

from pastor bart

Dear Church Family,



First, I would like to say "Thank You" to the Stewardship team, the MPPC staff and many other church leaders and members who worked together to offer our church an uplifting and hopeful celebration last Sunday, The Cathering. If you were away and missed it, please go to the MPPC

website, and watch the worship service and hear Rev. Dr. Jan Edmiston's sermon on Ezra 3:10-13, *A Case for Optimism*.

As I was getting ready for worship that morning, I checked my scripture memory verse for the day, it was Proverbs 19:21- The human mind may devise many plans, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established. All morning that verse was playing like a tape recorder in the back of my mind. As I worshiped, as I visited with church members (talked with people I have not seen in a while), and while sharing lunch with others, the verse kept playing, over and over again - The human mind may devise many plans, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established. As I reflect back on that day and that verse, I am reminded of God's purposes that have played out and have come to fruition after a tumultuous year. In the midst disappointment, confusion and anger, God continues to be mightily at work at MPPC. God's steadfast love and faithfulness continue to display the Lords purposes through us, the Body of Christ.

Gods' purposes continue to be established. Here are a few examples:

- MPPC continues to offer several ways to worship and glorify God on Sunday. Three worshipping options are available: outdoors, in the sanctuary and a live streaming option to watch wherever you are on Sunday (or any day of the week).
- Christian Education programs have flourished on-line via Zoom and in person.
- Our music ministry continues to find creative ways to enhance our worship experiences and other special occasions.
- The MPPC Member Care Committee delivers "bread bags" that include a loaf of cinnamon bread, a wooden cross, a bookmark and a personal handwritten note to all MPPC members who have been hospitalized or who have lost a family member (who is not a MPPC member) To date the Member Care committee has delivered almost 100 bags.
- Our Local Missions Committee has hosted the Red Cross four times in 2021 and collected 154 pints of blood through their blood drives.
- Our Bridge Builders team continues to bring social justice issues to the fore front of our thinking and actions. Most recently they hosted Chris Singleton, and his inspiring message, Love is Stronger than Hate
- International Missions Teams continue to stay in contact with our international mission partners

- and supply encouragement and financial support. We hosted Pastor Leon Dorleans from Haiti and welcomed him to our pulpit.
- Our Local Mission team has made site visits and given support to our local mission partners. Many of our local mission partners being on campus for the MPPC Mission Fair.

The youth at MPPC have been engaged and involved in 2021:

- MPPC has about 100 youth participants each week with CornerStone Youth Ministry
- Our youth recently provided over 30 bags of food to ECCO through a youth event "The Grocery Bag Amazing Race"
- They have a tremendous presence as volunteers at most churchwide events as they engage the children of the church in special ways and activities.
- Our youth went to Charlotte for a middle school youth mission trip and served over 20 sites while they were there.
- The youth recently helped our friend, Rick Porter, at the Hope House.

The adult and children's ministry has also been active and involved in 2021:

- Children participated in worship leadership on Children's Sunday.
- We continue to offer children, youth, and adult faith formation opportunities during COVID, including Sunday morning and weekday gatherings
- We have more than 65 volunteers currently working with children's ministry.
- We are a congregation that is engaged in Christian Education with more than 250 adults participating in Lent small groups during 2021 and more than 350 children, youth and adults connecting in faith formation during the week and on Sunday mornings so far in 2021.
- More than 80 children participated in VBS on campus in August and raised money for mission.

Of course, I could go on and on, and so could you! **We** have many ministries and missions not mentioned above, but count them all as equally important. We the members of MPPC, as the Body of Christ fill an important role; we partner together with God for the fulfillment of God's purposes. Each of us is called to be part of the body. Some of us are hands, some are feet, some are the voice, some the eyes but together we become the Body of Christ.

Many thanks for all you do to make God's story and our ministry possible. You and your service to the Lord and to each other is why MPPC is such a vibrant church. Carry on!

In Christ,

Bart W. Cemb

Pastor Bart Edwards

a year in review

missions



Our Member Care committee has delivered almost 100 bread bags.



We've hosted four blood drives and collected 154 pints of blood.



We've continued to support our local and international mission partners.

children



Children participated in worship leadership on Children's Sunday.



There are more than 65 volunteers currently working with children's ministry.



More than 80 children participated in VBS on campus in August.

youth



Middle school youth went to Charlotte for a mission trip and served over 20 sites.

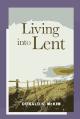


We have about 100 youth participants each week with CornerStone Youth Ministry.



We've provided over 30 bags of food to ECCO through the "Grocery Bag Amazing Race."

adults



There were more than 250 adults participating in Lent small groups during 2021.



Our music ministry continues to find creative ways to enhance our worship experiences.



Christian Education programs have flourished via Zoom and in person.

**This is just a SMALL glimpse into all the amazing things our ministries are doing.

connected through education



Fall Festival

Wednesday, Nov. 3 from 5-7 p.m.

A fall tradition at MPPC is our annual Fall Festival for children and families in the congregation and in the community. With the many activities happening in October this year, the festival is Wednesday, November 3 from 5-7 p.m. outside and will include games, trunk-ortreat, crafts, and food! (Who can pass up a good hot dog?)

Children are welcome to wear their Halloween costumes, bring a friend, and hang out for some great family fun! In case of inclement weather, we will move inside the Fellowship Hall.

Children's Worship is Back!

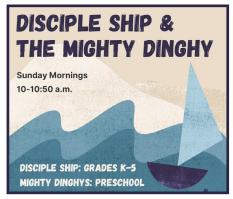
Introducing "Kids Praise" our updated Children's Worship service for grades K-2 beginning Sunday, November 7, during the 11:00 a.m. Service of Worship. Following the children's message, children will head to GH 122 for their own special worship and activities. Kids Praise will include a children's liturgy, story, and activities that connect the story to life. Parents will pick up children in GH 122 immediately following worship.

This special children's worship will occur on the first three Sundays of the month. On the fourth (and fifth) Sundays, children are encouraged to worship with their families in the sanctuary.

This is a volunteer led ministry for children. Please contact Dan Wiard at dwiard@mppc.net to get involved.



Disciple Ship & The Mighty Dinghy



Children's
Sunday morning
education classes
will be looking
at the Christian
practice of
Confess during
November. Here's
what the PCUSA
Follow Me
Curriculum will
teach children.

WHAT DOES CONFESS MEAN? On the surface, confess can simply mean "to say something." We confess what we believe, we confess our love for one another, we confess our secrets; in all these cases, confession is about words. In this unit, however, we understand confession to be more about actions than simply words. Of course, words are a form of action, and confession certainly involves saying some key words, namely, those difficult and humbling words "I apologize" and "I'm sorry." But it also involves recognizing that we've done wrong,

committing to find another way to live, and repairing, to the best of our ability, any damage (physical or emotional) that has been done. Throughout the Confess unit, we will look at our choices and actions in relation to God's desires for us and the world. Confession is the practice of recognizing before God and others where we are and are not in right relationship to the path God has outlined for living. We will talk about "staying on God's path" as well as "finding our way back to God's path." Such language is chosen intentionally to help children understand that making mistakes or doing something wrong, or sinning; confessing; and repenting are not reflections on their goodness or badness. We are all beloved in God's eyes.

Meeting locations:

2- SB 202
3- SB 204
4-SB 205
5-SB 208

youth ministries

connected through education

Fall Leaves and Youth Trips, Please!

Fall is finally in the air and we are excited to see it in CornerStone Youth Ministry. We are gearing up for our fall and winter retreats that we have not been able to go on in over a year. The anticipation and excitement feel great!

The Middle School Youth will be traveling to Bethelwoods Camp and Conference Center in a couple weeks for the Fall Presbytery Retreat with youth from all over the Charleston Atlantic Presbytery. This is a great time for the youth to meet their brothers and sisters in Christ from around the Charleston area.

Our weekly CornerStone Youth Programming is also fully back with Breakfast in the Basement, Confirmation, CYM, Prayer Breakfast and Wednesday Night Live. There is something for EVERY youth at MPPC and ALL are welcome to be a part of it!

Thank you to those that have brought food on Sunday mornings and those that are helping with weekly youth activities! If you would like to help out in any way, please reach out to me.

Courtney Kraus Director of Youth Ministries



SUGAR MOUNTAIN, NORTH CAROLINA

SIGN UPS BEGIN ON NOVEMBER 1ST THROUGH REALM

\$325.00

COST INCLUDES HOUSING, TRANSPORTATION, EQUIPMENT RENTALS, AND LIFT TICKET













connected through education

Adult Small Group +1 on **Sunday Mornings**

We offer six adult small group opportunities on Sunday mornings, two in person, one hybrid, and three on Zoom. A quick breakdown of the classes and what they are studying:

- **The Middle** The group is studying *The Disciple* Making Church and meets on campus in the parking lot of Hope House. (10:00-10:50 a.m.) Contact: Jim Deavor, Holly Limbert.
- Youngish Adults Meeting in GH 123/125, this kind-of-young adult small group is looking at various topics, with a parenting study coming soon! (10:00-10:50 a.m.) Contact: Towner Magill.
- The Academy of St John is a hybrid class, on campus meeting in SB 106 and via Zoom. They are beginning a new study using NT Wright's The New Testament You Never Knew, and during Advent they will focus their attention on Adam Hamilton's Advent study "Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas." (9:30-10:30 a.m.) Contact: Sharon Barnett.
- **Connect 3** meets via Zoom and is currently using the PCUSA's new Follow Me curriculum. This discussion-based class has honest dialogue that brings humor and life application to Scripture. This class parallels the children's lesson themes on Sunday morning, so it offers opportunities to better connect and engage in at-home conversations between children and adults. Advent will feature an Advent study beginning on November 28. [Trivia: The Connect 3 name means: Connecting with God, connecting with one another, and connecting with missions.] (9:30-10:30 a.m.) Contact: Martha Waters, Evie Evans.
- Seekers & Sowers meets via Zoom and is looking at 1, 2, 3 John. This discussion class looks in-depth at Scripture as they study various themes throughout the Bible. (10:00-11:00 a.m.) Contact: Bill Marsh.
- The Harbor offers a historical exploration of Scripture in the context in which it was written. The class is currently in the Old Testament. (10:00-11:00 a.m.) Contact: Butch Hills.



Wondering

1st Monday of the Month via Zoom, 7 – 8 p.m.

Wondering is a Bible study where we encourage questions; it's a Bible study that might have more questions than answers. Bring your



Bibles and an open mind as we explore the Bible!

On November 1, Wondering will explore the story of Noah in Genesis 6:5-9:28 using Carolyn B. Helsel and Song-Mi Suzie Park's book The Flawed Family of God as our resource. Looking ahead, in December we look at the Christmas Story in the Gospels. Then, in January, we will use Amy Jill Levine's book The Difficult Words of Jesus and explore Mark 10:17-27 when Jesus tells the rich man to sell what he owns.

Sign up at *mppc.net/events* to receive the Zoom link or contact Dan Wiard at dwiard@mppc.net.

Advent Devotional

This year the Adult Faith Formation Ministry Team is once again compiling a special MPPC Advent Devotion booklet for personal and family use during the Advent Season. A digital devotion book will be emailed to congregation members. Printed copies will be available to pick up at the church, and a limited number of printed copies will be mailed to those without email or who request a printed copy be mailed to them. The Ministry Team hopes that this Advent Devotional will add a special blessing to your Advent celebration.

Advent Workshop

Sunday, Nov. 28, 4 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Advent is a time when we anticipate celebrating the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ on Christmas Day. We prepare for this celebration in different ways. For some, an Advent calendar is used at home, each day revealing something exciting about the season. For others, a Jesse Tree walks us through Jesus's family tree as we read about stories of people in his family. At MPPC, we offer an Advent Workshop for children and families that provides a time to gather for fellowship, Advent Wreath making, and children's crafts that remind us of the season. The wreaths are useable and can easily be recycled year after year, the crafts are "keepers" for storytelling and hanging on our walls, and the fellowship is priceless. You can sign up for this MPPC tradition at mppc.net/events.

hope house

connected through hope

Adopt-a-Day at Hope House

NOVEMBER 6

In Loving Memory of Virginia Gilliam on her birthday; Given by Mike, Julie, and Will Stephenson

NOVEMBER 9

In Honor of Christy and Garrett Rowe on their anniversary; Given by Ken and Donna Widener

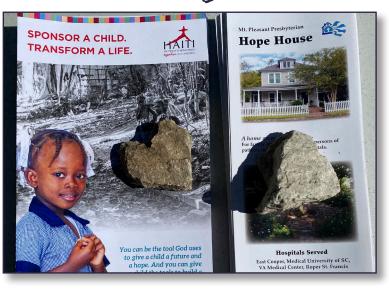
NOVEMBER 15

In Memory of Douglas Mellichamp; Given by Joan and Don Brown

Visit <u>mppc.net/hope-house</u> to adopt a day!







God's Word is a Gift

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many." -Mark 10:45

What a glorious day Sunday, October 17th was! As we started to come out from under the pandemic, I couldn't have thought of a better way to spend a Sunday than to have been a part of the Missions Fair at MPPC. It was a brisk, windy morning and we all struggled to keep our pamphlets and brochures from blowing off the tables and into the streets as we proudly tried to display the information and share our missions with our congregation.

The street was lined with tables and those involved with various missions within our church and community. We mingled with each other and learned so much about each other's missional involvement and we all seemed to share the passion to serve others.

The Hope House table was directly beside the Haiti Outreach Ministries. Suzy Edwards, Bart's wife and I commented on the fact that both of us hosting the tables collected rocks from the side of the road to use as paper weights for our brochures. Suzy brought to my attention the fact that both rocks on our tables were shaped like "heart rocks." It was just another reminder that sharing God's word and serving others is such a gift to those who serve. Volunteers at Hope House often comment that they feel rewarded by volunteering just as the guests who stay there say they feel.

Hope House and Hope Cottage are both open to one vaccinated family and we're feeling alive again! Helping others....is what life is all about! I encourage each of you reading this article to try to help someone each day and see how it fills your life. AND...Good things are happening at MPPC!

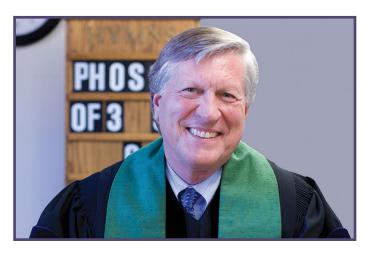
connected through worship

The Lighting of the Advent Candles

In the ancient world, various peoples lit fires to mark the winter season and to pray for the return of the light. The church has adapted the practice to a tradition of the lighting of candles on the Advent wreath. The candles representing hope, peace, joy, and love serve as signs of the growing light of Christ who is coming again in all fullness into the darkness of our world.

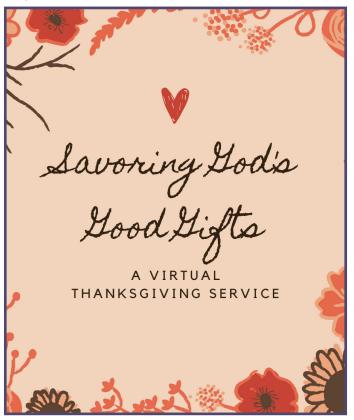
The Worship Committee is inviting individuals and families to light the candles at the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services on the four Sundays of Advent (November 28; December 5; December 12; December 19), the Travelers' Service on December 15, and the 4 Christmas Eve services.

Sign up here https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0f49aea72ea7f4c43-advent by Nov. 15 to participate in this meaningful MPPC tradition.



About Our Guest Speaker on Nov. 7

The Rev. Dr. Thomas G. Long is the Bandy Professor of Preaching Emeritus at Candler School of Theology, Emory University. Before going to Emory, he taught preaching at Erskine Theological Seminary, Columbia Theological Seminary, and Princeton Theological Seminary. He has also served as the Director of Geneva Press at Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Tom received his B.A. from Erskine College and M.Div. from Erskine Seminary and his Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary. He has published a number of books, including The Witness of Preaching, Preaching and the Literary Forms of the Bible, Accompany Them With Singing - The Christian Funeral, What Shall We Say?: Evil, Suffering, and the Crisis of Faith, and biblical commentaries on Hebrews, Matthew, I and II Timothy, and Titus. Tom now lives in Cambridge, Maryland, with his wife, liturgical scholar the Rev. Dr. Kimberly Bracken Long.



SAVORING GOD'S GOOD GIFTSA Virtual Thanksgiving Service

For the Beauty of the Earth...
For the Wonder of Each Hour...
For the Joy of Human Love...
For Jesus Christ, Best Gift Divine...
Lord of all, to Thee we raise, this our hymn of grateful praise.

This year's Thanksgiving worship service will be virtual, and we need your help! As an individual or as a family, think about the blessings that you have enjoyed during the past year. Pull out your phone or tablet and make a 15-second recording saying "I/We am/are thankful for....." Send your recording to Logan Prochaska at *Iprochaska@mppc.net* no later than Nov. 14 so that it can be included in this meaningful service.

Then during the week of Thanksgiving, you are invited to carve not only your Thanksgiving turkey, but to carve out 15 minutes of time to worship God and savor the good gifts which God provides. The 15-minute recorded worship service will be available throughout the week. Plan to gather your loved ones on Thanksgiving Eve, just before you sit down to dinner on Thanksgiving Day, or as the sun sets on Thanksgiving Day, and press the Play button wherever you may be to worship God with heart, soul, and voice.

connected through mission

I'm feeling so well, and happy, especially for my children that didn't have a room where to sleep. Sometimes I think that all this is just a dream, that isn't real. Before when it rained, I have to gather all my 4 children and get shelter in a corner of the house, water used to get inside cause a several leaks through the roof; Now we do not get sick cause the cold weather."



Esslyn St. Elena, Roatán, Honduras



A Letter from Habitat for Humanity Honduras

On behalf Esslyn and the other 32,000 families that have been benefited in Honduras with decent and affordable housing, Habitat for Humanity we would like to thank you for being part of the change in the quality of life of children, elders, women and men that have received a house thanks to your economic support of \$5000 During the month August. Your contribution allows us to continue the work at the most needed zones of the country, including native groups.

Your donation means hope, blessing and achievement of the dreams of thousands of families that thought it was beyond them

Honduras has a total housing deficit that reach 1.4 million units, 61.8% stands for quality and 38.2% require a brand new house; those numbers increased with the crisis provoked by Covid-19 pandemic, thousands of people lost their jobs or entrepreneurships for lack of capital to work with; many of these families were affected by the hurricanes ETA and IOTA as well, and despite the event happened several months ago, they haven't been able to resolve their housing situation after losing all cause the floods.

Habitat commitment is to keep working to reduce the housing deficit in the country so more families can be benefited, we believe that adequate and affordable housing is the foundation to break the poverty cycle.

Once more, we would like to thank your help, we like you know how important have been your commitment for the families.

¡Please receive our most sincere grateful feeling for your generosity!

Hábitat para la Humanidad Honduras Alberto Benítez Salem Executive Director

connected through community

MPPC's Resident Lay Theologians – Jim Deavor & Ellen Creed Branham

The PCUSA Book of Order states, "Membership in the Church of Jesus Christ is a joy and a privilege. It is also a commitment to participate in Christ's mission. A faithful member bears witness to God's love and grace and promises to be involved responsibly in the ministry of Christ's Church." The Book of Order then goes on to state more explicitly what such involvement entails. Included in this list is "studying Scripture and the issues of Christian faith and life."

Two MPPC ruling elders, Jim Deavor and Ellen Creed Branham, have experienced the joy and privilege of extended Biblical and theological study at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. Jim leads a busy life as Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry and Interim Department Chair at the College of Charleston and as MPPC Clerk of Session. However, by "rising with the chickens" and studying while on the CARTA bus to and from school, he has completed online courses on the Old and New Testament, Reformed Theology, Reformed Worship and Sacraments, Pastoral Care, Preaching, Polity, and Christian Education, recently receiving his Certificate of Completion. He says that he initially became interested in seminary study when he led the Net liturgy for a number of months, an experience which prompted him to begin asking the question, "What will God have me do next following my retirement from teaching?," raising the possibility of serving as a Commissioned Ruling Elder. He goes on to say, "I've been sitting in pews all my life. I've been enriched as I have studied why we do things the way that we do!" He particularly enjoyed the New Testament course as he and his classmates read through the entire New Testament in a guided manner over the course of twelve weeks and the Reformed Theology course--reading through the entire Book of Confessions, topped off by a week on Karl Barth, was "eye-opening!" he says.

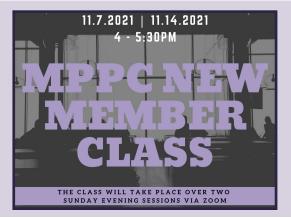
Jim is now continuing his theological study by participating in the South Carolina Lay School of Theology which meets two weekends each year at Presbyterian College.

Ellen Creed Branham was led to deeper



Biblical and theological study through the suggestion of MPPC Associate Pastor John Hage and engagement in spiritual direction. During 2019-20, she completed a one-year Princeton Seminary program on theology and ministry. What she has loved about the Princeton program and her study at UDTS is the intellectual engagement with the material which intersects with daily life, "what I'm learning and living," as she puts it. Like Jim, Ellen has especially enjoyed the Reformed Theology course which culminated with the drafting of her own statement of faith in dialogue with the Confessions. Much to her surprise, she was energized by the Polity course, digging into the "why" of our Presbyterian way of governance, worship, and discipline. When asked where she feels that her theological study is leading, she responded, "I have no idea! However, I am learning not to run ahead of God's plans, but to be open to where the process is leading." MPPC is looking forward to welcoming Ellen as our guest preacher on November 21!

Perhaps reading this article has piqued your interest in deeper Biblical and theological study. If so, speak to Jim or Ellen, Bart or Dan or Lib, or check out the websites for the UDTS program or the SC Lay School.



November New Member Classes

Our next New Member Class will be held on November 7th and 14th. Participants will meet via Zoom from 4 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. on both Sundays. These two evening classes will allow us to introduce each of you and us. Pastors, Elders and other church leaders will join us to talk about life at MPPC and answer any questions you may have. Please spread the word and ask any friends and neighbors who may be considering membership in our church to contact Rev. Bart Edwards with any questions they may have. **Register at mppc.net/events.**

connected through community



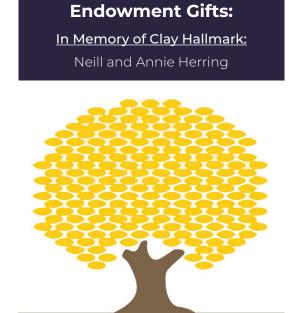
Second Sunday Speaker Series

You have probably heard the recent controversy over expanding Hwy. 41 through the Phillips community. Come listen to a panel of experts on the challenges that our African American neighbors face in their efforts to preserve "heirs property" on Sunday, Nov. 14 at 5:00 in Fellowship Hall.



Wise Giving is Coming! November 21-December 23, 2021

The holidays are almost here! There is no better gift to give or receive than to help someone in need. Wise Giving, MPPC's annual alternative gift giving campaign, supports many of our trusted local and international mission partners. Wise Gifts can be given in honor of your family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, or anyone else on your Christmas list. Whoever is honored by your Wise Gift will be blessed by knowing that someone in need is being helped. Wise Giving will run from November 21st to December 23rd.





Have you gotten your Leaf on the Endowment Tree? Are you *leafing* a legacy?

If you don't know about the Endowment Tree, the tree is a large display in the Fellowship Hall designed to recognize those that are leaving funds to the Endowment at their passing. To get a leaf, you need to set up your estate documents to leave money to the church at your death. This can be as simple as giving the church a set dollar amount from your IRA or a line item in your will but there are many options. Several are quite tax efficient!

Have you listed the church in your estate documents and need to get a leaf? Please contact Katie Edwards at 843-364-8495 or Chairman Harry Smith at 843-708-9556 for next steps. Also be sure to visit mppc.net/endowment-tree. Next round of leaves are being ordered **November 15**, please get your paperwork in before then. Call Katie or Harry with questions.



Non-Profit Organization U.S. Postage **PAID** Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464 PERMIT No. 28

CONNECT WITH US

***SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

9 a.m. Outdoor Worship 10 a.m. Education Hour + Fellowship Time 11 a.m. Sanctuary + Live Stream Worship

Visit mppc.net to learn more about faith formation opportunities for all ages!

SERMONS

Live Streaming: mppc.net/watch-live Sermons: mppc.net/sermons Podcasts: tiny.cc/mtpleasantpodcasts

EVENTS, REGISTRATIONS & NEWS

mppc.net/events

FOLLOW US







@mtpleasantpres

OTHER WAYS

mppc.net/contact 843-884-4612

PRAYER REQUESTS

mppc.net/prayer-requests

*Masks are required indoors on the MPPC campus.