



*Grounded in the grace of God,
we are a vibrant Christian community,
disciples of all ages, gathered for worship and nurture,
scattered to serve and to love.*
MPC Mission Statement adopted by the Session March 31, 2008

WORSHIP for
FIRST SUNDAY of ADVENT
DECEMBER 1, 2024

GATHERING

WORDS of WELCOME

Pastor Alex Lester-Abdalla

PRELUDE — *Give Thanks* - Henry Smith

Yun Kang

INTROIT — *Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah*- TIF IN VELDELE

Chancel Choir

*Light one candle to watch for Messiah:
Let the light banish darkness.
He shall bring salvation to Israel,
God fulfills the promise.*

LIGHTING of the ADVENT CANDLES

The DeSciscio Family

Family: Today we light the first candle in the Advent Wreath. It is the Candle of Hope.

All: God of hope, renew in us the hope we have in the dawning of Christ's advent among us. Come, let us worship the Lord

HYMN — *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (verses 1, 2 & 7)

VENI EMMANUEL

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
the mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show; teach us in her ways to go.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

*O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

PRAYER of CONFESSION

Karl Helland, Liturgist

O come, Emmanuel. As we enter this season of Advent, we get tangled in sparkling lights and glittering tinsel. We get lost in our to-do lists. We hope the endless gatherings fill our hearts and familiar songs will retune weary souls. O come, Emmanuel. Ignite in us the awe of a child in the season as we wait on the promise of the coming infant King in a humble stable.

SILENT PRAYERS of CONFESSION *Here each worshiper may offer silent prayers of confession.*

PROMISE of FORGIVENESS

One: God is greater than we could ever imagine. God brings beauty out of chaos, reconciliation out of conflict, and life out of death. Together, let us proclaim the good news of the gospel:

All: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God! Alleluia! Amen.

RESPONSE to GOD'S GRACE — *Glory to the Father*

GLORIA PATRI

*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
Amen. Amen. Amen.*

LITURGY of the WORD

PRAYER for ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON — *Psalm 80:1-3*

One: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!

All: You who are enthroned upon the cherubim,

One: Shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh.

All: Stir up our might, and come to save us!

One: Restore us, O God;

All: Let your face shine, that we may be saved.

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM — *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence* - PICARDY, arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams

*Let all mortal flesh keep silence, and with fear and trembling stand;
ponder nothing earthly minded, for with blessing in his hand
Christ our God to earth descendeth, our full homage to demand.*

*King of kings, yet born of mary, as of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords, in human vesture, in the body and the blood,
he will give to all the faithful his own self for heavenly food.*

*Rank on rank the host of heaven spreads its vanguard on the way,
as the Light of light descendeth from the realms of endless day,
that the powers of hell may vanish as the shadows clear away.*

*At his feet the six-winged seraph, cherubim, with sleepless eye,
veil their faces to the presence, as with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, Lord most high!"*

TIME for YOUNG DISCIPLES

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON — *John 1:12-13 & 2 Corinthians 9:15*

Reverend Dr. Tom Kort

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

One: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

What's in Your Wallet?

Rev. Dr. Kort

HYMN — *Take Thou Our Minds, Dear Lord*

HALL

*Take thou our minds, dear Lord, we humbly pray;
give us the mind of Christ each passing day;
teach us to know the truth that sets us free;
grant us in all our thoughts to honor thee.*

*Take thou our hearts, O Christ; they are thine own;
come thou within our souls and claim thy throne;
help us to shed abroad thy deathless love;
use us to make the earth like heaven above.*

*Take thou our wills, Most High! Hold thou full sway;
have in our inmost souls thy perfect way;
guard thou each sacred hour from selfish ease;
guide thou our ordered lives as thou dost please.*

*Take thou ourselves, O Lord, heart, mind, and will;
through our surrendered souls thy plans fulfill.
We yield ourselves to thee: time, talents, all;
we bear, and henceforth heed, thy sovereign call.*

AFFIRMATION of FAITH — *Apostles' Creed*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

OFFERING

Invitation to Give

Offertory Music — *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing* - arr. Sun Ahn

Doxology — *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow*

OLD HUNDREDTH

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Amen.*

S A C R A M E N T *of the* **L O R D ' S** **S U P P E R**

INVITATION

PRAYER of GREAT THANKSGIVING

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them up to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE BREAKING of the BREAD

COMMUNION of the PEOPLE

MUSIC during COMMUNION — *I Am the Bread of Life* - Suzanne Toolan

PRAYER after COMMUNION

S E N D I N G

HYMN — *There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit*

SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT

*There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place, and I know it's the Spirit of the Lord;
there are sweet expressions on each face, and I know they feel the presence of the Lord.
Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us, filling us with your love;
and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise;
without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived
when we shall leave this place.*

*There are blessings you cannot receive till you know him in his fullness and believe;
you're the one to profit when you say, "I am going to walk with Jesus all the way."
Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove, stay right here with us, filling us with your love;
and for these blessings we lift our hearts in praise;
without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived
when we shall leave this place.*

CHARGE and BLESSING

CHORAL BENEDICTION

VENI EMMANUEL

Rejoice, Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

POSTLUDE — *Glorious Things of Thee are Spoken* - Robert Hughes

ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Please note all announcements for Sunday bulletins are due by noon the Tuesday before they are to be published. Please email announcements to Bulletin@MPCusa.org.*

TODAY'S CHANCEL FLOWERS

The Chancel Flowers are offered to the glory of God and are given by Kathleen Foster in memory of, and in gratitude for, Betsy Burgess Jurey who, for over 15 years, was devoted to the Clothing Center. Betsy dedicated her time and energy to ensure that the Clothing Center continued to operate and that it was a pleasant shopping experience for our customers. She will be greatly missed. The second arrangement is given to thank the members of our Interim Committee whose dedication and commitment to our church family has led to The Reverend Dr. Tom Kort, now serving as our Transitional Pastor. We are most grateful!

FAMILY CHOIR FOR CHRISTMAS EVE! REHEARSALS START TODAY

Everyone, Teen Choir members though adult singers, is invited to be part of the Family Choir on Christmas Eve. The pieces we will sing are accessible and won't take a lot of time and effort to learn, but will be gratifying to sing and will enhance the Christmas Eve 7:30 p.m. service. Our first rehearsal will be held in the Sanctuary immediately after worship today, December 1. The Family Choir has been a great experience for all those involved, so if you have been part of this choir in the past, or would like to try it out, come and be a part of this choir.

FOOD CENTER REQUESTS

The requested food donation for the month of December is cookies. A shopping cart has been put in the Welcome Center to receive your donations. Thank you for your continued generosity!

ADULT EDUCATION CLASS THROUGH DECEMBER 15

Pastor Alex will lead the class titled, *Waiting to Act: Contemplation and Action in Advent*, where he will invite us to reflect on and engage with Advent themes and scripture passages through the lens of contemplation and action. Through this study we will engage with the spiritual sides of justice, how prayer and faithful action are related, as well as what God might be inviting from each of us while we prepare for the Christ Child. We hope you will join us as we seek to live practical and inspired lives together. The class will be held each Sunday through December 15 at 9:30 a.m. in the Conference Room located on the second floor.

ANGEL TREE IS BACK!

Our annual Angel Tree has returned and is displayed in the Welcome Center. We will provide toiletry bags for the many individuals we serve each week at the Food Center from lower Bucks County and greater Trenton areas. Anyone interested in participating in this ministry is asked to please take a white angel from the tree and fill a one-gallon Ziplock bag (provided) with the following items:

- 2 toothpastes (regular size)
- 2 toothbrushes
- 2 bars of wrapped soap (neutral scent)
- 2 deodorants (neutral scent)

You will also find a few red and green angels on the tree for those who prefer to make a check or cash donation. Please note it is important to include the angel with your donation so that we know it came from the Angel Tree. Checks can be made out to The Food Center at MPC, and we ask that those donations be placed in the morning offering plate or mailed to the church office.

A "blessing" from MPC is printed on one side of each angel; the list of items is printed on the other side. Please include the angel in each Ziplock bag along with the items. We know how generous our congregation is! We ask, however, that you do not include extra items in the bag. Instead, perhaps fill another bag.

Filled bags can be dropped off Monday nights from 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Tuesday mornings from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m., or before/after the Sunday worship service in the box marked "Angel Tree" in the Welcome Center. All bags need to be delivered no later than December 26 for distribution to our Food Center clients beginning in the New Year! We are so grateful and thankful to all of you for your dedication to this ministry!

REBECCA CIRCLE POT-LUCK

Looking for a way to share faith, fun and fellowship? Come give Rebecca Circle a try! **As a reminder, Rebecca Circle will meet Monday, December 9, at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room for our Christmas Pot-Luck.** Please bring an appetizer to share. All women of MPC are welcome.

Rebecca Circle meets September through May, on the second Monday of each month. Usual meeting time and location are at 7:00 p.m. in the Lounge. Experience different programs each month ranging from spiritual, informative, hands on to just plain fun. Come as you are. No experience necessary. For information call or text Jen Jones 215 962-3655.

FOOD CENTER IN NEED OF VOLUNTEERS

Are you looking for an occasional way to help the Food Center? We are currently in need of people to join our Pepperidge Farm bread pickup team. Bread pickups occur every Friday morning at the warehouse in Willow Grove. Use the church van to transport trays of bread back to MPC for Wednesday distribution. Volunteers will need to be capable of lifting and moving trays of bread. You can choose to do just one pick up per month, or more if you decide you love it. For questions and inquiries, please email mpcfoodcenter@gmail.com. The Food Center is a living embodiment of "many hands make light work!" Join us!!!! Thank you for your consideration.

Annual MPC Clothing Center Open House



Saturday, December 7, 2024

9:00 A.M. - Noon

Room 4, near Fellowship Hall

Shop and see we're more than just clothing!

MPC's CHRISTMAS MEMORIAL & HONORARIUM GIFTS

Consider honoring, celebrating, or remembering a family member, friend, or loved one this Christmas Season. Contributions to these funds can be made in the name of a loved one who has passed or to honor someone in your life now.

POINSETTIAS

Give the gift of Christmas cheer! Contributions toward poinsettias ensure that homebound members receive a poinsettia delivered to their home this Advent. Suggested donation of \$10.00 per flower.

MPC MUSIC

Give the gift of music! Contributions to this fund help to supplement the music ministry program of the church. In the past, these funds have been used to invest in Orff instruments for enhancing the children's music program, handbell equipment, guest musicians, as well as ensure that "Word in Music" Sundays and other special musical offerings are possible.

DEACONS' FOOD BASKETS

Give the gift of food where it's most needed! Several times each year, especially during holiday seasons, our Deacons ensure that almost 100 food-insecure families are given the gift of groceries!

GIVE A GIFT THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

I/We wish to make the following contribution(s) to:

_____ **Poinsettias: The gift of Christmas cheer!**

Please find \$ _____ attached for this fund.
Suggested donation of \$10.00 per flower.

_____ **Music Fund: The gift of music at MPC!**

Please find \$ _____ attached for this fund.

_____ **Deacons' Food Baskets: The gift of groceries!**

Please find \$ _____ attached for this fund.

TOTAL GIFT AMOUNT: \$ _____

Given by _____

Email Address _____

Home/Cell Phone _____

(Circle one) *"In loving memory of"* *"In celebration of"* *"To give thanks for"*

Please **PRINT** information below **EXACTLY** as you wish it to appear in the bulletin.
Use the back if necessary.

Please provide payment separate from your pledged giving.

Make checks payable to MPC with the type of memorial noted on the memo line.

**This form must be returned to the Church Office by
Monday, December 16, 2024**



MPC Weekly Calendar

SUNDAY, December 1 - 1st Sunday of Advent

8:30 a.m.	God's Thunder	Room 121
9:30	Sunday School for all ages	
10:00	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
10:30	Worship Service	Sanctuary & Livestream
11:45	Teen Choir	Music Room
Noon	Adonai Tabernacle	Room 220

MONDAY, December 2

5:30 p.m.	Food Packing	Food Center
6:00	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
6:30	Mostly Motets	Music Room
7:00	Boy Scout Troop 3	Fellowship Hall
7:00	Boy Scout Troop 3	Lounge
	Parent Meeting	
7:00	Cub Scout Pack 3	Room 220
7:30	Personnel Committee	Zoom

TUESDAY, December 3

9:00 a.m.	Produce Prep	Food Center
6:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
7:00	Food Center	Parking Lot

WEDNESDAY, December 4

9:00 a.m.	Food Center Distribution	Parking Lot
9:00	Ivins Outreach Center Meeting	Lounge
6:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
6:00	Youth Club	Fellowship Hall
7:00	Girl Scout Troop 2888	Room 220
7:15	Chancel Chimes	Room 121

THURSDAY, December 5

10:00 a.m.	Clothing Center	Room 4
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THURSDAY, December 5 (continued)

6:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
7:00	AHTN Training	Conference Room
7:00	Chancel Choir	Music Room

FRIDAY, December 6

Middle School Retreat begins

10:45 a.m.	Weekday Nursery School	Room 220
11:00	Ivins Outreach Center	Lounge
6:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
6:30	Women's AA Meeting	Lounge

SATURDAY, December 7

Middle School Retreat continues

9:00 a.m.	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
9:00	Clothing Center Open House	Room 4
Noon	Visiting Hours for Betsy Jurey	Lounge
2:00 p.m.	Memorial Service for Betsy Jurey	Sanctuary
3:00	Memorial Service Luncheon	Fellowship Hall

SUNDAY, December 8 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

Middle School Retreat concludes

8:30 a.m.	God's Thunder	Room 121
9:30	Sunday School for all ages	
10:00	Boy Scout Troop 3	Parking Lot
	Christmas Tree Sale	
10:30	Worship Service	Sanctuary & Livestream
11:30	Advent Festival	Fellowship Hall
11:45	Teen Choir	Music Room
Noon	Adonai Tabernacle	Room 220
4:00 p.m.	Cantus Novus Concert	Sanctuary

Save the Date

Advent Festival ~ December 8

Following Worship Service in Fellowship Hall

Kick off the Advent Season together
as we create crafts that will serve as centerpieces
for our journey towards Christmas.
A light lunch will be provided






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