

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 4 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. There is a nursery available for children under 4.

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 and 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

Wednesday Morning Bible Study: The Bible—it's one of the most influential books in human history. It explores the big questions of why we exist. It's inspired many people to do amazing things...and it has confused many others. And you've probably got at least one Bible sitting around somewhere. Many of us have read the Bible or heard parts of the Bible read all of our lives...but what is it exactly and where did it come from? Join the Wednesday morning Bible Study as we learn about the Bible—the different literary styles, the plot, the characters, and how it all fits together to tell one big unified story. This is for everyone who wants to know more about how to read the Bible and get the most out of it. Beginners and more experienced readers will find a deeper level of appreciation and understanding of this most powerful and life-changing book. Each Wednesday, **10:00 am—11:30 am in the church library**. Come and bring a friend.

Looking ahead....for our Easter services, we will be collecting **new t-shirts and athletic shorts (for men, women, and children—all sizes) for the Family Protection Center in Morgan County**. The center handles sexual assault cases for adults and children—from initial intake and forensic exams/interviews all the way through assistance with the judicial process. These donations will be given to men, women, and children following forensic examinations.

Opportunities for Outreach and Mission

Ministry Bags for March: We will be collecting items for Pup Packs. Pup Packs began as a ministry of the Episcopal Church of the Advent in 2009. In an effort to combat childhood hunger and improve school performance, this ministry provides supplemental food over the weekends for children who might not have the food they need at home. For over 50% of the children in Morgan County Primary and Elementary Schools, school meals may be the only food they have. Pup Packs is run entirely by volunteers and has no overhead other than the cost of food. Donations of money and food enable the program to run. Volunteers shop for the food and then groups of volunteers meet on Fridays to pack the bags and deliver them to the primary and elementary schools. Once delivered, school counselors discreetly distribute them to the children who have been identified as needing the extra help provided by Pup Packs. Siblings who do not attend the elementary or primary schools are included and so many of the participants carry home two or more bags each weekend. Currently an average of 160 children are served each week. Please choose from the following list to put in your Ministry Bag: pop-top chicken noodle soup or ravioli, instant oatmeal packs, small boxes of raisins, small containers of applesauce, cereal bars or peanut butter crackers.

Our Outreach Ministry is providing opportunities throughout the year to serve with nonprofit organizations in our community. For the month of March, they are spotlighting Habitat for Humanity. Our church has a long history with Habitat for Humanity. When Habitat for Humanity of Morgan County was first organized, founding board members and the Lead Builder were from Madison Presbyterian. Today, Habitat's Board includes four church members and our Lead Builder is Hiram Johnston. Our MPC Outreach budget includes supporting Habitat for Humanity financially. On any given Saturday morning, you will find five or six church members volunteering on the Habitat build site. Habitat's mission: Seeking to put God's love into action, bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope. Home ownership starts with applicants qualifying for a loan. Once approved, the selected home owner, along with friends and family, are required to put in at least 200 hours of sweat equity building. Then, the family moves into the home, leasing from Habitat for six months. Finally, the home owner meets with a closing attorney to close on their home, becoming a proud homeowner with a mortgage. Our church family (16 years and older) are invited to participate in our current home build at 1190 Wheat Street in Madison. We are in the final weeks of this build and anticipate volunteers will be painting and landscaping. We'd love to have a big group representing Madison Presbyterian and supporting this ministry. If you have any questions, please contact Christie Jones at christiejones@bellsouth.net.

Sunday, March 17, 2024
11:00 AM
The Fifth Sunday in Lent



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(706) 342-4350 fax
www.madisonpresbyterian.church

Gathering as God’s Beloved

Gathering Music

Chiming of the Hour

Prelude

Welcome

*Call to Worship

Rev. Sarah A. Speed/ A Sanctified Art LLC/ sanctifiedart.org

Why are you here?

I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind, with a fire burning in my bones.

I see it! You’re in the right place! This is God’s house. The door is open to you.

Why are *you* here?

I am seeking God with my whole heart, with my entire mind, with a fire burning in my bones.

We see that in you! You’re in the right place. This is God’s house. The door is open to you.

Let us worship God.

Let us learn from the Spirit. Amen!

*Hymn 401

Here in This Place

*Confessing Together

Rev. Sarah A. Speed/ A Sanctified Art LLC/ sanctifiedart.org

Holy God, we long to be lifelong learners. We long to approach you with curiosity and an open mind. Instead, we often live as if we know best. We forget that the disciples called you “Rabbi, Teacher.” Forgive us for the times when we fail to be curious. Forgive us for the times when we assume we know best. Forgive us for the moments when we imagine that our learning is done and that we have all the answers. Like Peter—who was brave enough to ask, “How many times should we forgive?” - make us brave. Spark a desire in us to learn, and may our curiosity carry our faith into deeper waters. With hope and humility we pray... *(We continue in silence....)* Amen.

*Assurance of God’s Love

Adapted from Rev. Sarah A. Speed/ A Sanctified Art LLC/ sanctifiedart.org

Family of faith, when Peter asked Jesus, “How many times should I forgive?” Jesus responded with abundance. That abundance exists for you as well. No matter what you have done or left undone, no matter what lessons you have learned or are still learning, God’s abundant grace exists for you. God’s love will never run out. So hear and rest in this good news: You are forgiven. You are loved. You are invited to serve. **We are free to try again. Alleluia, Amen.**

*Response to God’s Grace (Hymn 582, verse 1)

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me, and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

*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!

Baptism of Eloise Maeve Lance

*Congregation’s Profession of Faith—The Apostle’s Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Baptismal Response (Hymn 188)

Jesus love me! This I know for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong. They are weak, but he is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Prayer for God’s Wisdom

First Reading: Psalm 119:9-16

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

Anthem

Second Reading: Matthew 18:15-22

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

Sermon

Wandering Heart: Teach Me

Responding to the Word

*Hymn 488

I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry

Prayers of the People and Lord’s Prayer

Our Creator 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.

Invitation to Generosity

Offertory

*Response (Hymn 609)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!

Praise God, in Jesus fully known: Creator, Word, and Spirit one.

Alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

*Prayer of Gratitude

Being the Church in the World

*Hymn 839

Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!

*Charge and Blessing

Postlude

*Please stand in body or in spirit

Serving in Worship

Rev. Courtney Pittman—Senior Pastor

Karisa Seymour—Music Director

Meghan Shafer—Accompanist

Mary Ann Orr—Baptismal Elder

Virgil Cole—Liturgist

Auja Stearns—Acolyte

Tommy Arthur—Communications Technologist