



# currents

## October 2020

## THANK YOU!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire MPC congregation for your generous donations for our second annual Backpack Drive benefiting our Food Center clients. An amazing amount of backpacks filled with necessary school supplies were donated for school students of all ages! Even during this pandemic, our congregation came through for these students and helped make going back to school (even virtually) a great experience!

Backpacks were received not only from our congregation, but from their friends, family members, and from Food Center volunteers. We'd like to send a special "thank you" to Ann Wong for her contributions and Lew Mohr and Maryann Goodrich from the Pioneers for their generous donations! Pioneers is a volunteer network founded in 1911 which represents service, loyalty, and fellowship through a broad spectrum of community programs. Their donations, along with generous financial and backpack donations from our MPC family, enabled us to provide more than 150 backpacks to children in the MPC community and surrounding areas!



Filled backpacks ready for Food Center clients.



Patti Sheffer picking up back packs from Maryann Goodrich. Pioneers organization provided filled backpack to MPC Deacons Backpack Drive.

We are so happy that family members of our Food Center clients will start the school year off with new supplies and with the knowledge that MPC cares about their success during this new and different school year ahead! We are all so grateful for the love and support of our congregation and friends of MPC. On behalf of the Deacons, thank you again for your generosity!

Sincerely,  
Patti Sheffer and Lori Newman



## *Pastor's Pen*

Dear MPC Family,

It would seem that contrary to everything we could have imagined or predicted, “We’ve never done it this way before” has become our new church motto! Indeed, the past seven months have been full of opportunities to do things in ways we’ve never done them before. And I will be the first to celebrate that against all odds, even the Presbyterian, “Frozen Chosen,” are capable of change and have welcomed it with open arms. Granted, it has taken a global pandemic to move us into new and uncharted territory, but the Spirit moves even now, and what a gift it continues to be to be a part of Morrisville Presbyterian Church.

I remain endlessly grateful for the ways in which you continue to be the church both inside and outside our walls and for the ways you have opened your hearts and minds to the new things God is doing in our midst even now.

Thanks to the generosity of so many of you in time and talent and resources, we continue to do so much to share the love of God with our local congregation and with our community. In the past month we have welcomed people safely back to worship in our sanctuary and shared communion on the church lawn. We have navigated new technology to ensure that worship is accessible online—and it has been viewed from over 10 different states! We have cared for our youngest disciples through Faith Formation care packages that have arrived at their doorstep. We have cared for older members through food delivery and regular check-ins. We have fed our community through our weekly Food Center and through countless volunteers who continue to make and bake and deliver food on a weekly basis. We have re-entered a season filled with opportunities to engage God’s Word in Adult Education and Bible Study. We have welcomed back our Pastoral Intern, Molly Ramsey. And we have continued to show up for one another in fellowship, in board and committee meetings, and in prayer for one another every day. I am filled with gratitude when I think of this church and its witness in these uncertain times. What a gift it is to know that the love of God is alive and well in this family of faith.

In the coming weeks, you will have the opportunity to express your gratitude to God for the incredible life that we share here together at Morrisville Presbyterian Church. In the mail, you will be receiving an “Estimate of Giving” card, which we invite you to prayerfully complete and mail back using the enclosed stamped envelope. I am confident that the Holy Spirit is already at work paving the way for our future together, and I am grateful for the ways that you will prayerfully consider being a part of it.

Thank you for embracing this new chapter of life with energy, humility, flexibility, humor, and joy. Thank you for the ways that you give so generously of your time and energy to this sacred home of ours. And thank you, most of all, for being the church of Jesus Christ in this world. It is because of your faithfulness that we can do things in ways we’ve never done them before. And it is because of your love for God and for God’s people that we can continue to remind the world of the light of God’s love amidst all that might feel dark. Thank you for being you. Thank you for being the church.

With gratitude for the Spirit’s constant work among us,

Rachel



## FAITH FORMATION UPDATE FROM PASTOR ALEX

Dear Priesthood of All Believers,

We will be continuing our different, yet strong start to the faith formation year as October comes into focus. For instance, Adult Education we will be having a special guest teach during our Sunday School hour! I hope you will join us welcome Dr. Mark Achtemeier as he will be teaching a four-week class on “The Best Supporting Characters of the New Testament.” In addition to being to being Pastor Rachel’s father, Dr. Achtemeier has been a minister, author, and a professor of theology and ethics at University of Dubuque Theological Seminary.

Here is Dr. Achtemeier’s description of the class for October: “Gentiles, Tax Collectors, Levites, Samaritans, Pharisees, Money Changers, and more...The narratives of the New Testament are filled with a wide variety of supporting characters whose names we may have heard before, but whose deeper identities and interests remain a bit murky. In this four-week study, led by Dr. Mark Achtemeier, we will investigate how a more detailed understanding of these supporting characters in the New Testament can radically affect our understanding of familiar passages and their implications for faith and life today.” We are very excited to have him teach and hope you will join us over Zoom from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. during the month of October. If you are interested in joining us, please email Pastor Alex at [alexlester-abdalla@mpcusa.net](mailto:alexlester-abdalla@mpcusa.net).



Our pre-kindergarten to fifth grade Sunday School classes will build on our “God *with* us” theme from September and extend God’s love to our neighbor. Parents and students be on the lookout for another round of faith formation coming in the mail! There will be memory verse magnets for your fridge, prayers for your dinner table, and crafts to assemble. Our theme for October is extending God’s love to those around us like Jesus’s parable of the Good Samaritan. Stay tuned!

Youth Club will also keep our consistent rhythm that we built in September. Prayers are appreciated for warmer weather, sunny skies, and keeping the sunset at bay as we try to spend as much time as we can outside on Wednesday nights in October. Bible study, community building, and mini-golf are on the calendar for this fall month. Stay tuned for more information!

Friends, there is no question that this season will be different and challenging. However, what is constant is the power and presence of God in our lives. I invite you to witness with me the ways God is calling us all to grow together at Morrisville Presbyterian Church.

Grace and Peace,

Alex

## SIGN UP FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP

Starting from Sunday, October 11, we invite you to sign up for two out of the next four Sundays through November 1. The live-stream and after-service recording will continue to be available for those who don’t attend in person.

We ask that you continue to follow the protocols which include entering and exiting via designated routes, maintaining six feet of social distance, and keeping your mask over your nose and mouth for your entire visit at MPC. Let us work together to maintain the safety of our congregation and our community and let us do so with a deep love for God and for one another.

To sign-up to attend in person, access the sign-up via our website at [www.mpcusa.org](http://www.mpcusa.org). Please contact A.K. Rosenbaum at [akalsomom@verizon.net](mailto:akalsomom@verizon.net) if you have questions about sign ups, or you are having difficulty canceling or changing your entry.

## STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN 2020

*Submitted by Drew Hunger*

Our Stewardship Campaign this year is going to be very different than all those in the past (except, possibly, for the ones in the 1918 – 1919 time-frame but there are no records of them). Almost all of our communication to you will be written or by video. The campaign, as all in the past, seeks you to be stewards in the life of our church, community, and world.

### **What Does a Steward of God Do?**

Our scriptural understanding of stewardship and our roles as stewards comes from 1 Corinthians 4:1 - “Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries,” and 1 Peter 4:10 - “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.”

### **How Are We To Be Servants Of Christ And Stewards Of God’s Mysteries In This Time Of Distress And Uncertainty?**

Love one another and your neighbor. Participate regularly in church worship, either in person as the pandemic allows, or watch on-line through the Internet, to glorify God's name and works. Enjoy the love of the congregation through phone calls and emails, and on-line Adult Education at 9:00 am on Sundays, fellowship at 11:30 am on Sundays, and the noon Bible Study on Wednesdays.

By the Grace of God, we are benefactors of God's mysteries: life, the sun and a planet that sustain us, and the Word of God through prophets and Jesus Christ. We are stewards of the earth and the Word of God which requires us to take care of our environment, plants, animals, families, communities, and churches.

### **How Do We Serve One Another With Whatever Gift Each Of Us Has Received?**

God measures our gifts with a measure different from that of the world; it's by the giver's capacity, and the giver's attitude. Scripture speaks to this question directly: from 2 Corinthians 9:7-9 - “Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.”

Offer what you have and what you can do. Be a generous giver of your resources, time, and talents. Complete an Estimate of Giving for 2021, which will soon be sent to you. Volunteer your time and talents at one of our many community missions: the Food Center, the Ivins Outreach Center, and the Clothing Center, or as a teacher of Christian Education.

Our church has been blessed with competent and faithful leadership in keeping the congregation focused on its mission to proclaim the gospel of grace. We are a church; we have been sustained; and with God, we are going to continue.

## MPC Clothing Center open - starting October 8!



**Open Thursdays only**  
**10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**  
Visit MPC Clothing Center  
webpage at  
[www.mpcusa.org/clothing-center](http://www.mpcusa.org/clothing-center)  
for information on accepted  
donations and drop-off times.



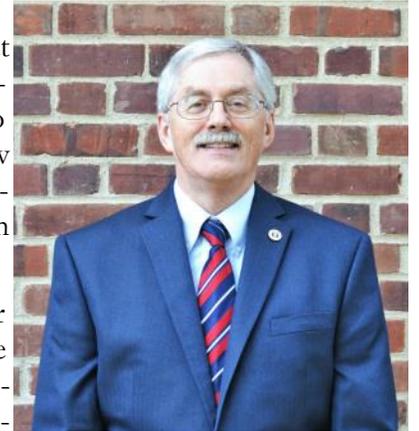
## GOING TO CHURCH: IT CAN BE GOOD FOR YOU

*Submitted by The Rev. Jack McAnlis, Minister of Visitation*

One of the most striking scientific discoveries about religion in recent years is that going to church weekly is good for you. Regular worship attendance – at least, participating in acts of devotion to God (such as online worship) – has been found to boost the immune system and decrease blood pressure. This news may not be new to some. We have often heard, “Confession is good for the soul.” Well, it is evidently good for the body, too. Engaging in earnest acts of piety may add as much as two or three years to your life. The reason for this, however, is not clear.

It is known that, on average, regular church-goers drink less, smoke less, use fewer recreational drugs, and are less sexually promiscuous than non-church goers. These behaviors provide obvious benefits for increasing longevity. They should be maintained, not just as matter of health, but of faithfulness, also. Having a healthy lifestyle is a discipline of stewardship in that we show respect and care for our bodies as created by God.

“Just being religious” is not guarantee that all illnesses – particularly COVID-19 – and ailments will be avoided or cured. You need to take an active part to keep fit, and that includes getting regular check-ups and paying attention to trustworthy medical and mental healthcare professionals. But having a relationship with God who is close and loving, who hears your prayers and knows your frustrations, is an important factor to having a wholesome life.



### BROWN BAG & BIBLE STUDY RETURNS ON WEDNESDAYS

#### **ALL ARE WELCOME—Wednesdays @ NOON**

Join us this fall as we complete our journey through 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel. Each week we will explore the biblical text together and do so with the assistance of a theological commentary alongside it. Please know that EVERYONE is welcome—this includes people who read the Bible and commentaries regularly, as well as people who don’t even know what a commentary is! No knowledge of King David or of 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel is needed in advance—we are learning and growing together!

The Bible Study will meet every Wednesday from Noon-1:00 p.m. over Zoom. The “Brown Bag” part of our title means that you are welcome to bring lunch and eat during Bible Study. Following our Bible Study, folks are also welcome to stay for our weekly prayer meeting that meets for about 15-20 minutes on Zoom.

**If you would like to attend Brown Bag & Bible Study this year (or are at least interested enough to check it out for a couple of weeks), please contact Pastor Rachel at [rachelrhodes@mpcusa.net](mailto:rachelrhodes@mpcusa.net).** We hope you will join us this fall as we study God’s Word together!

### MPC LIVESTREAMING

Worship services are now able to be streamed over the internet as they happen at MPC giving those unable to attend the opportunity to be a part of worship from their home or wherever they wish to view Sunday worship.

To view the livestream, simply click on the "Virtual Worship" button on the homepage of MPC's website at [www.mpcusa.org](http://www.mpcusa.org). The livestream window will appear at the top of the linked page.

You are now able to watch the livestream of the Sunday worship on YouTube as well. This will give you the capability of watching the services full-screen. Visit [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) and enter Morrisville Presbyterian Church in the search bar and click on the MPC channel signified by the MPC logo. Under the "Home" tab of the channel should be a number of small video screens (thumbnails). Starting at approximately 10:20 a.m., one of them will contain "Live" in the upper right corner. Simply click on that thumbnail to watch the livestream. In the video window there are icons to lower and increase the audio and make the video full-screen. You make also press "f" to activate the full-screen option.



# OUTSIDE COMMUNION SERVICE



On Sunday, September 20, a celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was held outside at MPC. This was the first in-person communion held since March and was welcomed by many members of the congregation. Those in attendance were able to sing and receive communion, all while maintaining social distancing. Another celebration is being planned and the date and time will be announced in the near future.

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