MORRISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Summer - Fall 2026

currents



Celebrating the Seasons at MPC

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Plus the annual Christmas Memorial & Honorarium Form

AND MUCH MORE!

Visit us at MPCusa.org

Pastor's Pen



A Thin Place

Dear Friends at Morrisville Presbyterian Church,

As I look back on these first couple of months among you, I find myself filled with gratitude. Ashley, our children, and I have been welcomed into this congregation and community with such kindness, generosity, and warmth. From conversations over coffee to invitations around dinner tables, from familiar faces beginning to become familiar friends to the many ways you have made room for us in the life of this congregation, we are grateful. Thank you for the hospitality you have extended to our family and for the many ways you have helped make Morrisville feel like home. It is a gift to be here, and I am thankful for the opportunity to share in ministry with you.

As we turn the page from summer and fall toward the season of Advent, I find myself thinking about the ways God makes God's presence known among us. This year's Advent theme is "A Thin Place." In Celtic Christian tradition, a thin place is understood as a place where the distance between heaven and earth seems especially close, where the ordinary and extraordinary meet, and where the presence of God feels just a little more tangible. These places are not necessarily extraordinary in themselves. Sometimes they are found in the familiar rhythms of daily life, in a conversation that stays with us, in the beauty of creation, around a table shared with others, or in moments when we experience unexpected grace.

Perhaps part of the invitation of Advent is to pay attention. In the midst of the busyness, noise, and expectations that so often accompany this season, we are invited to slow down, to make room, and to notice the places where God is drawing near. I wonder, where have you encountered a thin place in your own life? Where have you experienced a glimpse of the sacred in the ordinary? And how might we, as a community of faith, become a thin place for others—a place where people encounter welcome, belonging, hope, and the love of Christ?

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, I hope you will make room for the wonder of this season. I look forward to sharing in the many opportunities for worship, fellowship, and celebration that Advent and Christmas will bring. May we discover, together, that even in the most ordinary places and moments, God is nearer than we sometimes imagine.

With gratitude and hope,

Kyle



Living the "I.D.P.T." Way



Dear Priesthood of All Believers,

"I.D.P.T." Those were the four letters I heard on repeat for seven days. One of the first trips I took on my sabbatical was to Little Rock Arkansas for the CREDO Conference. CREDO is run by our wider denomination for pastors and church leaders. The goal is to reacquaint participants with God's call in their lives so they can lead from a places of values, energy, and strengths.

"I.D.P.T." is the model that they use to achieve their goal. Each day we were steeped in seminars on "Identity," "Discernment," "Practice," and "Transformation." And each phase of the model also has corresponding questions: "Who am I?" "Who is God calling me to be" "How do I live this out?" "How am I changing and growing?" I found this model to be such a gift during my sabbatical as I was discerning the intersection of contemplation and church ministry. As the conference unfolded, I was able to dig deeper into my growing sense of discernment around God's call to both of these important ministries in my life, along with looking for practical ways to live them back at MPC. Thanks to CREDO the rest of my sabbatical was given a direction and road map that greatly enhanced my spiritual and vocational growth!

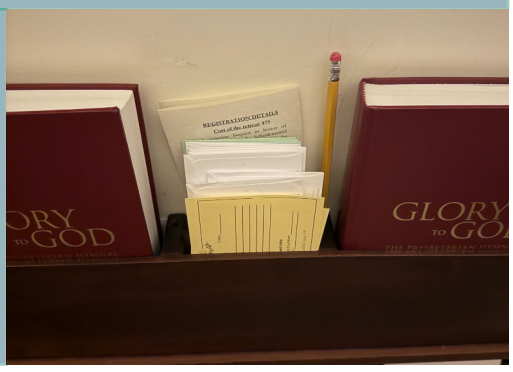
During the last several months I have observed that MPC has also participated in these discernment questions. Our Faith Formation committee has taken the reins of an ever changing church landscape. While I was away, church leaders on this committee realized that we needed to make some changes to Adult Sunday School and Youth Club. Instead of putting our heads in the sand, we reached out to the wider congregation and asked "where have we experienced God feeding our faith over the last two years" along with "what are the greatest challenges to our faith formation?" Through these listening exercises we heard two resounding themes. First, the greatest challenge congregants face is demands on everyone's time. Second, there is a deep desire for connection—connection to one another and to what God is doing in our lives. Out of these themes the FFC made changes to Adult Sunday School and Youth Club. These changes are examples of our faithful commitment to discerning God's movement in the congregation. While they may not be the final solutions to an ever changing world, they show our resilience and flexibility in faith as we continue to discern and connect to one another.

As we turn towards this Advent season, I wonder where you might find yourself? Are you curious about your own identity, discernment, practice, or transformation? And I hope you will join us as we continue to follow God in our midst. Through new programs of Coffee and Connection, Adult Faith Formation after worship, future contemplative offerings, and our longstanding traditions of Youth Club, Youth in Mission Trip, and plenty of volunteer opportunities from our Outreach Committee. Blessings on our journey together.

Grace and Peace,
Alex

New Prayer Request Cards

Yellow prayer request cards have now been placed in the pew pockets in the sanctuary. Persons who wish to share a concern or joy may fill out the card and place it in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. These cards are replacing the open notebook which had been in the Welcome Center. The pastors will follow up on prayer requests and share them with the congregation if permission is granted.



Our Church Family

Welcome New Members



John Oetting and his fiancé Susan Annenberg (MPC member) split their time between New Hope & Zionsville, PA. John has worshiped with Susan at MPC for five years. A native of the Ozarks, John has worshipped and served in a variety of leadership and ministry creation/ incubation capacities at half a dozen churches over the years. He is retired from a career in technology R&D with Bell Labs/AT&T and has spent the last seven years developing a nonprofit community arts and innovation center in Emmaus, PA (JuxtaHub).

In his spare time, John designs, builds, teaches and uses small skin-on-frame paddle craft. He embraces the words of Ratty from the book The Wind In The Willows: "…there is nothing, absolutely nothing, half so much as worth doing as simply messing around in boats."



Devin Hawthorne-Rentschler and Jim Rentschler live in Yardley with their son, Colin who is 6 months old, and their corgi, Rocky. Devin grew up in Philadelphia where she attended the Art Institute and received a Bachelor's Degree in marketing. She has been a real estate agent for eight years now, and works locally here in Bucks County at Keller Williams. Jim grew up outside of Atlantic City in Northfield, NJ and attended Stockton University where he received a Bachelor's Degree in economics. He currently works as a software engineer for the federal government. Jim plays rugby locally for the Levittown Hibernians where he learned about MPC through a few active members. They are excited to get Colin baptized at MPC later this month, and are thankful for the welcoming community of MPC!

Sacrament of Baptism

Please join us in welcoming the newest member of Christ's church. On October 25, Bethandy Byrd, daughter of Michelle and Will Byrd received the sacrament of baptism. The sponsors for Bethandy were Beth and Randy Curtiss. The participating elder was Luisa Herrera.





Celebrating MPC's High School Seniors

During the June 7 worship service, members of MPC' Youth Ministry recognized our high school graduates with a gift and a special superlative certificate honoring their individual talents they brought to MPC. This year's graduates were Max Dous, Elisabeth Halloran, James Leiby, and Eliana Song. The recognition concluded with a blessing for the graduates as they begin the next chapter in their lives.







Stewardship Update

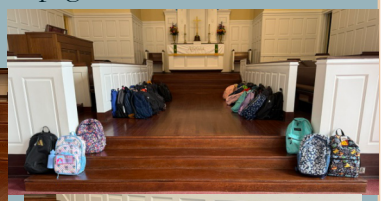
There is so much to celebrate in the way our congregation has responded to this year's Stewardship Campaign. So far we have received 124 Estimates of Giving—including 19 new EOGs this year!—totaling $475,159. We're on track to reach 140 Estimates of Giving and ~$500,000. It's not too late to participate; EOG cards and envelopes are available in the Welcome Center. You can also submit your EOG on our website at mpcusa.org/give. We hope you'll prayerfully consider participating; your participation is part of the story we are telling together about who we are and the ministry we hope to share in the year ahead. Thank you for your generosity!

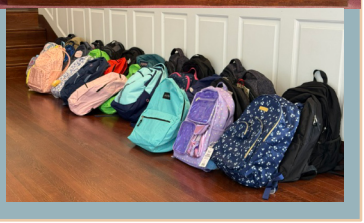


Deacons' Backpack Drive

The deacons thank you for the success of their annual backpack drive. Through your generous contributions, along with the Newtown Quilters Guild's, a total of seventy-four backpacks were donated, with plenty of extra supplies as well. The Ivins Outreach Center sends their gratitude for everything received and will distribute them to local students to help get them started on the new school year.







Ushers Needed

We need you for a new opportunity. Come join our Volunteer Ushering Team! Ushering at church is a simple, fun and meaningful way to serve. It's about showing up on a Sunday with a welcoming spirit, and lending a hand wherever needed. Would you like to try it out at MPC? No pressure, no long-term commitment -- just volunteers willing to give a little of their time, working side-by-side with deacons, to help create a warm and inviting experience for everyone who walks through our doors. Please see Robin Evans after the service, or contact her at robinevans310@gmail.com for more information. You must be at least twelve years of age and a church member.

Food Center Requests

From now till the end of the year, the Food Center is requesting the following items: Any variety of cereal, soup, or pasta sauce (no glass jars, please). Donated items may be placed in the shopping bin located in the Welcome Center. For the month of January, the Food Center is requesting soup. In February, the request will be cereal. Thank you for your generosity!





Congratulations to MPC Scholarship Recipients

Congratulations to the following students who received scholarships from MPC this past summer:

- Megan Oleynick received the Helen Nicholas Borden Scholarship which is given to a deserving high school senior or an undergraduate college student who demonstrates the values of hard work and perseverance.
- Angel Tamara received the Clara Burgess Scholarship. The scholarship is available to an undergraduate student with financial need.
- Hope Massey and Caroline Stover recieved the Roberts Scholarship. This scholarship is available to undergraduate or graduate students following a course of study in medicine or ministry.
- Eliana Song received the Patti Jane Reeves Scholarship which goes to a graduating high school senior who has shown academic excellence, service to community, and participation in the life of the church.
- Elizabeth Stoner and Maddie McCleskey received the McClaren Scholarship. It was created for children of MPC members with financial need.

This Advent Season at MPC

There are moments when the space between heaven and earth seems…thinner—like a wrinkle in reality when the ordinary gives way to the extraordinary, when light finds its way through the cracks, and when we catch a glimpse of God's presence in unexpected places. This Advent, we invite you to journey with us through a season of holy longing, making room for wonder, hope, and the promise of new life. As we wait for Christmas, we'll discover again the beautiful mystery at the heart of our faith: that God is not far off, but meets us right where we are.





Deacons' Angel Tree
November 29 - December 26
We will provide toiletry bags for the many individuals we serve each week at the Food Center.

Christmas Memorial & Honorarium Gifts
November 29 - December 14
Give the gift of flowers, music, or groceries by providing a donation in memory or celebration of someone, or to give thanks.





Evergreen Luncheon - December 1 ~ Noon
Older adults are invited to spend a holiday season afternoon together in Fellowship Hall for a luncheon and time together.

Blue Christmas Service - December 9 ~ 7:00 p.m.



This service acknowledges that the holiday season can feel heavy when we are carrying grief—the loss of a loved one, struggles with depression or health challenges, or difficult life transitions. We also gather to acknowledge our shared grief and lament for a hurting world. Through scripture, prayer, and song, this service offers a space to be honest about our sorrow, to bring our burdens before God, and to find comfort and hope in God's presence.



All-Church Caroling - December 13 ~ 4:00 p.m.
All ages are welcome to join as we walk around the surrounding neighborhoods of the church singing carols and end with desserts and hot chocolate. All you need to bring is your holiday spirit to share with our neighbors.



Deacon Christmas Food Basket Distribution - December 19 ~ 8:00 a.m.
Help pack and distribute Christmas Food Baskets for families in need. It's a great opportunity to participate in the outreach of MPC and meet fellow church members.



Christmas Eve Worship Services - December 24

4:00 p.m. - Children and Family Service

The Children's Choir will help lead us in a family-friendly worship as we sing familiar carols and hymns, hear the Christmas story, and celebrate the birth of Christ together.

7:30 p.m. - Candlelight Worship Service

Join us for a traditional Christmas Eve candlelight service filled with beautiful music and the wonder of the Christmas story. The service will feature brass musicians, our Chancel Choir, and beloved Christmas hymns and carols.

Angel Tree

The Deacons 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 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!

See the Lights

Save the date for our upcoming Shady Brook Farm Christmas lights wagon ride, dinner and fire pit fellowship on Wednesday, December 30, at 6:00 p.m. Sign up in the Welcome Center during December to reserve seats on the wagon. The cost is $5 per person or maximum $20 per family in advance.

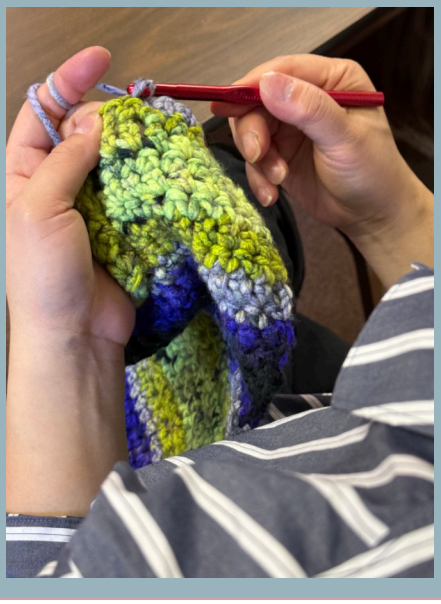
Shady Brook Farm is advertising that this will be the last year the lights will be displayed in this manner, so its a perfect opportunity to see this for the first time or visit it again if you haven't been there in a while. And the best part is spending it with friends from MPC.





Prayer Shawl Gatherings

Gatherings to make handmade prayer shawls supporting our Code Blue guests will now meet monthly, on the second Sunday of each month in room 200, upstairs. All supplies will be provided. No experience needed as many will confirm it is very easy to learn. Bring a friend and join in the fun by gathering together to serve in this new way.



MPC Thrift Store

Submitted by Kathy Foster

We have a new name, two new flag signs that we put out on the days that we are open (one on the N. Pennsylvania Avenue side and the other on the W. Trenton Avenue side), a new sign that is placed by the church entrance to direct our customers to our store, and one more sign at the top of the stairs pointing downwards. There can be no doubt when we are open and where our store is located within the church.

We also had our first Saturday opening on November 7. This now allows those who cannot shop on a Thursdays to check us out. What a fabulous day it was, we had 27 new customers!!!! Several live within walking distance of the church, and yet never knew we existed! We were very busy, even had to run out to the bank to get more change! Very exciting and so rewarding. As you know, all the proceeds from the Thrift Store are distributed to other community non-profits, agencies, local schools for student supplies and so much more, by our Outreach Committee. We are so thrilled to help make that happen.

Right now, we are accepting Christmas/holiday/winter décor, dishware, and clothing. So as you go through your Christmas decorations and thinking of scaling back, please consider donating to the Thrift Store, BEFORE Christmas, not after!

The Thrift Store is open on Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and the first Saturday morning of the month from 9:00 a.m. to noon. **Our next Saturday opening is December 5.** Only cash or checks are accepted. We look forward to seeing you there!



We will be CLOSED during the holidays on the following days: Thursdays - November 26, December 24, and December 31, 2026 and Saturday, January 2, 2027. Thank you for your support.



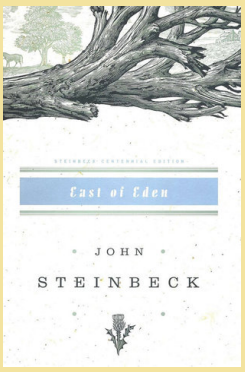


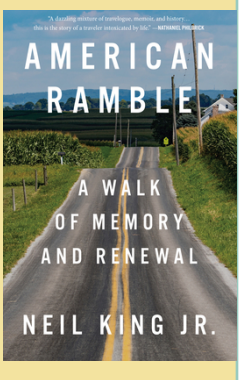


Book Discussion Group

Submitted by Shellie Stoddard

The MPC Book Discussion Group has listed their upcoming selections and meeting dates.





After the holidays and in the new year, the group will meet on Monday, January 11, 2027, to discuss East of Eden by John Steinbeck, a classic with biblical references to Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel. Then, on Monday, February 22, the discussion will be on the non-fiction American Ramble: A Walk of Memory and Renewal by Neil King Jr. Both books are available online.

There will be 2 more selections for meetings April 5 and May 17. Save the dates and the group will decide on those books during the next meetings.

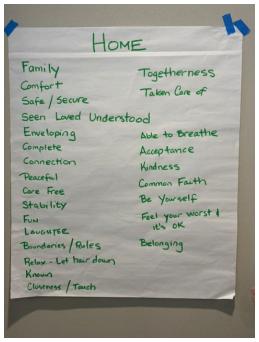
It's never too late to join in the discussions. You can participate in-person at MPC in the conferece room or via Zoom (please RSVP) from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Contact Shellie Stoddard at 215-510-5717 or at stoddard.shellie@gmail.com with questions and to RSVP. Join in on the fellowship!

Women's Retreat

The MPC Women's Retreat was held from November 6-8 at the Sisters of Saint Joseph Center for Spirituality, in Ocean Grove, NJ. The following are two reflections on the retreat.

Feels Like Home

Submitted by Ruth Workman



I have just returned from an amazing MPC Women's retreat. Our theme was "At Home in the Abundance of God". We began our time together sharing what home meant for us. We used words like "safe", "secure", "a place where I am seen, known and accepted", "a place filled with love and trust." All those words describe what my weekend felt like.

This group of MPC women is a safe place where I feel seen, known and loved. It feels like home. It was truly a time of abundance – abundant beauty of a walk on the beach, abundant laughter as we played games at night, abundant love as we listened to one another, shared our joys and sorrows, and cared for one another. There was always someone offering help or a hug.



Beauty, laughter, love, and caring are all ways I experience God. I am grateful to each of the women who attended, our speaker, and our hostess for giving me a deep experience of being at home in the abundance of God's love.

Saturday evening's communion was celebrated by Rev. Eileen Lindner who was baptized, confirmed, ordained, and married at MPC. In her meditation, she encouraged us to "drop your anchors right where you are." She shared delightful memories of MPC and her extensive ministry. Truly an MPC Women's Retreat is a life changing experience.







Found Inspiration

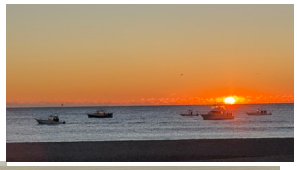
Submitted by Julie Kroon

The theme of the retreat, "At Home in the Abundance of God", invited us to reflect on what home means to us and how we can simultaneously live in God and God can live in us. Through song, Bible readings, discussion, poetry, and art, I grew closer to God and sisters in Christ.



Fellowship time in the evening was abundant with snacks, laughter, and games (Taboo has become an annual tradition).

The time away from home, the peaceful setting of Ocean Grove, and the retreat center allowed me to reset and relax. Even this morning-averse writer was inspired to wake up early to see the sunrise over the ocean.



This is the third year I have attended the retreat, and it is a weekend I look forward to now every year. I encourage all women reading this to join us next year.



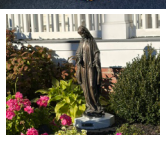
















Thank you Rev. Dr. Tom Kort…



On August 30, MPC said thank you to Rev. Dr. Tom Kort for his time and leadership serving as the Transitional Pastor. and gifted him with a special offering. Rich Ryan, former chair of the Personnel Committee said during the presentation, "Through your ministry, you have encouraged us, challenged us to grow in faith, and help guide our congregation with wisdom and grace. Although your time with us is coming to an end, the impact of your ministry will remain with us. You will always be remembered as a blessing to this congregation."

…and Welcome Rev. Kyle Anderson

On July 26, Rev. Kyle Anderson was greeted by many members of the congregation in the lounge prior to the worship service where he delivered that Sunday's sermon. After worship, a congregational meeting was held to elect Rev. Anderson as MPC's next Senior Pastor/Head of Staff. After the meeting, Rev. Anderson and his family were welcomed to the church during a picnic in the Memorial Garden where many more were able to spend some time getting to know him. Rev. Anderson started at MPC on August 31.





























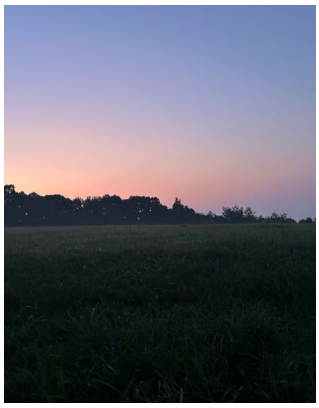


Youth in Mission Trip

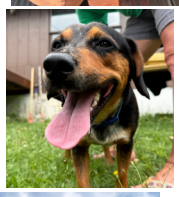
From July 11 to July 18, MPC's Youth in Mission spent their time providing hope and helping homeowners rebuild, repaint and repair their homes in Pipestem, WV. Along the way, and during some free time, they enjoyed some of the sights West Virginia has to offer..





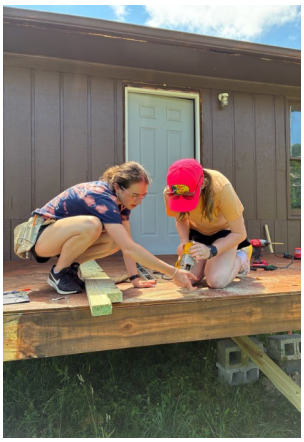


































Rally Day

The program year at MPC began on Rally Day, held September 13. Youth of all ages began their Sunday School classes. Adults participated in a new program develeped by the Faith Formation committee, "Coffee and Connection," allowing members of MPC to gather in the lounge during the Sunday School hour for coffee and casual conversation. During worship, Sunday School teachers were commissioned and the children met Pastor Kyle during Time for Young Disciples. The day was capped with a lunch served in Fellowship Hall.









Pumpkin Painting

After many attempts to go apple picking, but were rained out each Sunday, plans were shifted indoors to welcome fall with pumpkin painting in Fellowship Hall. Children were able to pick a pumpkin from the "patch" and enjoy the opportunity to show their artistic side!





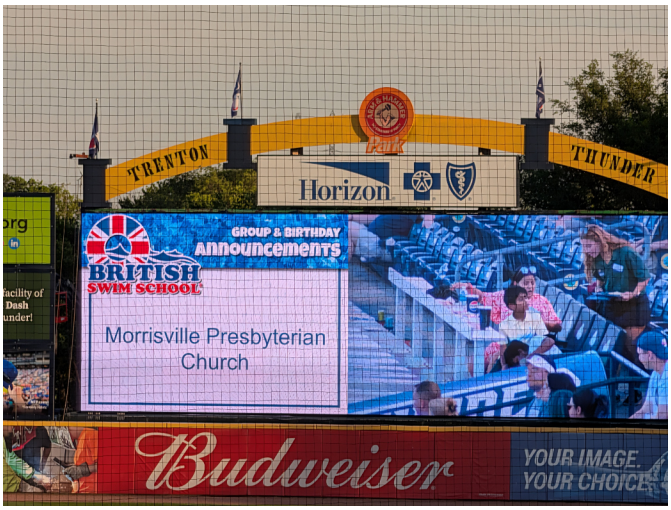




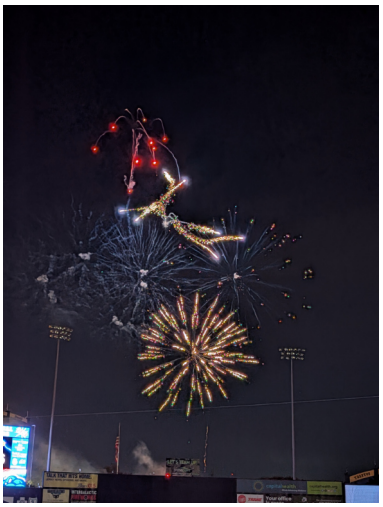


A Night at Trenton Thunder

Members of MPC enjoyed a night of fun, fellowship, and fireworks (oh yes, a baseball game too!) during the annual Trenton Thunder Night held June 13.

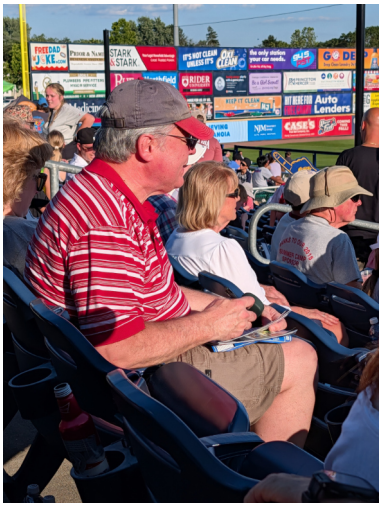
























All Saints' Sunday & Membership Recognition Sunday

On November 1, MPC gave "thanks for those who have died; whose lives have shared and continued to share our faith here; and for all those who share in the life and ministry of this congregation," said Pastor Kyle. He noted the many names of members placed on the communion table as a way to highlight "those church members who are celebrating significant anniversaries, (and it is) a joyful and thoughtful reminder of those we share this table with." Banners with photos of members adorned the sanctuary. After the service, a luncheon was served in Fellowship Hall celebrating all members of MPC.

























MORRISVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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' HOLIDAY 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!

Please COMPLETE and PRINT CLEARLY the form below and return it with your generous gift.

GIVE A GIFT THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

_____**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' Holiday Food Baskets: The gift of groceries!** Please find $_____ attached for this fund.

TOTAL GIFT AMOUNT $_____

Given by _____

Email Address _____

Home/Cell Phone _____

(Please 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. If possible, please use one form for each category and/or use the back if necessary.



_____

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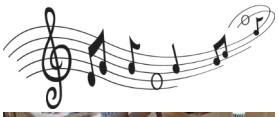

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Please provide payment separate from your pledged giving.
Make checks payable to MPC with the type of memorial noted on the memo line.

This form must be returned to the Church Office by Monday, December 14, 2026 in order to ensure inclusion in the December 20 bulletin.

CPR/First Aid Class



The Board of Deacons is sponsoring a CPR/First Aid certification class on Saturday, December 5. Class will start at 9:30 a.m. and last for about three hours. Cost is $80 and payment by check or cash is due the day of the class. Pre-registration is required. There will be sign up opportunities in the Welcome Center, during Fellowship Hour on Sundays, or by contacting Joy Rees at reesfam5@yahoo.com or by text at 215-280-4999.

Upcoming in the Months Ahead at MPC





February 7, 2027



February 14, 2027



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper





Check the bulletin and weekly emails for more information on these events and others in the coming months.

Contact Us

Morrisville Presbyterian Church Staff

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