

Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church

THE PELICAN

August 2020



FROM THE PASTOR

The Ties that Bind

"... so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another." (Romans 12:5)



Just this morning, one of my mentors shared a keen observation about the state of our world right now. "You know," he said to me, "monks will tell you that, if you want to escape, the last place you should go is to a monastery."

He went on to explain that, in the monastic life, all the busyness and preoccupations of the world are removed, which makes it virtually impossible for a monk to avoid his problems and personal demons. He then moved to the main point he was trying to make: thanks to COVID-19, we have all been somewhat forcibly confined into a kind of monasticism. The rapid stoppage of our normal patterns has given us way more time to ourselves – time to think and reflect... and also time to fret and worry.

According to the CDC, one-third of all Americans have experienced depression or chronic anxiety during the pandemic. Sales of alcohol have also spiked significantly, and professionals from the UN to the World Health Organization are warning of widespread repercussions resulting from increased personal stress and panic responses.

While I don't have any magic solutions to offer, I believe we are being called to lean into this monastic idea and try to concentrate not so much on the cloud, but on the silver linings on its edges. Perhaps we will recognize how God is at work right now doing what God does best; namely, redeeming a dark situation with a miraculous infusion of divine light. If we can adopt the right mindset, perhaps we can use this time for an honest inventory and appraisal of our own spiritual lives.

Perhaps God is trying to show us that the things we think we have to do to be happy are really not that important. And perhaps we will realize that we don't need to worry so much about what is being done, and what is not being done, because God is at work even now, putting in motion *"plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope"* (Jer. 29:11).

If you are feeling anxious, worried, depressed, or disconnected because of what is happening in the world, fear not. Even now, we are being knit and held together with eternal cords our human eyes cannot see. So be still and know that God is God (Ps. 46:10)... and breathe in these assuring words that we know and sing so well:

"Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love; the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above... We share our mutual woes, our mutual burdens bear, and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear. When we are called to part, it gives us inward pain; but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again. This glorious hope revives our courage by the way; while each in expectation lives and waits to see the day. From sorrow, toil, and pain, and sin, we shall be free; and perfect love and friendship reign through all eternity."

Blessings and peace,

Rev. Dr. Peter Bynum
Pastor & Head of Staff

CONNECTED THROUGH HOPE



Facing Life's Challenges Together

"Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

Hello Hope House Friends!

What a Spring and Summer it has been. All of us facing so many changes and challenges during this COVID-19 crisis...leaning on our faith and anticipating the day we can return to some sense of normalcy.

At Hope House and Hope Cottage that means throwing open the blinds and reopening the doors to those in need of a safe, temporary "home-away-from-home" while caring for loved ones in area hospitals.

When that time comes, guests will find a house cleaned from floor to ceiling, inside and out.

You'll find even more changes at the Cottage, which was damaged by heavy rains this Spring. Contractors have been hard at work repairing the siding, the drywall, the tiles, the floors - plus repainting every wall!

And during these trying months, countless supporters of Hope House have continued sponsoring an "Adopt-A-Day," each one helping to keep this Ministry going. Your generosity is inspiring and very much appreciated.

With the Lord's help, we will get through this together.



Adopt-a-Day at Hope House

AUGUST 1

In Memory of David Smith, Harry Smith's Brother; Given by Jane W. Bishop

AUGUST 2

In Honor of all our friends, STAY SAFE; Given by Jeff and Avis Griffith

AUGUST 4

A Big Thank You to the Staff and Volunteers of Hope House. My husband, Gerry is doing well and we continue in our awe and wonder of God's many blessings; Given by a former guest, Ruth Ann Pate

AUGUST 6

In Honor of Coleman Legerton and her devoted leadership of the Bridge Builders Ministry Team who is establishing opportunities to build relationships with our neighbors; Given by Dick and Susanne Query

AUGUST 7

In Memory of Richard and Kitty Farrier; Given by Patricia and Jeffrey Hyland

AUGUST 10

In Memory of David Smith, Brother of Harry Smith; Given by Lynn and Stephanie McCants

AUGUST 16

In Memory of Frank Vincent Patton; Given by Mark and Jennifer Davidson, Sue and Marcus Googer, Nancy and Gary Mullaney

AUGUST 18

In Honor of All Students Returning to School; Given by Bob Hervey

AUGUST 19

In Memory of Kelly Smith, Brother of our dear friend Kyle Smith; Given by Karl and Miff Cone

AUGUST 21

In Memory of Harris B. Davis; Given by Mark and Jennifer Davidson

AUGUST 22

In Memory of Nellie Grace Pickett; Given by Lynn and Stephanie McCants

AUGUST 23

In Celebration of our Son, Chase Cone's engagement to Katie Cox; Given by Karl and Miff Cone

AUGUST 25

In Memory of a sweet little Angel, Sutton Story; Given by Lynn and Stephanie McCants

AUGUST 28

In Honor of Marcus Googer; Given by Marc, Angela, Austin, and Dylan Googer

CONNECTED THROUGH EDUCATION

Connecting Through Adult Faith Formation

Connected. In the Foster Care system, “connected” is both good and challenging. Children often are leaving a dysfunctional family system that has put their well-being in question; it is the life they are connected to. Coming into Foster Care, however, the professional community hopes and sets goals that Foster Children will make new connections, healthy relationships, and the positive connections of the past will be reworked and connected to a new present. It can be a tough ship to navigate, but connections are so important to the children’s well-being!

In a time of pandemic change, the Church wrestles with connecting through Christian Education – Faith Formation – and what that looks like in a community that practices social distancing. Connected is about our faith focused on God, it is about feeling part of the community of faith we call Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, and it is about the relationships we had before, during, and what will one day be after the pandemic when life returns to a new normal. Gone are the face-to-face Sunday School gatherings at 9:00 a.m. and Get Fed on Wednesday nights, but these gatherings and NEW gatherings are happening!

There is energy percolating around those groups who have connected in different ways during the summer and are looking for re-connecting in the fall. Adult Sunday School classes continue to meet during the summer months. *Connect 3, The Harbor, The Middle, and Seekers and Sowers* are growing.

The Academy of Saint John has connected through email and is preparing for a fall return of full class presentations. The men’s *Friday morning Bible study* is back. *Soul Training* on Monday nights continues, as well as new Bible studies on Wednesday nights and a read through the Bible on Tuesdays at noon. This fall there will be new small groups and a re-formatted Get Fed! And I imagine there is more happening that I am not even aware of!

Summer has traditionally been a “break” from the routine of a nine-month program, but today new ideas and connections are generating new ways of Faith Formation. In this new way of connecting, we have ripe opportunities to ask, “What do we keep and what do we change in adult Faith Formation?” “What was working that we need to bring back?” “What do we need to let go and do in a new way?”

From *Ten Women of the Bible: One by One They Changed the World*, in Max Lucado’s chapter on Esther, he states, “The way we view God will determine how we respond when life is difficult.” Life is different from what we are accustomed to, even difficult for some, but God connected people throughout history and God is connecting us today in so many new ways!



Dr. Dan Wiard
Director of Christian Education

Want to join a Zoom Bible Study?

Check out the groups on Realm or contact Dan Wiard at dwiard@mppc.net. Opportunities include *Connect 3, Seekers and Sowers, The Harbor, The Middle, Wednesday’s Summer Road Trip Bible Study, Tuesday’s Read Through the Bible, Monday’s Soul Training, Men’s Friday Morning Bible Study*, and more coming! Here are what some of the Zoom Bible Study participants have to say:



“It’s been a great way to feel connected to the Church in these troubling times. I’m also learning so much about the Bible and how many of its stories can be related to our current days and lives.” ~ Harry Olsen

- “I consider the availability of Zoom, Face-time, and other means of communication such a blessing for such a time as this—I hope these new methods will remain part of the way we “do church” in the future. Dick and I are thoroughly enjoying Lib’s “Year in the Bible” and Connect 3’s Sunday School class via Zoom—both afford such a good means to really get to know the participants and provide great opportunity for discussion and honest expression of questions and observations.” ~ Susanne Query

CONNECTED THROUGH EDUCATION



Children's Ministry hasn't looked the way any of us thought it might this Spring and Summer, but it has been an incredible thing to be a part of. When we first started planning the digital Palm Sunday processional and Easter Egg Hunt, I thought that might be the extent of our adaptations. Four months in, we have

learned more about how to be in ministry together outside the church walls than I ever imagined. But I have to say, opening a text to find a kid reciting the books of the New Testament from memory is pretty special.

Children's Sunday School, held by Zoom, has followed along with the pastors' sermons and has helped interpret the Gospel message for kids each week. We have enjoyed divided classes but perhaps the most special experience has been our Breakfast & Bibles Zoom each Sunday before worship. Kids from toddler to fifth grade come to take part in this 30-45 minute lesson that helps unpack the Bible lesson for that day's sermon. It gives parents a few moments to gather themselves before worship and helps our kids understand worship. The fellowship in this time is also awesome! We also enjoy a midweek Zoom on Wednesdays where we get the chance to pray and play together, inspired by the Elementary Summer Socials we had hoped to enjoy on campus before the pandemic.



Kids took the fun "off-screen" for Kids Can, our month-long mission learning experience. Kids had the opportunity to choose from 27 organizations and received a

12-page original coloring book that we made to feature MPPC Mission Partners, our memory verse, and more! Our kids held lemonade and popsicle stands, collected books, made art to sell, created pop tab collection containers, practiced random acts of kindness, created videos to send to their friends and family inspiring them to give, and sent videos of their special talents to brighten the



days of our members at the Presbyterian Village. This event truly taught kids that they can make an impact, and we cannot wait to keep "Kids Can" a part of mission education in MPPC Children's Ministry.

The last four months have given me time to get to know our kids better,

through some smaller group meetings, some funny Zoom games, and doing drive by visits to drop off goodie bags. Pulling up to a kid's house and knowing they are excited to wave hello is a feeling I drive away thanking God for every time.

I've also gotten to work with leaders in children's ministry across the nation and right here in Charleston Atlantic Presbytery. Our Christian Education staff Zooms are enviably great



each week! Of course, none of this work would be possible without the diligence of our Children's Ministry team, our parents and guardians, and the support of MPPC Session and staff.



As our kids have adapted to life in a pandemic, there have been sweet experiences, new horizons, and lots of learning that came with taking our ministry digital. Many of these may not have even happened in our traditional environment. Some of our kids have gotten to know other members of our big children's ministry

better, and some have been able to participate in ways they couldn't before. Stay tuned to see what Children's Ministry does next in these ever-changing days! We have Backyard Bethelwoods yet to come before summer wraps up, plus a few other tricks up our sleeves. We've got children's Sunday School, fall LOGOS, and other opportunities in our sights!

Sarah Harbin-Coleman
Director of Children's Ministries



CONNECTED THROUGH EDUCATION

What Youth Ministry Looks Like During a Pandemic

When all of this began in March it seemed as though this was just a phase and that it would phase out before summer, but here we are in July. No summer trips were had, no summer lunch bunch gatherings, and no day trips to a water park or fun park. I have come to learn that the new word I despise the most is "canceled."

However, after reflecting on our time apart I have realized that we have remained connected by the Holy Spirit. Connected in ways that have made us stronger as a youth group. The creativity that has happened is unbelievable and I believe we have set the world record for the amount of zoom calls you can have in a week. In the midst of all that has been canceled we have created something new, an entirely new model of youth ministry at MPPC: Cornerstone.

Even when trips are canceled, we come to the realization that what remains the same is our faith. We have nothing else to distract us from being disciples of Jesus Christ. What we are left with are meetings to talk about scripture, the world, and the uncomfortable topics. So yes, we do not have summer trips or in person gatherings, but what we have is a connectional faith that will remain our foundation once those activities are allowed again.

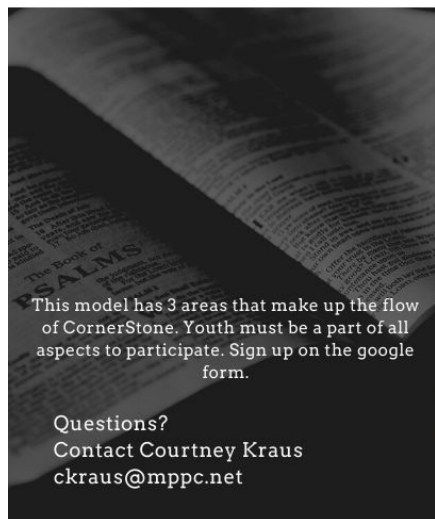


Courtney Kraus
Director of Youth Ministries



WHAT IS CORNERSTONE YOUTH MINISTRY AT MPPC?

CORNERSTONE
youth ministry @ mppc



PEER2PEER Group:

This is your **faith foundation** for youth group led by college students.

Here youth will spend time digging into the Bible with various studies.

Meets weekly (for the summer/may transition into the fall)



CORE Group:

This is your **faith formation** for youth group led by adults of MPPC. Here youth will gather as two P2P Groups to make a larger group. They will have discussions about current topics and play games with one another. This is a time for fun and fellowship.

Meets every 2 weeks (may transition into once a month)



BIG Group:

This is your **faith transformation** for youth led by the Youth Director and volunteers. Here youth will use what they have learned to share their faith to the world. This may be a mission trip, Montreat, or an event at the church campus. This is when we come together as one BIG youth group.

Meets once a month



CONNECTED THROUGH MISSION

I recently came across an article that shed some light in the midst of the current pandemic. This article was about people of faith doing God's mission in the world, its premise was "our why has not change but our what and how has." This statement is something members of the Local and International Mission Teams have taken to heart. We have worked hard over the last couple of months to stay connected and engaged in dialogue with each other, with our church family and our many mission partners both locally and globally. Here are just a few examples of the ways we are remaining connected:

- Both Local Missions and International Missions teams have continued to meet regularly via Zoom and have stayed in contact with our mission partners.
- We have used our budgeted resources and applications for challenge grants to help fund COVID-19 initiatives generated through our mission partners. As an example, one of our mission partners in Honduras is Habitat for Humanity in La Cebia. Our Habitat Honduras representative Bob Hervey reports:

"Through emails we checked in with our partner organization and learned that they were continuing to pay their staff during the pandemic and were also able to continue construction of homes, although at a greatly reduced rate of construction. Habitat Honduras also indicated that one of their needs was for personal protective equipment for the use of their staff as well as continuing support of their ongoing building operations.

The International Mission Team considered reviewed the budget available and the needs of the various mission partners and decided upon an amount to send to Habitat Honduras to support their need for Personal Protective Equipment as well as ongoing support in the form of funding to continue to purchase land for future neighborhood construction. This funding was received by Habitat Honduras

and is being put to immediate use. Our partner has indicated how grateful they are for our continuing, uninterrupted support of their mission and operations. Praise be to God."

- Several of our mission partners have initiated Webinars and Zoom calls to stay connected with us and their other partners in the USA. International Missions partners with Lamb, Haiti Outreach Ministries and AMOS have hosted these informative presentations.
- We have supported our local mission partners such as ECCO (East Copper Community Outreach), Lowcounty Food Bank, One80 Place and many others with food and supply drives to help them handle the increasing demand of their service during the pandemic.
- Local Missions and International Missions team members participated this year in the virtual, mission oriented, Vacation Bible School- Kids Can. Sarah Harbin-Coleman, our Director of Children's Ministries, did a fantastic job teaching the children of the church about missions and how they can be involved. Over the course of the VBS week, over 25 of our mission partners were touched by the program.

This brief list is a small sampling of the many mission and outreach programs our church has continued to be involved with this summer. If reading about these programs or hearing about our many church's mission activities excites you, reach out to me or one of our committee members. We would love to work with you to get you plugged in. Even in this time of social distancing and limited access, MPPC continues to be a missional church both locally and globally. Together we are using our hands, our feet, and our voices to be the presence of God in the world.

Rev. Bart Edwards
Associate Pastor



Our Member Care Food Ministries team has been making deliveries to people and families who have been hospitalized or bereaved during the past months.

CONNECTED THROUGH WORSHIP



Music is a fair and glorious gift of God. I wish to see all arts, principally music in the service of Him who gave and created them. I would not for all the world forego my humble share of music . . . Music makes people kinder, gentler, more staid and reasonable. I am strongly persuaded that after theology there is no art that can be placed on a level with music; for besides theology music is the only art capable of affording peace and joy of the heart. – Martin Luther

Martin Luther wrote those words over 500 years ago, but they are still relevant today. He loved music and congregational singing. He knew as we do that music connects us to each other and our Triune God in unique ways.

Music in worship is a special blessing because our connection is immediate and perceptible. I imagine that even through our virtual worship, music is connecting us as the Body of Christ.

As I was looking for wisdom from our forebears, I found some quotes from John Calvin which I found pertinent to the focus on our connection through worship:

- “We only praise God aright when we are filled and overwhelmed with an ecstatic admiration of the immensity of his power.”
- “There is no other method of relieving our anxious souls, but by reposing ourselves upon the providence of the Lord.”
- “We should ask God to increase our hope when it is small, awaken it when it is dormant, confirm it when it is wavering, strengthen it when it is weak and raise it up when it is overthrown.”
- “Faith is not a distant view, but a warm embrace of Christ.”

All of these quotes are at once individual and collective. Through the years, I have found in worship moments of praising God aright, relief for my anxious soul, an increase in my hope and a warm embrace. Here at MPPC, I have witnessed these moments in others. Music and Worship are indeed “fair and glorious” gifts from God.

Barbara Loehr-Fox
Director of Music Ministries



CONNECTED THROUGH COMMUNITY

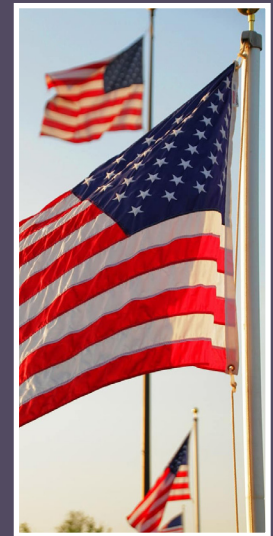
Register for a New Member Class

Our next planned New Member class will take place in two, one and a half hour classes via Zoom on Sundays August 23rd and August 30th from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. These two evening classes will allow us to introduce each of you and us. Pastors, Elders and other leaders in the church will join us to talk about life at MPPC and for you to ask any questions you may have. Please contact Rev. Bart Edwards at bedwards@mppc.net if you would like to know more or visit our website to register for the class!



History Committee Requests Veteran Information

MPPC is proud to have many veterans among its membership. Although the History Committee has a partial list of those who have served in the armed forces during World War II and since, we would like to update our history to include all those who have served our country so that we may recognize them on and near Veterans' Day. We are, therefore, requesting the names of church members, both men and women, who served or are presently serving in the armed forces in any branch of service. We would also like the names of anyone who served (or is currently serving) in the Peace Corps since its inception in 1960. The History Committee is compiling this information for history purposes and it will only be used by MPPC to recognize and honor our veterans. If you have not already done so, please call, text or email your name and branch of service to Linda Schreck at 884-906-7325 or Ischreck2@comcast.net by Sept. 21, 2020.



Seeking Common Ground: Part of the Bridge Builders Julius Scott Lecture Series

Join us for an open conversation about race and social justice in America on Saturday, August 22 at 10 a.m. The event will be hosted on Zoom by Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church, St. Andrews By-The-Sea UMC and All Saints Episcopal Church. You can register online at mppc.net/events. We have several exciting panelist and moderators such as:

Rev. Dr. Peter Wherry

Senior Minister, Mayfield Memorial Missionary Baptist Church - Charlotte, NC

Dr. Gloria Holmes

Adjunct, University of SC, Professor emerita at the School of Education Quinnipiac University - Hamden, CT

Rev. Dr. Rodney Sadler

Associate Professor of Bible and Director, Center for Social Justice and Reconciliation Union Presbyterian Seminary - Charlotte, NC

Rev. Daniel Burbage

Bluffton Campus Pastor, St. Andrew By-The-Sea United Methodist Church - Bluffton + Hilton Head, SC

Rev. Denise Trogdon

Rector, All Saints Episcopal Church, Hilton Head, SC - Moderator



CONNECTED THROUGH COMMUNITY



Staying Connected Through Stephen Ministry

"The Times They are A-Changin'" sang Bob Dylan over fifty years ago. Now more than ever we find ourselves in a world of uncertainty and turmoil. This is why we need to stay connected as a church family, lifting each other up and staying focused on what is truly important in life.

Your Stephen Ministry team has been active over the past several months meeting virtually and in person with our sisters and brothers in Christ to bring them love and support. We embarked on a campaign writing encouraging letters to our high school and college seniors making transitions in this new environment, wrote letters of support and appreciation to our MPPC members in health care who have bravely cared for us during this time, and to our church leaders for their hard work and creativity in planning our services and keeping the missions of our church moving forward.

And we are here for you. If you feel the need to talk with someone about anything that is troubling you, that is why we are here. Stephen Ministers meet with individuals in need of a listening, non-judgmental and Christ-centered caregiver. Our mission is to serve God, one person at a time.

Pick up the phone and call Parish Associate Lib McGregor Simmons at 704.884.4612, ext. 234. Creating confidential and caring relationships is our mission.

May the peace of Christ be with you, Your Stephen Ministry Team.



Pre-Register for S.T.E.P.S.

Virtual STEPS will consist of two workshop sessions with three options each. Read about the workshops by checking your Wednesday eNews! In order to participate, you MUST pre-register on the presbytery website at capresbytery.org/steps-2020/. There is no cost to participate, but you MUST pre-register by Friday, August 21. Zoom links to the workshops for which you registered will be sent to you Monday, August 24. If you do not receive your link by Tuesday, August 25, contact Dorothy Blackwelder (dblackwelder@capresbytery.org) or Pie Mikell (pmikell@capresbytery.org) immediately.



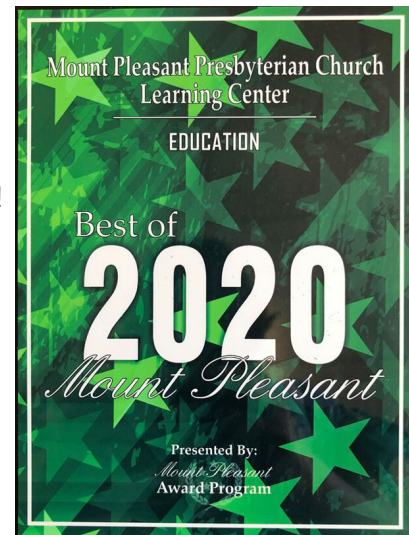
KEEPING THE CONNECTION

Congratulations to the Learning Center!

It seems like just yesterday we were sharing the exciting news that the Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Learning Center had won the 2019 Best of Mount Pleasant award for education. And now we are excited to share that the Learning Center has done it again for 2020!

The programs offered at the Learning Center include chapel, music, Bible, Learning Without Tears Handwriting, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) and Spanish. It was the variety of programs available to the students that designated the Learning Center as the winner two years in a row!

Please help us congratulate the Learning Center on their 2020 Best of Mount Pleasant Award!



Good Luck to Andi, Ann and Lisa

In coming days, we will be saying goodbye to three members of our church staff who have served our congregation well and will be sorely missed. Ann Burdette's last day is July 31st and Andi Awkerman and Lisa Schwartz will be leaving on August 15th.



Ann Burdette has served as an administrative assistant at Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church since 2011. During that time, her thoughtfulness, attention to detail, and process-oriented organizational skills have helped keep us focused on the things that matter, and her quick, Southern wit has allowed her to do it all with a wink and a smile.

Andi Awkerman will celebrate her tenth anniversary with the church staff just a few days before she retires. As many of you know, Andi has been a rock in our member care area, helping to keep pastors, deacons, and care teams informed about members who are sick, grieving, or in need of help. Smart, dedicated, and always ready to help, Andi has been a blessing to those who have worked with her over the years.



Lisa Schwartz managed the Learning Center with faith and hope. After a number of years managing jobs in different states, getting children through school, and caring for aging parents, Lisa and her husband are ready to start a new chapter for their family. As Lisa says, "the time has come for me to join my husband in Raleigh, NC."

In addition, Ann and Andi are looking forward to spending more time with the people they love most in the world and especially to focusing energy on their grandchildren. Although we will miss Lisa dearly, she is leaving the Learning Center in good hands. **Lori Baney** will be serving as the interim director of the Learning Center. Lori comes to the position with 18 years of experience working with the Learning Center. She served as a kindergarten assistant, lead 3K teacher, and art teacher. She will be a great addition to our team!

Please join us in giving our loving thanks for the many contributions Lisa, Ann and Andi have made to our church and in wishing them blessings and happiness as they enter a new chapter of life and service to God.

The Learning Center is Hiring

Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Learning Center is currently searching for both a PK Lead Teacher and a PK Assistant Teacher. If you or someone you know is interested in either of these positions, please email your resume to Lisa Schwartz at lschwartz@mppc.net.





Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church

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CONNECT WITH US

VIRTUAL SUNDAY SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. Online Worship

Online Sunday School:

9:00 a.m. (Adults)

9:15 a.m. (Children- All Ages)

SERMONS

Live Streaming: mppc.net/watch-live-on-sunday

Sermons: mppc.net/sermons

Podcasts: tiny.cc/mtpleasantpodcasts

EVENTS, REGISTRATIONS & NEWS

mppc.net/events

FOLLOW US



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OTHER WAYS

mppc.net/contact

843-884-4612

PRAYER REQUESTS

mppc.net/prayer-requests