.m. Free Holiday Babysitting 7 p.m. Mandolin Society	4 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Weight Watchers 7 p.m. Theology on Tap; MLPA Zoning	5 9 a.m. MPP 12 noon DFCS Retirees Lunch 6 p.m. Cherub Choir 6:30 p.m. Treble Choir 7 p.m. Wonderful Wednesdays 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	6 9:15 a.m. MPP Prospective Parent Tour 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group 7 p.m. Handbell Choir; Chancel Choir 7:30 p.m. MLPA Public Safety	7 9 a.m. MPP	8 9 a.m. AA Meeting 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Special Music Sunday Rehearsal
9 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Special Music Sunday 12 noon Fellowship 12:15 p.m. Deacons Meeting 1 p.m. Deacons Training 2 p.m. Venture Crew 5 p.m. Youth Group Christmas Party 6 p.m. Journey <i>Atlanta Food Bank Collection</i>	10 9 a.m. MPP 7 p.m. All Saints Holiday Concert with Walter Huff; Mandolin Society 7:30 p.m. MLPA	11 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Weight Watchers; Preschool Committee	12 9 a.m. MPP 9:15 p.m. MPP Carols and Coffee 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	13 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group 7 p.m. Lydia Circle; Handbell Choir	14 9 a.m. MPP 7 p.m. Couples Group	15 9 a.m. AA Meeting 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Christmas Pageant Rehearsal 7 p.m. LGBT & Friends Christmas Potluck Dinner
16 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Worship 12 noon Fellowship 2 p.m. Venture Crew 5 p.m. Christmas Pageant followed by Soup & Chili Dinner and Carol Sing	17 9 a.m. MPP 6 p.m. Session Meeting with Dinner 7 p.m. Mandolin Society	18 9 a.m. MPP 6:30 p.m. Weight Watchers	19 9 a.m. MPP 7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir	20 <i>MPP Winter Break</i> 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group 7 p.m. Handbell Choir	21 <i>MPP Winter Break</i>	22 <i>Virginia Highland Christmas Run</i> 9 a.m. AA Meeting
23 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Worship with Baptism & Handbells 12 noon Fellowship 12:15 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal 2 p.m. Venture Crew 3 p.m. Children's Rehearsal	24 <i>MPP Winter Break</i> 4 p.m. Family Friendly Christmas Eve Service 8 p.m. Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols	25 <i>Church Office Closed Merry Christmas</i> 	26 <i>Church Office Closed MPP Winter Break</i>	27 <i>MPP Winter Break</i> 6:30 p.m. Prayer Group	28 <i>MPP Winter Break</i>	29 9 a.m. AA Meeting
30 9:30 a.m. Coffee & Conversation 9:45 a.m. Church School 11 a.m. Worship 12 noon Fellowship	31 <i>MPP Winter Break</i> 7 p.m. Mandolin Society					

There's Advent in the Air, Christmas on Our Minds

The season is infectious—and we're not talking about flu! Groups large, small and the whole MPC congregation anticipates the birth of the Christ Child with fun, food, music and, of course, worship. Here is your guide to what's going on in December. Of course, our Free Holiday Babysitting starts off the month on Monday, Dec. 3—go back to Page 3 to learn more about this gift to our community.

Group Gatherings:

- First up is Theology on Tap. Our men's group will meet at Richard Brownlee's (1046 Bellevue Dr. NE, 30306) for dinner and talk on Tuesday, Dec. 4. Oh, wait! It's not holiday-themed! The discussion led by Baron Mullis will be "Is It Too Soon to Talk About Politics Yet?" RSVP to the church office, please (office@morningsidepc.org).
- On Wednesday, Dec. 5, the Wonderful Wednesdays Bible study bunch will feast at 7 p.m. at the home of Juarlyn Gaiter (1107 Longwood Trace NE, 30324), having completed our study of the Gospel of John. You're welcome to come meet this congenial group as a guest and talk about plans for 2013—just be in touch with Link Marx (fmarx25@yahoo.com).
- All couples are welcome to celebrate the holidays with the MPC Couples Group. Alan and Kathy Bremer (785 Cumberland Rd. 30306) host on Dec. 14. Be in touch with the Bremers (kdbremer@bellsouth.net) to join the fun.
- See Page 4 to learn more about Lydia Circle and their gathering on Dec. 13.
- And our LGBT & Friends invite everyone for a Potluck Dinner Christmas Gathering on Sat., Dec 15, at 7 p.m. The gathering will be at the home of Jeff Peters and Michael Siedschlag (1812 Meadowdale Ave NE, 30306); RSVP to Michael (michaelspnyc@yahoo.com or 404.254.0706).

Deck the Halls:

The holly and the ivy, indeed. The beauty of our worship and music are complemented by our holiday decorations throughout the church. Advent means a coming or arrival. We start off the season by hanging our Advent banners, designed and made by a Morningside member. The Advent banners represent the coming of the promises of God through Christ Jesus. They are titled "Heart Root Promises of God: Hope, Peace, Joy, Love." Expressed with purple batiks, the living, powerful energy of the Holy Spirit represents bringing forth the promises through Christ into the world. The green, blue, pink and gold batiks represent the power and ever continuing evolution of these promises.

To help Morningside achieve all its celebratory Christmas glory, please consider a tribute contribution in memory of or in honor of friends and family. The suggested contribution is \$10 per name. A listing of tributes will appear in the Dec. 23 bulletin.

New this year will be the Family Christmas Tree in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited to bring one non-breakable ornament to represent his or herself or the family to baskets in the Welcome Center Dec. 2 and 9. All these ornaments will adorn a nine-foot fir throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons and become an ongoing part of our holiday celebration.

The Family Christmas Tree will be decorated the afternoon of Dec. 12, in time for our pageant, chili/soup supper and carol sing on Dec. 16. Contact Worship Ministry Chair Philip Hawkins (ph_atlganatv@hotmail.com) if you've got the time and energy to help put up all our church decorations—the Sanctuary Chrismon tree, the window treatments, the wreaths and garlands and more.

What IS Advent, anyway?

Come find out about "The History and Theology of Advent" with Rev. Drew Stockstill and our adult learners in Room 201 Sunday mornings at 9:45 a.m. beginning Dec. 2.

Sounds of Season at Heart of Holiday Celebrations at MPC

Throughout the year, the music of all our choirs glorifies God and uplifts our worship. But something even more special happens during the Christmas holiday time.

The extremely popular 11 a.m. worship service featuring "Great Music of Christmas" offers a wide range of sacred music on Dec. 9. Walter Huff and the Chancel Choir will present selections from Handel's *Messiah*, the Bach and Rutter *Magnificats*, and Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio* — plus a lively Nativity spiritual ("Round the Glory Manger") and "Christmas Day" by Gustav Holst. Guest soloists will be Carrie Kahl and Kristin Vienneau with Mark Mashburn, trumpet. This is a great Sunday to invite family and friends to experience Morningside's outstanding music ministry.

Still hungry for the magic music of Christmas? Then you'll want to buy your ticket immediately for the annual Atlanta Opera Chorus Christmas Concert on Dec. 10 at 7:30 p.m. at All Saints' Episcopal Church downtown. Eight select singers including Tami Giusto, Megan Mashburn and Tim Miller will combine and solo in a variety of popular and sacred seasonal songs. This program is conceived and conducted by Walter Huff. Go to <http://allsaintsatlanta.org/music/concert-series> to purchase your ticket, then let the church office know if you'd like to join a group of Morningsiders for dinner before the concert.

If you can't sing like our choir, and even if you don't have a child in the pageant, Sunday evening, Dec. 16, is a great time to dive into the spirit of the season. Come out for the 5 p.m. pageant presented by almost 50 MPC children, then stay for a soup and chili dinner, followed by a Carol Sing in Fellowship Hall led by Walter Huff. Come one, come all— but we do recommend allowing ample time for parking and finding a seat in time for the 5 p.m. curtain.

'Elves' then transform Fellowship Hall into a dining room with a quick set up of tables for you to enjoy a warm yet simple dinner with friends and family. If you are able to donate a pot of soup or chili, sign up on bulletin board across from nursery or contact Amanda Lewis (amandaslewis4@gmail.com) who is coordinating the evening with the help of our youth group, who will set up, serve and clean up as their outreach activity in December. When you come to this event, we invite you to bring something for the women staying at the Shearith Israel Shelter - gloves, scarves, hats, women's coats all sizes, socks, any Kosher hot chocolate packets or coffee supplies.



*Our atmospheric Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols*

Our 4 p.m. family-oriented Christmas Eve service geared to children quickly has become a tradition here. The MPC Handbell Choir under our new director, Jeff Peters, has prepared special music, and some of our young members will participate in the worship service as liturgists and as a tableau of characters from the Nativity.

Childcare will be provided in the nursery for any who need it. If your elementary age child wishes to participate in the worship service, contact Melinda Sandkam immediately to let her know. They

will need to make a 3 p.m. practice on Sunday, Dec. 23, and arrive at 3 p.m. on Christmas Eve.

There's a place for children at our beautiful traditional Candlelight Service of Lessons and Carols at 8 p.m. on Christmas Eve, too. We're looking for youngsters between the ages of six and 12 as junior ushers to hand out candles to the congregation. Be in touch with Shari Tant (sdtant51@gmail.com) to be part of this beautiful service featuring our Chancel Choir. Doors open at 7:15 p.m. and childcare will be available for our little ones.

Ghosts of Mission Trips - Past, Present and Future

You remember those ghosts Dickens conjured up to remind Scrooge of all he owed his neighbors. Well, in the past five years, we have taken trips within the United States with either Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) or similar organizations that help with the long-term rebuilding and recovery from disasters.

As we hear in the recent news, there are many important organizations equipped to help with initial emergency needs, including the Red Cross and power company repair crews. As we've become aware through PDA that disasters spawn many long-term needs for full recovery, many of Morningside's trips have been one, two, three and even seven years after a disaster, including three trips to Pearlington, MS, one to Nashville, one to Gadsden, AL, and our most recent trip to New Orleans where our first day was spent building in continued recovery from Hurricane Katrina and our second day was spent gutting a house damaged only a few months ago by Hurricane Isaac. The

MPC team on this trip was particularly touched by the needs that still exist throughout New Orleans and also the efficiency and dedication of the RHINO (Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans) program of St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church.

At the same time, we are paying particular attention to the development of relief programs for the Northeast. As we plan our 2013 mission trips, we are already considering returning to New Orleans in the first quarter and then possibly a trip to the Northeast later in the year. Watch for more information and share your interest and inquiries with Mission Trip Chair Roland Behm (roland.behm@gmail.com) and Program Director Melinda Sandkam. Since both of these options are at least a full day's drive away, we will be looking at ways for some to fly in order to cut down on time off needed for the trip. If you can't presently go on a mission trip but have airline points that you can donate, please let us know.

Many Ways You Can Provide Helping Hands in Holiday Season

- Use your hands to add non-perishable foods to your grocery carts to support our annual collection for Atlanta Community Food Bank. Think protein (canned meats) and whole grain, low sugar cereals, canned veggies and fruits. We hope that our five barrels will be overflowing when they come to pick them up on Friday, Dec. 14, as ACFB is reporting "an unprecedented need for food assistance - unlike anything recorded in 33 years of food banking."
- Use your fingers to go to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance site www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/pda/hurricane-sandy/ to give towards relief efforts for victims of Hurricane Sandy in the Northeast.
- Use your arms to hold a child during Free Holiday Babysitting. See the details on Page 3. Assistance needed in EVERY category: with infants, toddlers and twos, playing with preschoolers or elementary age kids, being there at 4:40 to receive over 100 kids, coming for relief and clean-up crew as soon as you can make it
- Grasp a pencil and sign up for one or both January outreach opportunities: We continue to support the Shearith Israel Shelter for Women by providing volunteers each evening for 10 days in January. They no longer seek overnight volunteers! We will be providing two volunteers each night Jan. 5-14, 6-10 p.m. to welcome the residents, serve dinner, clean up kitchen and prepare lunches for the following day and visit with ladies until 10 p.m. See Mission bulletin board to sign up or contact MPC shepherd Becky Medearis (becky.m.medearis@wellsfargo.com). Our second opportunity in January is the Martin Luther King, Jr. Weekend Project for Seniors in Decatur. A team from MPC will help with yard work and handyman tasks that make it easier for seniors to remain in their own homes. Again, sign up on the Mission board or contact MPC shepherds Jack Klotz (jacksklotz@gmail.com) or Lloyd Prince (LloydPrince@comcast.net).

You Can Serve by Serving Our Congregation

Yes, we mean serving food! Fellowship Hour—or Meet, Greet and Eat—is a great time to gather after worship for light refreshments and getting to know other members. It all depends on the generosity of those who prepare and donate the food and those who spend time organizing it. Special thanks to those groups who have committed to serving one or more times this year.

Individuals also can build a team of four and choose a Sunday to serve. A calendar for the first quarter of 2013 has

been posted in the hall so that members can volunteer. You may want to use Fellowship Hour as a way to celebrate a special person or occasion – birthday, baptism, anniversary, etc. One person can act as leader and point of contact for each Sunday, but it usually takes at least four people to set up, serve and clean up. The “template” for refreshments is one serving each of a sweet, a savory, something fresh and punch for 100-125 people. It's not meant to be lunch!

Your Session at Work: Nov. 12 Meeting

- Session got off to a late start this evening, as elders volunteered their energies to help with everything from greeting to dishwashing at the Thanksgiving Gathering. More than 200 preschool and MPC parents and kids thoroughly enjoyed the hearty meal and fellowship.
- Session approved a motion from Children and Youth Ministries, as presented by Team Leader **Jill Davis**, to hire an additional nursery worker for the rest of 2012. The nursery and the toddler/twos rooms have been bursting with babies since August and the upcoming Advent season typically is busiest of all.
- **Jennye Guy**, team leader for Discipleship Ministries, reported that attendance at the adult Sunday school class taught by **Rev. Drew Stockstill** is steadily increasing. Drew is receiving accolades for his knowledge and teaching skills. Drop by Room 201 at 9:45 Sunday to see what all the buzz is about.
- According to Jennye, discussions are under way with **Ken Sharpe** who has expressed an interest in leading a Christian Meditation Group at MPC. See Page 2 for details.
- **Tony Fishpaw**, team leader for Mission Ministries, said that **Roland Behm** did a superb job of organizing MPC's fall mission trip. Seven MPC members spent the first four days of November working with RHINO, Rebuilding Hope in New Orleans, and said it was a great trip.
- For Evangelism Ministries, **Shannon Harris**, team co-leader, reported that MPC had nine new members join Nov. 4. MPC has added 45 new members to its rolls in 2012, and enjoys a total membership of 532.
- Training will begin for our newly elected elders and deacons, culminating with their examination at the next Session meeting, followed by their ordination (for first-timers) and installation early next year.
- Session unanimously agreed to adopt the Vision 2017 strategic plan as its planning document. **Baron Mullis** said a planning team that would monitor timely implementation of the plan will be formed next year.

Ruthlyn Newell
Clerk of Session



December Birthdays

1 Richard Blanchard

1 Melissa Lawson
1 Olivia Hunter
2 Samantha Hampton
2 Cathie Gay
3 Dawn Bell
4 Amy Kayler
4 Angie Keller
6 Tamara Nix
6 Ted McMahan
8 Kelly Garrison
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

24 Claire Burke
25 Bridget Ryan
25 Nicholas Lazzaro
27 Anna Nuckols
27 Brooks Nuckols
27 Nancy Anderson
29 Murphy Weis
29 Ken Pramik
30 Eleanor Attwood
30 Billy Palmer
30 Annie McNeill

Elder on Call

Art Sweum	December 2-8
Peter Cobb	December 9-15
Bonnie Daneker	December 16-22
Jennye Guy/Leslie Prince	December 23, 25-29
Leslie Prince	December 24
Caroline Tanner	December 30-January 5

Deacon on Call

Jeff Peters	December 2-8
Jill Klotz	December 9-15
Ken Sharpe	December 16-22
Brenda Fishpaw	December 23-29
Link Marx	December 30-January 5

MPC Kids Get Dramatic This Winter

This January, the Children's Ministry Team of MPC is excited to offer a winter drama camp for kids in grades one through five.

Preschool teacher Amy Lowe (who led our oldest kids at VBS this summer and has a strong background in drama) will lead this program. Throughout her years at Fayette County High School and Oglethorpe University, she focused her talents on theater. After she graduated with a Theater Major, she directed Sagamore Elementary's spring production for three years and has held several drama camps for children. She loves directing, costuming and teaching children theater. She is currently in her second year of teaching at MPP and working toward a Masters degree in Early Childhood Education at Mercer University. MPC Program Director Melinda Sandkam and other MPC staff and volunteers will provide support.

Children who want to participate must be signed up by Thursday, Jan. 3 (registration fee of \$35 will be due at that time-- scholarships are available, contact Melinda to ap-

ply). Our young drama students must also be able to participate in ALL practices and have one parent available to accompany each child on the workday to assist with final preparations.

There are only four practices, starting with a first read-through 12:30-1:30, Sunday, Jan. 13. Parts will be assigned before MLK Jr. weekend and the remaining practices will be Saturday, Jan. 26, 9:30-noon and Sunday, Jan. 27, 12:30-1:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 2, 9:30-noon will be a workday with the students and one parent each.

On Sunday, Feb. 3, there'll be a cast call for final rehearsal at 9:45 a.m., then all will attend worship or children's worship before making final preparations for a 12:30 performance during our congregational lunch. Look for the registration form on MPC's website under Children's Education. Contact Melinda (msandkam@morningsidepc.org) with questions.