



Fall 2024

When I was an associate pastor here back in the summer of 2007, the view out of my office window (which is currently the office of our DCE, Allison Tibe) was of a beautiful evergreen tree. I don't know how old that tree was, but it had been there a long time. That summer was unusually hot and dry, with one of the worst droughts in history. Partly because of the weather, that beautiful tree got browner and browner. I'm sure there were other things ailing that tree, too, maybe an insect, or maybe the new construction that we had just completed disturbed its roots... Whatever the cause, my beloved evergreen tree was dead by the end of the summer and the view out of my window was not what used to be.

As I write this letter, the stumps of our old cherry trees are being ground down into pulp, almost like they never were, and the view out of my office, like last time, is not what it used to be. I'm going to miss so much about those trees; their shade in the summer, blooms in the spring, and colors in the fall. Like the evergreen tree that preceded them, and eventually like all living things for that matter, they were at the end of their life span. I preached on Ecclesiastes 3 last week. There was a time to plant twenty some years ago. This past week was a time to pluck up that which was planted.

But now it's time to plant again. I am not exactly sure what that planting will entail, but I do know that some new trees are being planned and ordered. It's more than trees, though, that we are planting at MPC. We had over twenty children last week at the blessing of backpacks. The planning that we have for them in the fall is in this newsletter and is extensive. The same holds true with our youth group. Tom Kiff has done an INCREDIBLE job this summer with our music. Our Israel/Palestine study was well attended with good energy. That ends on September 11, but we will conduct other studies like it soon. Stay tuned. Last but certainly not least, the chapel building planning has taken several twists and turns this summer and finally has some more definitive direction. You can read more about that later in this newsletter.

Fall is my favorite time of year. The weather finally cools off, the leaves start to turn, and the holidays are just around the corner. Normally, Fall is a time to harvest. At MPC this year, we're going to do some planting. The best days of this place lie ahead of us. God is doing a good thing here, planting lots and lots of seeds. I look forward to watching them flourish with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "AB" or similar initials.

Digging Deeper

by Rev. Luke Maybry

The session held several congregational gatherings last May to present some ideas on the chapel building. The first was demolishing the entire structure, otherwise known as “renovating the front lawn.” The second option was renovating the entire structure. The last, and one that seemed most compelling at the time, was to demolish the education wing and renovate just the old chapel. The church’s programming no longer requires all that space and renovating only half of that building, we thought, would be more cost effective.

The task force has been meeting with architects all summer, all of whom concluded that tearing down only half of the building was problematic because it would compromise the entire structure, would require additional construction costs, and would likely be more expensive than repairing the entire structure. The general contractor we were using also had to back out recently, which required us to find another one. Repairing old church structures is a small niche in the construction marketplace, so finding contractors to do that can be difficult. Once those costs are established, the session will call other congregational gatherings to present them to you. Those costs need to include the repair itself and anticipated future maintenance costs, all the while maintaining the new building.

Regardless of what decision is made regarding the chapel, we will need to raise additional funds, which will require a capital campaign that asks you to give over and above your pledge. Our campus is situated on some of the most coveted property in Matthews. Our buildings are fundamental to the character of the town and hold so much potential to do the Lord’s work. Our final goal is to be the church in the world, specifically in Matthews, NC. We are excited about the direction that God is leading us and we look forward to presenting further findings to you as we discern together what that direction is and what it requires of us.

Spotlight on Christian Education and Spiritual Development

YOUTH MINISTRY (Ages 6th grade through 12th grade)

- YOUTH WILL REGATHER ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2024 FROM 5:30-7:00 P.M.
- *AT LEAST ONE PARENT MUST ATTEND THE FIRST MEETING!* (We will review the upcoming schedule and vote on important calendar dates and events)!
- BBQ WILL BE PROVIDED...PLEASE BRING A SIDE DISH TO SHARE!

CHILDREN (Ages birth through 5th/6th grade)

- **THANK YOU FOR A FABULOUS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)**
 - GLOWING WITH GOD was a huge success. The children had a wonderful time and learned so much about living out God's light in the world!
 - THANK YOU to the many members who volunteered their time, energy and talents to make VBS a very special week!
- **SUNDAYS - NEW THIS FALL! NURSERY AVAILABLE!**
 - *Ages birth - 2:* Stay tuned for the official start date which will be announced soon! Let your friends and family members with infants to toddlers know that a nursery will soon be available during the 10:30 Worship service. Two paid childcare workers that have been vetted through background checks and extensive interviews will care for our very youngest children while parents enjoy Worship.
- **SUNDAYS - NOAH'S CHAPEL:**
 - *Ages 3 (must be potty-trained) through 2nd Grade:* Gather with 2 leaders immediately following the Children's Message in Worship for a Bible Story, fun crafts, and free-play time.
 - *Sundays during Worship (10:30 a.m.) following the Children's Message.*
 - Volunteers are always needed and can be any adult who wants to care for our young brothers and sisters in Christ. Please click or copy and paste here for link to Signup Genius: [MPC Children's: NOAH'S CHAPEL VOLUNTEERS \(signupgenius.com\)](https://signupgenius.com/MPC-Childrens-NOAH-S-CHAPEL-VOLUNTEERS)

- **SUNDAYS - NEW THIS FALL!! SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR UPPER ELEMENTARY STUDENTS:**

- *Ages 3rd Grade through 6th Grade. This offering is entirely optional. All children of every age are more than welcome to remain in worship with your family if you so choose!*
- Many parents have expressed a desire to have a deeper Christian Education experience for their children but struggle after a hectic week to arrive by 9:30 a.m.
- The Sunday School curriculum is entitled “Living The Word” and seeks to teach children how we as followers of Jesus live out the Gospel in our particular place with our particular gifts.
- Allowing through 6th grade provides a wonderful transitional opportunity from being “Children” to engaging more fully in “Youth” Ministry!
- Children will join a teacher and one assistant upstairs in Room 207 after the children’s moment.
- **IMPORTANT! Sunday School will be held on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Sundays. On the first Sunday of the month, children will remain with their families to partake of Communion together.**
- Allison Tibe, DCE, will lead Sunday School most of the time, BUT we must have two adults supervising the children at all times. ALSO, we would love to have wise voices help teach God’s Word. Please click or copy and paste this link to SignUpGenius to either be an assistant or a lead teacher: [MPC Children's: Sunday School for Elementary Kids \(signupgenius.com\)](https://signupgenius.com/signupgenius.com)

- **WEDNESDAY NIGHTS - A.M.P. IS BACK!**

- Formerly “Midweek Manna” will once again be called A.M.P.: **Activities at Matthews Presbyterian).** Ages 4 through 5th grade!
- A.M.P. will be focused on fostering relationships in a community of faith. There will still be story, games, crafts, and music, but in order to incorporate the wide age ranges of our children, this will be done in a way that honors every age with movement, variety and joy!

EVERYONE

- **WEDNESDAY NIGHT COMMUNITY DINNERS**
 - **EVERYONE IN THE CONGREGATION IS WELCOME TO JOIN FOR SUPPER ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS AT 6:00 P.M.!**
 - **\$6.00 per adult**
 - **\$3.00 per child**
 - **\$20.00 max family**
 - **NEW SIGN-UP PROCEDURES TO PROVIDE MEALS & RSVP FOR SUPPER:**
 - *We are beyond thankful to the many folks who are willing to provide our community meals!* If you are willing to cook Wednesday supper, we now ask that you sign up by Thursday of the prior week by noon (i.e., I am willing to cook on September 18th, therefore I must sign up by September 12th at noon).
 - Please save your receipts and place them in April Taylor's box with name/date on them for reimbursement.
 - If no one signs up by the prior Thursday at noon, dinner will be canceled for the following week. *All other programming WILL CONTINUE, only supper will be canceled.*
 - This process will help us to maintain plans for the following week and ensure that accurate information is announced each Sunday.
 - **There is one Signup Genius to provide Wednesday supper:** [Matthews Presbyterian Church: PROVIDE WEDNESDAY SUPPER! \(signupgenius.com\)](https://signupgenius.com)
 - **There is another Signup Genius to RSVP to join for Wednesday night supper** (it is very helpful *but not required* to sign up in advance) *You may still come eat even if you forgot to sign up (the Lord provides).* [Matthews Presbyterian Church: ENJOY Wednesday Supper...Yum! \(signupgenius.com\)](https://signupgenius.com);
 - (If you are not comfortable with Signup Genius, contact Allison at allison@matthewspresbyterian.org to sign up or make standing reservations).

ADULTS

- Doug Samson will be leading a Bible Study of 2 Samuel. Participants will explore the Old Testament author's perception of God, of violence, of neighbor, and of God's particular call for the Israelites to be set apart as God's own people. **DO NOT WORRY IF YOU MISS A WEEK, YOU ARE WELCOME ANYTIME.**

2024 Financial Summary

As of July 31, 2024

Below is the financial summary as of July 31, 2024, provided by the Finance Committee. Revenues are running slightly behind the budget, while expenses are well below projections. The primary cause of the cash flow surplus for the first seven months of the year is the absence of a full-time music director, and lower than expected church maintenance costs.

	2024 Budget	7/31 Projected	7/31 Actual	% Actual to Budget
Revenue	556,303	324,510	304,240	94%
Expenses	610,452	356,097	284,971	80%
Net (Deficit) Surplus	(54,149)	(31,587)	19,269	

Upcoming Worship Services and Events

Wednesdays at MPC: Below is the schedule through November 20th:

AMP Children's Program (4 years old-5 th grade)	5:00-6:00
Supper for all ages (children must be accompanied by a parent or other adult)	6:00-6:30
Spirit Ringers	6:30-7:20
Chancel Choir	7:30-8:30

September 8th: Parent's Meeting and Supper for Middle School and High School Youth; 5:30 – 7:00 pm (At least one parent must attend with their youth).

September 9th: Circle #1; 2:00 pm; Room 206 (Meets on the first Monday of the month).

September 10th: Share Our Spirit Circle; 6:30 pm; MPC Library (Meets on the second Tuesday of the month).

September 11th: Israel-Palestine Conflict Conversation (4th of 4 conversations); 6:30 pm; MPC Sanctuary and live-streamed.

September 12th: ESL (English as a Second Language) Classes for Adults; 6:30 – 8:30 pm; Upstairs Classrooms; Every Thursday through November 14th.

September 15th: Stated Session Meeting; 11:45 am; Room 206.

September 15th: Youth Group; 5:30 – 7:30 pm.

September 19th: NC Baroque Orchestra Concert, *The Glorious Orchestral Music of JS Bach and his Contemporaries*; 7:00 pm; MPC Sanctuary; Free and open to the public.

September 29th: MPC Book Group; 11:30 am; Room 206

September 29th – October 31st: Community Pumpkin Patch 46; Sponsored by the scout units of MPC; Mondays and Fridays: 12:00 – 8:00 pm; Tuesdays – Thursdays: 3:00 – 8:00 pm; Saturdays: 10:00 am – 8:00 pm; Sundays: 12:00 – 6:00 pm.

October 6th: World Communion Sunday; 10:30 am; Sanctuary.

October 6th: Community Blood Drive; 9:00 am – 2:00 pm; MPC large parking lot.

October 20th: Stated Session Meeting; 11:45 am; Room 206.

October 20th: Stewardship 2025 begins and runs through November 17th on Dedication Sunday.

October 27th: Reformation Sunday.

October 29th: Presbytery of Charlotte Meeting; 9:30 am; Sardis Presbyterian Church.