

THE WINDOW

MPC Quarterly Newsletter

Season of Lent 2020



A community for you.

"Now I'm turning you over to God, our marvelous God, whose gracious Word can make you into what he wants you to be and give you everything you could possibly need in this community of holy friends."

~Acts 20:32 The Message

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The Pastor's Page

by Reverend Luke H. Maybry



Dear Members and Friends of MPC,

Over the last month, we have had the privilege of having either youth or children lead worship. I am fully aware that some don't like that. The hymns, the sermon, the liturgy, and the vibe are all different. The sanctity of worship, some would say, is compromised. I beg to differ. While the vibe may be different, if by "sanctity" we mean "holy", then I can't think of anything much more holy than witnessing and giving thanks for how God has worked through our young people. Given all the other "activities" the world offers these days, it gives me great hope to see young lives transformed through activities offered here. And, I have never in my life heard a preacher have the courage to talk about his or her own battle with mental illness from the pulpit. That's powerful stuff.

I also learned something in our recent Children's Sunday about Lent. It's always a challenge as a pastor to discern and communicate the essence of a particular season. The children nailed it. When asked about what gave them joy, they mentioned things like cats, family, their siblings, music, being together, and helping others. It seems like they would have mentioned an Xbox or some other wildly popular video game. But they liked the simple things. Margaret Renkl wrote an editorial in last Sunday's *New York Times*, about that very thing.

"Instead of giving something up for Lent," she writes, "I'm going to make a heartfelt offering. In times like these, it makes more sense to seek out daily causes for praise than daily reminders of lack. So here is my resolution: to find as many ordinary miracles as a waterlogged winter can put forth, as many resurrections as an eerily early springtime can allow. These beautiful things are bursting forth in the darkest places, in the smallest nooks and deepest cracks of the hidden world, and I am going to keep looking every single day until I find one."

(continued on pg. 2)

WELCOME

(continued from pg. 1)

The children helped teach us that on Sunday. I always thought we were supposed to give something up for Lent, which is well and good *only if it points us to something greater*. Giving up is only in service to seeing God's grace all around us. So be on the lookout this season. Lent is not solely supposed to be about self-sacrifice and depravity. God's sacrifice in Jesus Christ was more than enough. Grace abounds, even in the darkest of places, even though we don't always notice it. The children helped me notice that Sunday in worship. I am most grateful that they opened my eyes to God's every day, ordinary, and holy grace. I hope to notice a lot more of it during Lent.

Yours in Christ,



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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Save the date:

For a detailed list of special worship services and events at MPC, please see the calendar on the last page of this newsletter.

Our Vision:

Motivated by the Grace of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit, we strive to honor the Lord as we:

Welcome all to worship in God's name.

Share the love of Christ, through our lives, words, and deeds.

Serve our neighbors, in our community and beyond.

Encourage all children, youth and adults to grow and explore their faith.

Joining together, we celebrate our living traditions as a dynamic and caring congregation who seeks to glorify God in all we do.



Congratulations to our Confirmands



(pictured from left): Hannah Williams, Mallory Karrenstein, Caroline Purdie, Miller Webb, Trevor Davis, and Matthew DeVantier.

On Sunday, February 2, we welcomed six of our youth into active membership at MPC. Under the direction of Sarah Evans, each youth completed confirmation class, during which they were able to explore and grow their faith. At the end of the class, the confirmands created and shared faith statements. We encourage you to learn more about our newest confirmands by reading their faith statements included in this newsletter.

Hannah Williams

I believe that God is almighty. I believe that He is the Holy Trinity, 3 in one, and He invites us to live our lives to the fullest that we can. I believe that He created everything and He tells us to go into His creation with love. He loves every single being on Earth, no matter what, and He tells us to be the same way by loving our neighbors. I connect to God by praying, reading scripture, and being involved with the church, but I also connect to God by drawing, painting, and just admiring nature around me. I believe it is just as important to see God in everyday life as it is to see God in church. I plan to live my faith by speaking the truth and to welcome anyone who is able to praise alongside me. My responsibility in the church is to help anyone who needs it and to strive to be the best member I can be. I plan on doing this by wishing everyone I can a good morning, helping in the kitchen or in Noah's chapel, and going on mission trips to spread God's love and help people who need it.

Mallory Karrenstein

I believe in God, I believe that he is almighty, that he is forgiving, that he knows and is all things. I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. I believe that God is there even in the darkest of times. I connect with him through prayer, through song, and through my heart. I can feel God's presence when I'm in worship and in my hard times. I will continue to go to church, to spread his word through mission work, to pray to him, to thank Him for everything He has done for me and for everything I have. As a member of the church I promise to join a committee, to continue to do mission work, to help spread God's word however I can, and finally to help the church when I am needed.

Caroline Purdie

I believe that God lives in us and is active in us through the kindness and love we put out into the world. God connects us with one another through the love and relationships we form with each other. I believe that when we form good relationships with people, and show loyalty, trustworthiness, and honesty, that is God at work in the world. I connect to God through the people I meet and the things I do, such as volunteering or helping someone. I connect to God everyday by being there for friends and thinking about how what I say and do can influence their life. I also connect to God when I go on mission trips and help people who may not have as much as I do. Mission trips and retreats are also a great way to strengthen relationships with friends, furthering our relationships with God. I plan to live out my faith by trying my best to create and improve relationships by being real, honest, and truthful, as God lives through us in the way we treat others. My responsibility is to continue going to church while creating and improving friendships. I will continue to go on mission trips in order to show God at work through kind actions and good deeds.

Miller Webb

Matthews Presbyterian Church has certainly helped craft my faith and what I believe in. I believe that God is the almighty ruler over all mankind. He made all plants, animals, and all life on Earth. He is the Holy Trinity, Three-in-One, Father, Son, Holy Spirit. God has the power to forgive us all for our sins. We could do nothing to lose that. God's love is eternal and it will never run out. I connect with God in four major ways: through prayer, service, leadership, and honesty. I feel a direct connection to God through all four of these ways. When I'm in prayer, I know God can hear me and I can feel him listening. During times of service, I feel I can worship Him personally and become closer to Him. When I'm being a leader, I am doing God's work in the world. In everything I do, I am honest about who I am and what I believe, no matter the circumstance. I plan to live out my faith in four simple ways. I plan to come to church and worship, not just go through the motions. I want to come to hear God's word and learn more about Him. I plan to further my faith by being more comfortable praying. Praying should be a time shared between God and me; not bothered by school, sports, or toxic friends. I want to volunteer more time for God. My schedule shouldn't get in the way of my faith and my relationship with God. I plan to be one hundred percent transparent about my beliefs and who I want to be. Nothing should get in between what I believe and my future. My responsibility to the church is to love my neighbor as myself. No matter where they are from, their past, color, etc. I am responsible for making time for God. God shouldn't be a burden to me. God should be a priority. I affirm what I believe every Sunday as a reminder that God is almighty and everlasting. I am responsible for serving God through everything I do and keeping him in mind.

Trevor Davis

I believe God created earth, humans, and animals and that God continues to keep us all safe. I believe that God loves us and has a plan for us all. I am currently and will continue to connect with God by praying, attending church, reading the Bible, and helping others. I plan to live out my faith by doing the following:

- regular church attendance
- volunteering within the church
- sharing God and church with others
- continue to attend mission trips

I believe my responsibility in the church is helping where needed, being an acolyte, bringing food, helping with the sound booth, ushering, helping with the children, and contributing to the church through work and creativity.

Matthew DeVantier

I believe that God created everything on earth. I also believe that God will be with me and protect me wherever I go. I believe that God is the Father of everything and everyone. I connect with God by praying and going to church, and when I do good and helpful, simple things, such as picking up a book when someone drops one or holding the door for people, it makes me connect with God because I know he is watching. I connect with God when I read the Bible and when I learn more about God. I plan to live out my faith by going to church every Sunday and attending youth group after. I also plan to believe God is with me no matter what and by telling others what God did for us, such as, creating all living creatures and all the good things in life. Lastly, I plan to live out my faith by doing good deeds even when I don't want to. Helping out is one of my responsibilities in church. So is being an acolyte and being a volunteer at VBS. Another one of my responsibilities is to help out with Room at the Inn.

GROW *in the*
GRACE *and*
KNOWLEDGE
of JESUS.
2 Peter 3:18



On February 16, with joy and thanksgiving, we welcomed Mabel Ruth Davis into the Christian Family, through baptism. The Book of Order reminds us that it is the responsibility of the whole congregation, particularly exercised through the Session, to nurture those who are baptized as they grow in faith and seek to respond to Christ's call to discipleship.

Join us as we welcome Mabel Ruth Davis!



We welcome Joseph and Molly Davis into active membership at MPC. Joseph, by Transfer of Letter from Calvary Baptist Church of Monroe, NC and Molly, by Transfer of Letter from First Presbyterian Church of Monroe, NC. They are the proud parents of newly baptized Mabel Ruth, and her big sister, Hadley, previously baptized.



Make the Circle Wider

As MPC continues to welcome new members into our congregation, we celebrate the joys of having a growing church family. Members are encouraged to connect with new members, welcome visitors, and invite neighbors and friends to worship with us. Shake hands, say hello, stay connected—as we make the circle wider.

“Like a branch that grows because of its connection to the tree, we thrive when we stay connected to the church.”

- quote taken from “Why the Church Is Vitally Important for Every Christian”, Stephen J. Nichols



How to Make Time in the Day for Lent

The fast pace of your life may seem to leave little time and energy for the traditional Lenten practices. But you can weave moments of spiritual awareness and service into even the busiest of schedules. The trick is to see Lenten practice as part of, rather than in addition to, each activity of your ordinary hectic day.

The three foundational practices of Lent are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Here's how to think about them in a new way:

Praying Daily

If you make a habit of saying a little prayer whenever someone irritates you, cuts you off in traffic, or makes life difficult; when someone does you a favor, you experience great and friendly service, or when something joyful happens to you—you will soon find yourself praying your way through the day. Try this simple practice and you will be observing the call for greater prayer during the Lenten season. You will also find that this habit makes your life flow smoother, yourself more centered, and your spirit more aware of God's presence.

A Different Type of Fasting

There are many ways to fast. Why not fast from criticism, gossip, judging others, or passing on rumors? Why not abstain from unwarranted fear and anxiety? You can also tell that inner voice inside your head that criticizes you to abstain from eroding your ability to be the confident, blessed person God calls you to be. These are beautiful ways to observe the Lenten call to fasting and abstinence.

Give of Yourself

Daily life also offers countless opportunities to give of yourself to others (alms), and most don't involve dipping into your wallet. Give encouragement to the doubting, give a word of praise to the insecure, show kindness to someone who could use a friend, and offer a word of thanks to those whose service of others often goes unappreciated. Give the gift of your attention to someone who simply wants to be noticed. Tell your children stories about people whose values you admire when you gather at mealtime. Don't be stingy with your smiles—give them freely to everyone you meet. And most important, give your love to those close to you. Hug them, hold them, and tell them what they mean to you. In this way you open your heart to God and others.

So no matter how busy you are in life, with some greater awareness and new perspectives you can consciously pray, fast, and give of yourself this Lent—and you will be ready to celebrate when a joyful dawn breaks upon you Easter morning.



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

During the Annual Congregational Meeting on February 9, the congregation voted to approve the proposed MPC Budget for 2020. Details can be found in the MPC Annual Report. (copies are available in the church office)

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Requested</u>	<u>CY 2020 Offering</u>	<u>Available Funds</u>	<u>Total 2020</u>
Missions and Outreach	44,000	34,000	5,000	39,000
Worship	15,000	6,000	3,000	9,000
B&G	181,207	138,000	12,000	150,000
CESG	17,950	3,000	10,120	13,120
Personnel/Admin	339,501	339,501		339,501
Admin	16,580	14,314	2,266	16,580
Finance/Stewardship	6,000	3,285		3,285
Fellowship and Member Care	1,900	1,900		1,900
<u>Total</u>	622,138	540,000	32,386	572,386
<u>Income</u>				
Anticipated Offering	Available Funds	Total		
540,000	32,386	572,386		

Celebrate the Season of Lent at the Sacred Choral Festival

In the Summer of 2018, I (Sarah Allred) shared an idea with my colleague and friend, David Brinson, at the Worship and Music Conference. I wished our choirs at home could experience the joy of singing with a mass choir like the one at the Worship and Music Conference. Together, we started to dream about an event in Charlotte to do just that; bring church choirs together to make BIG music. When we got back, we schemed and planned getting as far as drafting a letter to send to other area directors. Then, our other responsibilities took over, and we let the idea go. In 2019, again at the Worship and Music Conference, David brought it up. This time, we decided to take action right away. Adam Ward, the Music Director at Providence United Methodist, was the accompanist for the Adult choirs at the conference. We met with him and he was immediately on board. Now our idea was gaining traction.

Fast forward, on February 29, the first ever Sacred Choral Festival will meet. Over 150 choir members from Davidson College Presbyterian, Good Shepherd Presbyterian, Matthews Presbyterian, Myers Park Presbyterian, Providence United Methodist, and South Mecklenburg Presbyterian are gathering at Myers Park Presbyterian to sing! I hope you will all consider coming to hear the fruit of our labor. At 5pm, we will close the festival with a concert of music entitled "Singing the Seasons: Lent through Easter".

What a joy it will be to make music together!

**Join us Saturday, February 29, 5:00pm at Myers Park Presbyterian Church.
Tickets are free!**

SERVE

Thank you to all of our youth and children who served as worship leaders on Youth Sunday, February 2, and Children's Sunday, February 23. The services were full of music, praise, faith, and enthusiasm. We are grateful to them for sharing their time and talents with the congregation, and appreciative of Sarah Evans Shetley, Sarah Allred, and all of the youth leaders and helpers, who made these services so special.



Sunday mornings are a busy time at MPC, and we could use some help in the following areas:

Noah's Chapel:

Spend some quality time with the youngest members of our congregation. Volunteers are needed in the nursery and preschool rooms during the service. Our nursery workers, Doris and Anne, can always use some extra help. To sign up for one or more Sundays, please contact Sarah Evans.

Coffee Social:

Weekly volunteers are needed to provide the Coffee Social after the service. A sign up sheet can found in the Friendship Court. *Please note - all kinds of treats are appreciated, but we request that they be nut-free to protect children with severe allergies.

Mission Opportunities

Be on the lookout for monthly mission opportunities in the Friendship Court.

This month:

Help Center Food Bank Donation

Canned Mixed Vegetables

Please place your donation in the large brown basket by the sign-up table in the Friendship Court.

In this life
we cannot
always do
great things.
But we can do
small things
with great love.

~ Mother Theresa

Digging Deeper by Pastor Luke

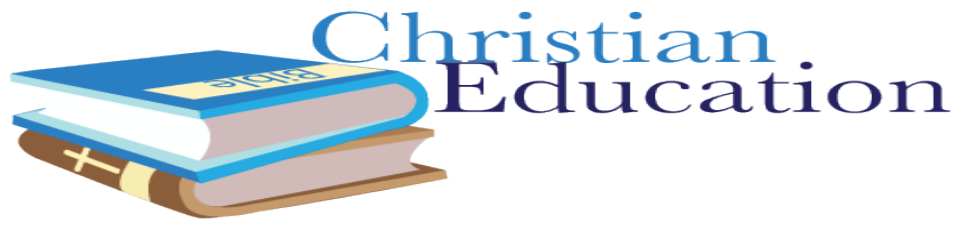
Have you ever wondered why most of the prosperity of the Charlotte region is clustered in one area? If you put a clock over Charlotte, the prosperity would be from 5:00 to 7:00. Matthews is at the bottom of the 5:00. Pineville is at the bottom of the 7:00. Ballantyne is due directly south at the 6:00. South Park, Myers Park, Dilworth, and Elizabeth are all in that wedge, which is made up mostly of affluent white people. There are notable exceptions, but the rest of Charlotte is mostly poor and brown. Hence the saying, Charlotte is a wedge of prosperity in a crescent of poverty. Why is that?

Well, as it turns out, it was planned that way. Local historian Tom Hanchett points out that Charlotte was surprisingly integrated during the twenty years after the Civil War. He actually mapped it out once and showed white families living next door to former slaves. Charlotte was remarkable in that way. But an economic recession happened around 1890. Partly as a response to that, the North Carolina Democratic Party's White Supremacy Campaign started. That particular movement, whose leaders are enshrined in our university buildings and roads, convinced working class whites to break their alliances with black voters. North Carolina codified this new era of discrimination with an amended constitution, with legal discrimination. By 1911, the city had sorted itself out by color, with deeds on new houses specifying that only whites could live there. Confederate monuments exploded during this period.

Additionally, as a response to the Great Depression of the 1930s, banks coded certain parts of the city as green, which were considered good investments, and certain parts as red, which were too risky. The black parts of town, of course, were in the red zone, otherwise known as "undesirable social or economic groups." This system was known as redlining.

Despite those policies, a few black neighborhoods flourished, mainly 2nd Ward and Brooklyn. The city bought those neighborhoods using eminent domain for "urban renewal". Schools, churches, businesses, community centers were all destroyed. Matthews was not immune to any of this. The mostly black Crestdale community in Matthews didn't get city water or utilities until the early 1980s.

Wealth redistribution is a hot topic today. The truth is, though, that wealth has been unfairly redistributed from black to white families for centuries in this country, all of which has resulted in this wedge of prosperity in a vast crescent of poverty. Today's Christians must speak to this and somehow seek reconciliation and amends.



Lent/Easter Activities

On April 11th at 10am, the church will be having an Easter egg hunt in conjunction with the preschool! Bring a blanket, your Easter basket, and get ready to have some fun!

Youth Sunday & Children's Sunday

Both Youth Sunday and Children's Sunday serve as wonderful testaments of how Matthews Presbyterian as a whole is following Christ. These services are completely brain stormed, created, and brought to fruition by the youth and children themselves, affirming them to believe that no matter how young they are, they still have a lot to bring to the table, not only within our walls but also out in the world.

Sunday School Info

2020 kicked off not only a new year, but also a new Sunday School class. The Fellowship and Faith class is a group of young families who enjoy learning from one another and our seminary intern, Marcy Doak. In this class, they discuss a multitude of topics and explore how they can implement their faith in their families and in their work places.

Our other adult classes continued with wonderful attendance, despite a temporary relocation because of a broken elevator. The children and youth continued learning and growing together, strengthening their knowledge of the stories of faith from scripture.

CCE

The children have a lot to look forward to. AMP has had continuous growth throughout the school year, introducing us to new friends almost weekly. To keep in touch with our friends and continue faith based learning throughout the summer, we now have two new day camps in addition to VBS.

June 15-18 Creation Camp: Noticing God's Creations

August 17-20 Creation Camp: Using God's Gifts

At these camps we will explore God's world through nature and work to create our own plays and skits using our voices and our talents. For more information on these camps, please reach out to Sarah Evans or Sarah Allred.

In addition to this, we are currently working to finalize plans for this year's VBS!! VBS will be Mon-Fri **Aug 3-7**. Be on the lookout for registration sheets in the coming weeks. If you'd like to volunteer for VBS please reach out to Sarah Evans.

Youth

The youth have been extremely busy since the new year with confirmation and youth Sunday. The confirmands enjoyed a 4 week class and an overnight retreat to help them explore their faith further and have a better understanding of what it means to take ownership over their faith in comparison to responsibility to the church. Please check out their faith statements, on pages 3 and 4 of this newsletter.

This summer is going to be a blast in youth! Not only are we going to the Worship & Music Conference, we are also going on a mission trip to Washington, DC. In DC, we will serve alongside many different communities, learn about the affordable housing problem, advocacy, race in America, and more. In addition to that, the youth planning team has picked out 5 days in the summer to get together for fellowship activities. Please stay tuned for those fellowship dates.



Matthews Presbyterian Church

Child Development Center



Matthews Presbyterian Church Child Development Center celebrated Valentine's Day with classroom Valentine's Day parties. We all enjoyed food, fun, and sharing Valentine goodies. Throughout the month of February, our classes learned all about hearts, Valentine's Day, manners & kindness, STEM, ABCs & 123s, and planets & stars. Our Bible verse of the month was "Love one another", Romans 12:10. The children enjoyed reciting this verse and many of them have it memorized. The 3 and 4-year-old classes enjoyed their field trip to the Matthews Playhouse to see Pinocchio and had an exciting visit from the dentist where they learned all about dental hygiene.

2020-2021 school year registration for MPC-CDC began in February. If you missed registration and still have interest, please contact the preschool office at 704-847-5564 or cdcdirector@matthewspresbyterian.org. Wait lists will begin as classes fill up and it is well worth adding your child's name to the list. We welcome children ages 3 months through PreK. We are dedicated to helping even the youngest students grow in the knowledge of our Father's love. Visit the website: www.matthewspreschool.com for more information. Registration forms can be found in the box outside the preschool office (room 209).

Wow, it is hard to believe that spring is almost here. Spring is always full of fun learning opportunities; nature takes a hand and helps form our curriculum of discovery. Be on the lookout for rainbows, caterpillars and other beautiful signs of spring in our classrooms.



Matthews Presbyterian Season of Lent/Holy Week Calendar

February 26 - Ash Wednesday Service 7:00pm

February 29 - Sacred Choral Festival Concert at Myers Park Presbyterian 5:00pm

April 5 - Palm Sunday Service 10:30am

April 9 - Maundy Thursday Service 7:00pm (in the chapel)

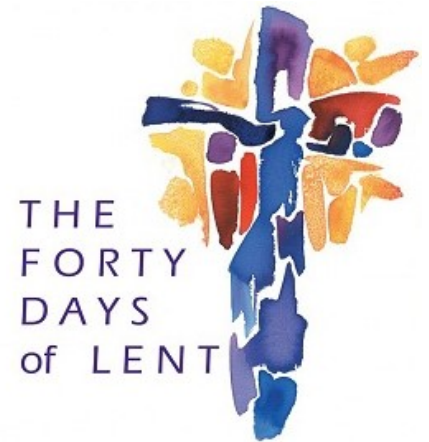
April 10 - Good Friday Service 7:00pm (in the sanctuary)

April 11 - Easter Egg Hunt 10:00am

April 12 - Easter Morning Services:

Easter Sunrise Service 6:45am (in the outdoor chapel)

Easter Communion Service 10:30am (in the sanctuary)



Matthews Presbyterian Church

A community for you.



Reverend Luke H. Maybry - Pastor
Sarah Allred - Director of Music Ministries
Sarah Evans Shetley - Director of
Children and Youth Ministries
Tom Kiff - Organist
Beth Haynes - Administrative Assistant
April Taylor - Financial Secretary

Worship Schedule

Sunday School 9:30 am

Worship 10:30 am

*** Transportation available upon request**

Please contact us for more
information about our worship
schedule and programs.

Matthews Presbyterian Church

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