

THE WINDOW

MPC Quarterly Newsletter

Season of Stewardship 2020



The Pastor's Page

by Reverend Dr. Luke H. Maybry



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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Dear Members and Friends of MPC,

The last newsletter that you received was in February. It seems like years ago, doesn't it? Lots of things have happened since then which have had major impacts on our lives, the biggest of which has been, at least for the church, that we can no longer meet in person for worship. COVID has touched almost all aspects of life. Everything has changed, almost none, it seems, for the good.

The last newsletter article came on the heels of a worship service led by children. The thing that struck me then, I said, was how they were grateful for small things in life and not necessarily their new X-box. And then I quoted *New York Times* columnist, Margaret Renkl, who had recently written an editorial about Lent.

"Instead of giving something up for Lent," she wrote, "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."

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WELCOME

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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.

* To access recent worship services online, visit our website:

www.matthewspresbyterian.org

At least for me, in spite of me, that prayer has been answered. I am beyond sick of COVID, and I haven't even gotten sick from it (not yet anyway). I'm tired of weighty decisions, zoom calls, and virtual meetings. I'm tired of worrying all the time. But I do think that in so many ways, we have indeed found that "beautiful things are bursting forth in the darkest of places, in the smallest nooks and deepest cracks of the hidden world."

We are learning to cope, slowly but surely, with COVID. Christian Education programs are opening back up with stringent modifications to our protocols ensuring healthy and safe practices. You can read about that below. We are worshipping either outside at 9:00 am or virtually at 10:30 am for now, but other options will be considered as conditions allow. We will find a way to do stewardship (you can read about that below, as well). We will continue being the church in every way that we can. It won't be the same or the way we would prefer, but, by God, the church will be the church.

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.

God will also continue being God. God will be sovereign and gracious. Fortunately for us, God's embrace is COVID free. We have a few dark days ahead of us. The fall of 2020, the upcoming Christmas season, and very likely a good chunk of 2021 will not be business as usual. We will not be able to do so much of what we love. But God's grace still abounds...everywhere. And God has given us the opportunity to notice and enjoy that. So stay connected, keep your chin up, and keep the faith. I am blessed to be your pastor.

Yours in Christ,





On March 15, with joy and thanksgiving, we welcomed Bryce Charles Zanin 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. On that day, we also welcomed Mike and Kerry Zanin into active membership at MPC.

Welcome, Zanin family!



"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."



On August 2, we welcomed Marshall and Whitney Prewitt into active membership at MPC, by transfer of letter from Crestwood Christian Church in Lexington, Kentucky. They are the proud parents of Campbell, Knox, and John Marshall Prewitt, who we joyously welcomed into the Christian Family, through baptism.

Whitney Prewitt is the daughter of Joe and Steffani Hardesty, longtime members of Matthews Presbyterian. We join them in welcoming the Prewitt family to MPC.

Welcome, Prewitt family!

SHARE

We welcome Marcy Doak back to MPC **as our Administrative Assistant**

Marcy Doak has graciously agreed to step in as our interim Administrative Assistant.

We are grateful to Marcy for taking on this role, especially during this trying time.

Welcome back, Marcy! We are so happy to have you at Matthews Presbyterian Church.



Marcy grew up in Statesville, NC and went to college and graduate school in Winston-Salem, NC. Recently, she graduated from Union Presbyterian Seminary in Charlotte with a Master of Divinity degree and is a candidate completing the requirements for ordination in the PC(USA). She returned to seminary in the fall of 2020 and is enrolled in the Master of Arts in Christian Education program. Prior to seminary, she spent most of her career in the areas of human resources, leadership, and organizational development in the Atlanta area before moving to Charlotte in 2006. Marcy and her husband have two high school aged children, and are members of Sharon Presbyterian Church. When not studying, Marcy enjoys reading, playing golf, and walking their two German Shorthaired Pointers.



Throughout the pandemic, the Mission Committee has remained in contact, by phone, with all of the missions we support. The committee is currently working on plans for a local mission opportunity this fall that the entire congregation can participate in, while still following the COVID guidelines.

COVID CONVERSATIONS

A SERIES OF ONLINE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS
HOSTED BY: MATTHEWS PRESBYTERIAN, MT MORIAH MISSIONARY BAPTIST,
CROSS & CROWN LUTHERAN, FIRST BAPTIST MATTHEWS AND MATTHEWS UMC

"Mental Health During A Pandemic"

Sept. 22 at 7 PM

www.Facebook.com/MatthewsPresbyterian



STEWARDSHIP

Managing God's Gifts To Us

This year has not gone the way any of us had anticipated. Given the pandemic and its uncertainties, planning for 2021, preparing the budget, and conducting our annual stewardship campaign for that budget are real challenges. We must recognize, though, that since COVID started, many things have not changed. We have worshipped God together every Sunday morning at 10:30, and, although it has been virtual for us, God still calls us together. Bible studies have occurred every Wednesday night. Children and youth are still being formed in the faith. One positive change that has occurred is that we have increased our missions giving to meet the ongoing and increasing needs of our community. None of this has come easily and none it has come the way we wanted it, but the church has not ceased being the church.

Furthermore, giving has been remarkably good. Although we have experienced a recent downward trend in weekly revenue, we are not sure whether to attribute that to COVID or the normal dip in giving during the summer months. We look forward to restoring the pace as the year goes on.

The year's Stewardship Campaign will start on October 18th and will culminate on Dedication Sunday on November 15th. This year's theme is simply "The Ongoing Church." It sounds simple and not very exciting, but that the work of the church is still being done even though we cannot meet for worship is remarkable and should be celebrated. That lives are being changed, that God is still calling us together, that the community is still being served... that the church is still being the church in these difficult times all testify to God's ongoing faithfulness, sovereignty, and grace.

As we do every year, we will send you a stewardship packet close to when the season begins on October 18th. This packet will include a full budget request from every committee. We will then craft a budget based off the congregation's pledges, historical trends in giving, and mostly off what we believe God is calling us to be and do.

Thank you for your faithful giving to God's church, especially in the midst of such an uncertain time as this. God is doing a good thing in our midst. The work of the church has not stopped or even slowed down. COVID has touched all aspects of our lives, including the ministry of Matthews Presbyterian Church. Yet the church is still very much doing the work of the church. God is doing a good thing among us and we have an opportunity through our prayers, activities, and financial giving to be a part of it.

SERVE

Music Ministry During Coronavirus

This pandemic has us all thinking about all the things we can't do. That is certainly true for MPC's Music Ministry. With singing being a super spreading activity, there are lots of things we can't do.

But, there are things we can do!

Early in our quarantine time, a lot of our church musicians were featured in Daily Devotions and Music Mondays. These are still available on our Facebook page if you want to check them out. As we continued to explore the things we can do, we added a monthly outdoor hymn sing, which will continue through the fall. The next one is September 16 at 7pm. In addition, we put together recording groups to add some variety to the hymn singing in our pre-recorded worship services.

Now, as we look towards fall, we are finding more things we can do. Spirit Ringers will resume on most Wednesday evenings at 6:30pm, spread out in the sanctuary. Music will be a part of both our youth and children's programming on Sunday and Wednesday nights respectively. We are so fortunate to have lots of wonderful musical equipment to facilitate music making in this social distancing era. Xylophones, drums, hand chimes, children's bells, and other various percussion instruments will all be used by different groups with proper cleaning afterwards, of course. All this music will be featured in our services on Sunday via Facebook.

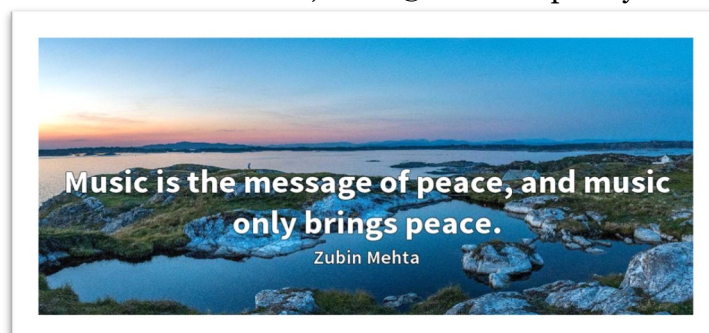
We surely miss singing together in the ways we used to do. We look forward to the day we can return. But for now, we will make the most of the things we can do, and we will do them safely to the glory of God!

Want to participate in our Music Ministry? Join us in one or more of these ways by contacting Sarah Allred, sarah@matthewspresbyterian.org for more information.

Monthly Outdoor Hymn Sings on the 3rd Wednesday: September 16 at 7pm	Spirit Ringers 2 nd , 3 rd *, 4 th , and 5 th Wednesdays
Children's Music during AMP on Wednesdays	Youth Music during Youth Group on Sunday nights
Preschool Music during Preschool Pals on the 2 nd and 4 th Wednesdays outside	Instrumental Music contact Sarah for more details.

Worship Volunteers Needed

Lots of volunteers are needed to participate in our pre-recorded worship services. If you would like to record yourself reading, singing, or playing an instrument, please contact Sarah Allred, sarah@matthewspresbyterian.org.



Digging Deeper

by Pastor Luke

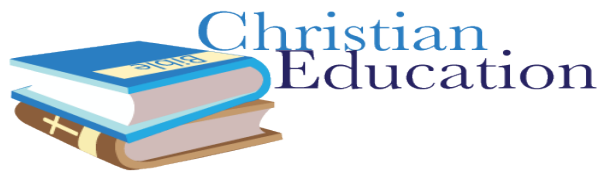
In addition to a global pandemic, just in case you may have forgotten, we are also having a national election this fall. Every side of every election has Christians on it, reading the same Bible, praying to the same God, and yet rooting hard against one another. This election is no exception. In fact, the role of faith is heightened this time. Division, anxiety, and rhetoric are all heightened. The prospect for a peaceful fall looks particularly bleak.

So what can we Christians do regarding the election? I would offer several words of advice. First, seek the truth. Jesus promised us that we can know the truth and that the truth will set us free. Between fake news and alternative facts, it's hard to know where truth lies, but if we look hard enough and humble ourselves, I think we can discern it.

Second, don't demonize the other side. Most of us feel strongly in favor of one candidate and therefore strongly against the other, which is fine. But refrain from demonizing people who feel just as strongly in the opposite direction. Seek to understand more so than to be understood. Maybe, just for kicks, try to make a case for the *other* candidate. You might learn something. By the time you read the next newsletter, after all, this election will be over... and we will have to live with one another.

Fourth, vote your conscience. Consider all the facts, consider the character of the candidates, consider what this country needs for such a time as this, consider who is most Christlike, and go into that booth and pull the appropriate lever. If you're a lifelong member of a political party and your conscience is telling you that you just can't vote for that guy this time, but the other guy, then go hold your nose and pull the lever in the other guy's favor.

Finally, know that this election, as consequential as it is, is far from what counts the most. God is sovereign and God is gracious. The most important election, after all, is that God has elected us, the church, for salvation as well as service. Don't forget that. Therefore, whatever the outcome on November 3rd (and let's pray that there is a clear outcome), be gracious in victory and magnanimous in defeat. Or, to quote my favorite Presbyterian president (he was never formally Presbyterian, but worshipped often at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church during office), "with malice towards none and charity for all, and with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."



Sunday School

Fall 2020 brings many different changes, including the way in which we do Sunday School. However, in this time of change and being apart, we will still find new ways to be together. For our preschool and elementary group, their parents can expect an email each week with a short pre-recorded Sunday School lesson that the kids can watch.

Our youth will be taking a hiatus from Sunday School this fall, as they will have a new opportunity to gather through the opening of our youth lounge for virtual learning, and they will gather for youth group on Sunday nights.

The four adult Sunday School classes are working on different ways to meet that best suits each class. Our young parent class, Faith & Fellowship, has decided to take a break this fall, as it is difficult for them to schedule a good meeting time with little ones at home. If you have any questions about how your particular class is going to meet, please use the list below to reach out to your teachers, as some of them are still developing and finalizing plans.

The Explorers Class: Doug Sampson

Living & Learning: Mark Bagley

Genesis: Katie Meyers

Youth Opportunities

Youth this year is going to be structured differently than it has been in the past, providing new and different opportunities. With virtual learning being the new reality, we decided to open our youth spaces on Mondays and Tuesdays to provide an opportunity for our middle schoolers and high schoolers to get out of the house and have a change of scenery as they do online learning. As the MPC staff and CESG committee, we are so excited that this is a possibility, as we think it will greatly help students to be in the presence of others and feel a sense of community.

In addition to this new opportunity, youth group is also structured in a different way than it has been in the past. Typically, we have one fellowship night a month, one mission night, and two discussion nights. This year since mission nights are much harder to do (we typically visit somewhere such as Samaritan's House), youth will have three different parts each week: music, devotion/discussion, and fellowship. The youth will be split into groups of 10 based on age, and each group will rotate through those three different sections.

The CESG committee is grateful that we are able to host in-person youth events in a safe way at this time. Masks, temperature checks, and hand-washing are required at every event.

Children's Education Opportunities

We have several different ministries happening this year for the children of MPC. Please read about each below:

AMP

Parents were given the opportunity to sign their kids up for AMP this year, knowing that there would be a mask requirement and different social distancing procedures in place. Once kids signed up, they were split into groups of 5 and assigned a specific Wednesday of the month. Each group gets to come once a month. At AMP they will have a time for music, fellowship, games and art in addition to their educational piece. The two younger AMP groups will be completing a fun worship education curriculum! The older group will be learning all about baptism and communion.

Preschool Pals

As it might be difficult for our younger children to wear masks and properly social distance, we've configured and come up with a safe outdoor ministry for children ages 2-4 and their parents to participate in! The first and third Wednesday of every month, for 30 minutes, parents and preschool children will come and gather on the church lawn to hear a Bible story and do silly songs.

Bible Study: Ephesians

TAUGHT BY PASTOR LUKE

Wednesdays: September 9th - October 14th

7:30 PM

Facebook Live

Women's Bible Study: Sermon on the Mount

Taught by Betty Meadows

Tuesdays at 7:00 pm on Zoom

Beginning September 15th

Preschool Pals

for ages 2-4

4:30-5:00 pm

Outside

beginning September 16th

1st and 3rd Wednesdays
(we won't meet if it rains)



**Matthews
Presbyterian Church**
Child Development Center



The preschool children had their first day of classes on September 8th. The staff has implemented new cleaning and Covid screening procedures to keep the children safe and healthy this year. We look forward to a great school year, and we are grateful to see the children's smiling faces again!

There are still spaces available for children in the T/Th Infants class and the Toddlers class (all days). If you would like to enroll your child in one of these classes, or learn more about MPC CDC, please contact our preschool director, Heather Efird at cdcdirector@matthewspresbyterian.org or 704-847-5564.

You can also find more information online at www.matthewsprespreschool.com.

Matthews Presbyterian Fall Calendar

September 9 - Bible Study - Ephesians (lead by Pastor Luke) 7:30pm Facebook Live

*every Wednesday through October 14th

September 13 - Rally Day - Commissioning of MPC volunteers @ 9am outdoor service

September 15 - Bible Study - The Sermon on the Mount (lead by Betty Meadows) 7pm Zoom

September 16 - Preschool Pals 4:30 - 5pm, 1st & 3rd Wednesdays (outside @ MPC)

September 16 - Hymn Sing 7pm (MPC parking lot)

September 22 - Bible Study - 2nd Half of the Gospel of Mark (lead by Jackie Ford) 10am Zoom

September 22 - Covid Conversation 7pm (www.matthewspresbyterian.org)

October 18 - Stewardship Campaign Kickoff

November 15 - Dedication Sunday

Join us for worship each Sunday:

In-person outdoor service @ 9am - limited capacity, sign-up required

Online worship via Facebook Live @ 10:30am - worship services are recorded weekly, and are available for viewing following the service at www.matthewspresbyterian.org.

Matthews Presbyterian Church

A community for you.



Reverend Dr. Luke H. Maybry - Pastor
Sarah Allred - Director of Music Ministries

Sarah Evans Shetley - Director of
Children and Youth Ministries

Tom Kiff - Organist

Marcy Doak - 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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