

Notes about Worship at MPC

Welcome! We are so glad you are here. For those who are visiting MPC, please stop by and introduce yourself to our pastor, Courtney Pittman, or to one of the ushers. We want to celebrate your presence! We know there are a lot of demands on your time, so we are thrilled that you have chosen to spend your Sunday morning at MPC!

Children's Church—Children age 3 and up are invited to join our leaders for fun and faith in Children's Church located in the fellowship building following Let the Children Come. Pick up is immediately following the service in the fellowship hall.

Stewardship—Should you feel called to give today, ushers will be passing around the offering plates during the Invitation to Generosity. Giving is also available online at <https://madisonpresbyterian.church/generosity>.

Language—The words we use are important! So often we go into "autopilot" during worship that we miss the meaning of the words we say each Sunday. In an effort to be more conscious of the language we use during worship, some words in our liturgy will change monthly; but please know that you may pray in whatever way you feel comfortable. We are family here!

Coming Up in the Life of the Church

Save the Date! The Women's Retreat will be held March 8-10 with facilitator Kim Ness. Watch upcoming bulletins for more information.

The 2024 Flower Calendar is now available on the bulletin board by the stairway in the education building. Sign up to place flowers in the sanctuary in memory or in honor of a loved one or in celebration of a special event.

Opportunities for Outreach and Mission

Ministry Bags for December: Can you imagine being a child who is in foster care at Christmas or when your birthday is coming up?? Will I get any gifts? Will anyone remember to get me a gift? This month we are going to try to make sure each child in foster care in Morgan County ages birth to teenager will get gifts for Christmas or their birthday this year! Fill up your ministry bag with small toys, art supplies, school supplies, books, fun t-shirts, winter wear like caps, gloves, muffins!! Please don't wrap any of the gifts!

Let us
WORSHIP
Together

December 31 11:00 am Epiphany
January 7 11:00 am Lord's Baptism

THE
WEEK
AHEAD

- **Monday, December 25** Church Office Closed
- **Tuesday, December 26** Church Office Closed
- **Wednesday, December 27** No Wednesday Activities
- **Monday, January 1** Church Office Closed

Serving in Worship



Courtney Pittman—Senior Pastor
Karisa Seymour—Music Director
Meghan Shafer—Accompanist
Jonathan Jones (4:00 pm) - Liturgist
Christie Jones (6:00 pm) - Liturgist
Mason Hawk (4:00 pm) - Acolyte
Tripp Pittman (6:00 pm) - Acolyte
The Hawk Family (4:00 pm) - Advent Candle
The Pittman Family (6:00 pm)—Advent Candle

Hoyt Jackson, Rae Merritt, Allen Orr and Katherine Webster (6:00 pm) - Quartet

Sunday, December 24, 2023

How Does a Weary World Rejoice?

4:00 PM and 6:00 PM

Christmas Eve



382 South Main Street
Madison GA 30650
(706) 342-2813 phone
(706) 342-4350 fax
www.madisonpresbyterian.church

Gathering as God’s Beloved

Gathering Music

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude

Welcome

*Call to Worship

There is room for you here. If you’re weary and worn, or hopeful and patient.

If you’re tired and lost, or wrapped up in hope.

If you’re new to this place, or have been here before.

Come in, Come in. There is room for you here.

The angels are singing,

“Be not afraid.”

The angels are singing,

“Good news and great joy!”

So come in, come in!

There is room for us here.

Lighting of the Advent Candles

How does a weary world hold onto hope, practice peace, spread joy, or know love? How does a weary world combat cruelty? How does a weary world shine a light into our bleakest night? We do all these things with God’s help. For tonight, a child is born in Bethlehem. Tonight, Christ draws near. Tonight, we light the Christ Candle. Tonight, we are not alone.

God is near. Love has drawn close. Rejoice! For God loves this weary world. Amen.

*Hymn 113

Angels We Have Heard on High

*Confessing Together

Loving Christ, scripture tells us that you were placed in a manger among livestock and hay because there was no place in the guest room. The space was full, and yet—your parents made room. Scripture tells us that shepherds arrived from the fields beyond town. The space was full, and yet—they made room. Scripture tells us that Mary pondered what the shepherds had to say. Her heart was full, and yet—she made room. Too often we assume there is no more room. Too often we choose exclusion and close off our hearts. Teach us how to make room for one another. Teach us how to make room for you. Carve out space in our hearts to love as you love, for we do not want to build hostility here. We want to build your promised day. Guide us forward. With hope and honesty we pray... *(We continue in silence....)* Amen.

*Assurance of God’s Love

Friends, the angels say, “Be not afraid,” but they also say, “Unto *you* a child is born.” Christ is born for you. Christ walked this earth for you. Christ forgives you. That’s what love does. It makes room. It offers grace. It learns your name. So repeat these words of hope after me: Unto us a child is born. **Unto us a child is born.** Unto us grace is given. **Unto us grace is given.** May this good news change the very fabric of our lives. **Christ has made room for all of us. Amen.**

*Response to God’s Grace (Hymn 583)

Glory to God, glory to God, glory in the highest!

Glory to God, glory to God, alleluia, alleluia!

*Passing of the Peace

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

And also with you!

Proclaiming the Word

Let the Children Come!

Prayer for God’s Wisdom

First Reading: Luke 2:1-7

Holy wisdom, Holy word. **Thanks be to God.**

Anthem

Second Reading: Luke 2:8-20

Holy wisdom, Holy word. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

We Make Room

Responding to the Word

*Affirming our Faith

A Sanctified Art—Rev. Sarah Speed

We believe in a God who makes room for us—who opens the door, pulls up a seat, puts the kettle on, and says, “Tell me everything.” We believe that God not only treats us this way but also makes room for our neighbors, for strangers, and for our enemies. Jesus modeled this kind of room-making love when he said, “Let the children come to me,” and, “Let me wash your feet,” so we try to follow suit. In a world of closed doors, we believe in saying, “There is room for you here.”

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

*Response (Hymn 606)

Praise God, from all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God, above ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Prayer of Gratitude

The Eucharist

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Prayer After Communion

Being the Church in the World

*Hymn 122

Silent Night, Holy Night!

*Charge and Blessing

Postlude

*Please stand in body or in spirit