

The Scroll

Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church
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 1600 W. Mallard Creek Church Road



From Pastor Rob

Someone popped into my office recently and asked, ‘So...what have you given up for Lent?’ I smiled and snapped off something like, ‘Not being nice to people!’ And after a chuckle, they repeated the question.

I answered candidly and truthfully, ‘Nothing, really.’

I do not go through the ritual of giving up something for Lent. For much the same reason, I do not make New Year resolutions, either. Instead, I try to think about what I truly need to be better able to be whom I need to be. I use the season to take stock, to rumble through the jumble of memories from the previous year. I note the things that did not go so well; and I mark those times when things did reach a high point. I usually discover that most of my life is somewhere between those two poles, rarely spending much time at either end of the spectrum.

Is that true for you, as well?

In the liturgical calendar of the Church universal, most of the year is marked as ‘Ordinary Time.’ There are great sweeps of it between the high holy days. Advent and Christmas get a month, as do Lent and Easter. Pentecost gets one Sunday. The rest of the year is just life as it is lived.

That seems appropriate to me. Our lives have special moments—we have those high holy days of births, deaths, birthdays, anniversaries, and so on—but there are great sweeps of time in which we just live.

With that being the case, what do we need to really live as God made us to live? Lent offers us a chance to think about that. As we go through the events of the previous year, stop at one of those rough spots—what would have helped? What would have made it better? How might we have met that moment, perhaps keeping it from becoming one of those dark place? Do the same with the high points—what made everything work? Did we prepare for it? How did we meet that moment?



What we discover are ways to become better disciples. We discover the gifts and blessings that enable us to live faithfully and fully as people of God. We also discover those things that get in the way. We can begin to ponder how we might maximize the good stuff while minimizing the bad things. We can then set some goals and priorities for ourselves. Over the next year, what can I do to build on the foundation of good things? What can I do to better use the gifts God gives me? We can also take stock of how to eliminate hard places. Is there something going for which I really need someone else’s help? Are there things and situations where another person’s eyes might help me better focus? Are there habits I need to break? Habits I need to pick up? What will help me be better able to hear God’s voice and follow the direction God is leading me to take?

Adopting such a practice this season will help make Lent something richer and fuller. It will keep it from simply being the lead-in to spring. It can become a trove of blessings from which to make the rest of the year more what we would like it to be.

So, no, I do not really give anything up for Lent. Instead, I try to use it as a month-long refresher in what God made me to be, needs me to be, and wants me to be.

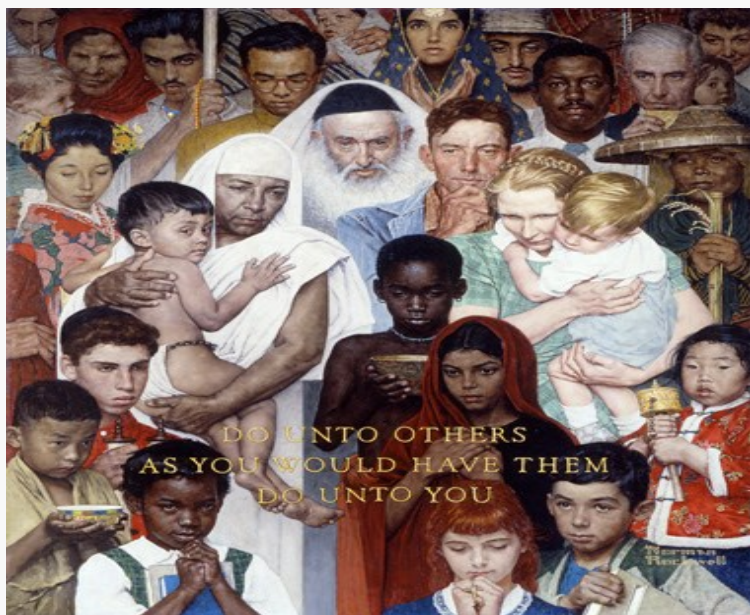
Try it. See what it does for you.

Hunter's Thoughts

We have recently celebrated Ash Wednesday - the beginning of our 40 days of preparation for Holy Week. As Protestants, many of us did not have that as part of our faith tradition as we grew up. Only in recent decades have most of us reclaimed Lent as a significant part of our spiritual journey. I have come to find Ash Wednesday and the rituals that surround it to be something that really deepens my understanding of God's love for us.

Once again this year, we had our traditional Ash Wednesday service in our sanctuary. But we also have one of those holdovers from the Covid years - we are still offering a "drive-through" time during the day for people who may not be able to get to a service. For me and Rob and Andrea, along with Terri Garrison and Kristy Maddux, it is a blessing to be part of these special moments. This year, we had more than 40 people who took advantage of this opportunity to embrace their faith. What was really significant is that about two thirds of these people were not church members but are from our surrounding community.

Some said this was the only chance they would have on a busy day to be able to get ashes. Others do not currently have a local church home and were thankful for the outreach that Mallard Creek PC was providing. And some have never been part of a church and may have even grown up in a different faith. Several wanted to know more about the meaning of Ash Wednesday and Lent and Holy Week and what it all means. It was an honor in those moments to get to share about what our Christian faith means.



I was thinking about the variety of people who had come through that line when I sat down in my office and looked up at a painting I have long had right above my desk. It is by Norman Rockwell and has the words of the Golden Rule printed across it - "Do Unto Others As You Would Have Them Do Unto You" - based upon Jesus' words in Matthew 7:12. I could not help but look at those faces and think about the many different people that now make up our community and our world. Faces that may look very different but all belong to God's children.

Over these next weeks, as we prepare our hearts to remember Christ's great sacrifice for us and his ultimate victory over sin and death, we are reminded that God sent the Son into all the world. One of our challenges is to make sure that we let everyone know about that. But we can all do so by sharing our hearts and our faith with others - because God has first loved all of us.



This month, we are kicking off our “Be Smart, Read More Books...Eat More Chikin” March Reading Program and will celebrate by having Spirit Week from February 27th through March 2nd. Our students and staff will have fun dressing differently each day. **Monday will be “LLS” Pajama Day, in which we will collect**

donations for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Tuesday will be Crazy Hair Day, Wednesday will be Silly Socks Day, and on Thursday everyone will wear Silly Hats.

We are excited that Chick-fil-A at University Place is sponsoring our March Reading Program again this year! The Chick-fil-A cow will come and read to our students on March 1st and each of our students will receive a reading certificate and coupon for a free ice cream from Chick-fil-A. ***When you visit the Chick-fil-A at University Place, please thank them for their continued support of our preschool. They have supported our preschool for more than 15 years.***

This month, we invite guest readers to come into the preschool and read to the children. If you **LOVE to read, we would love for you to come and read to some of our students. If you are interested, please email kristym@mallardcreekchurch.org.**

This month our students will learn about: Dr. Seuss; Day & Night; How Their Family Works; Pets; Gardening; Sun, Moon, & Stars; Machines & More; the Outdoors; and St. Patrick’s Day. We will celebrate St. Patrick’s Day with visits from a few leprechauns and shenanigans in our classrooms. Our Pre-K classes will each visit the Sea Life Aquarium at Concord Mills for their second field trip at the end of the month.

The Bible stories that Ms. Robin will teach our students in Children’s Church this month are: The Walls of Jericho, Creation, Baby Moses, Fishers of Men, and Peter Walks on Water.

Our initial Registration for the 2023-2024 school year has ended so all remaining openings are on a first come first served basis. *(When accepting children into our program, church members do have priority over the public.)* If you have a child who you would like to register, please email paulab@mallardcreekchurch.org.



Youth Club and Teen Fellowship March 2023

Sunday Afternoon Schedules:

Youth Club Schedule:

Youth Club 3:00-4:30pm	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
3/5	Sabbath
3/12	Bible Story and Craft
3/19	Kids Yoga and Games
3/26	Easter Bible Lesson and Party

Teen Fellowship Schedule:

Teen Fellowship 4:30-6:30pm	
<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
3/5	Sabbath
3/12	Mission - Goodwill Clothing Drive
3/19	Cooking Class with the Moores
3/26	Easter Bible Lesson and Party



Community-wide Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 1st 1-2pm!

Save the date for our annual Easter Egg Hunt for kids of all ages! Teens are encouraged to come at noon to help set up and hide eggs. It's fun for the whole family!

Teens Lock-in on Friday, March 17!

Drop off your teen at 5pm, and pick them up Saturday, March 18 at 9am. We will provide dinner Friday night and breakfast Saturday morning. Bring a sleeping bag/mat and pillow, pajamas, and your own toiletry items.



The Neal Scholarship applications will be available from Andrea or in the church office on **March 6** for current high school seniors attending college in the fall. **Applications are due April 27 by 5pm.**

Backpack Blessings continues to be busy.

We are helping Parkside, Mallard Creek and University Meadows Elementary Schools, feeding between 80 to 120 children each week. The schools also have several needs.

Below are some ways to get involved if you would like to volunteer:

Helping in the library Assist with monitoring in the cafeteria during lunch Being a buddy by tutoring and working with the children Spend time with the children during recess

If there's anything of interest, please call me and I'll put you in touch with the school.

February is the month of love and it was very much demonstrated in our church. We received some wonderful clothes for the children through the Circle of Rebekah clothes drive. The Pre K classes at our preschool held an amazing food drive as their mission project and below are some pictures.

A big Thank You to the Pre K teachers who taught the children the importance of giving to others. it was also a hands on project with the children participating in the backpack program. They got to put food away, made some bags and the most fun for them was lifting the bags and seeing how heavy they were. We definitely enjoyed having them there.

We also very much appreciate the monetary and food donations to Backpack Blessings. We'll continue to collect clothes thru the rest of the year so if you have clothes that your child has outgrown please bring them to church; we have bins in the gathering space.

Maria Menconi 704-560-3961



GREETING FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE



The Finance Committee brings you greetings and a huge thank you for your time and financial support to MCPC. With your support we were able to pay off the loan on our new gathering space in 2022 and we are now debt free. In response to our December letter you responded with the largest December collection we have ever received. Your response reduced the 2022 yearly deficient to \$66,000.00.

The Finance committee and the Session are looking at ways to reduce our costs to balance the 2023 budget. This will be a very difficult task as most of our expenses are tied to staff (50%) or in reoccurring facility costs --- i.e.: electric, gas, water, insurance, building upkeep and ground maintenance. However we have little choice as our reserves will only last so long unless we reduce spending, increase collections or a combination of the two.

MCPC has seen other lean times over its 200-year history. The impact of the covid stoppage along with other factors has reduced the participation at MC and many other houses of worship. The ministry of MC will continue. The question is how it will look or differ from the past. Your officers and staff cannot express how grateful they are for your continued support. Please spend family time in prayer for guidance on how you may support the ministry of MCPC. Your comments or suggestions are welcomed. Please contact a member of Finance or any Elder. Your name will not be repeated if you so desire, but we need member input.



In Christ, The Finance Committee



Save the
Date!
Vacation
Bible School
June 25-29,
2023

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be held on March 12, immediately after our 10:00 am worship service.

The agenda for this meeting includes—

- The annual meeting of Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church, inc., as required by the state
- A report from Session on the state of the church
- A report from the Finance Committee on our current financial picture
- Approving changes to the Terms of Call for the Pastor
- Electing the at-large members of the Nominating Committee for 2023—those people are:

Linda Wallace
Robin Fuller
Doris DeArmon
Bobbi Lisi



You have been invited to this luncheon

if you sing in the Choir, play in the Handbell Choir, teach Sunday School, help with Youth Club or Teens or helped with VBS last year.

We want to celebrate and appreciate your many talents!

Please RSVP by 3/12/23 via Punchbowl Evite or 704-516-6376(text or call)



New ways to give at Mallard Creek



Scan
QR
Code

WE GIVE because
GOD GAVE FIRST

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son...
John 3:16

Text
MCPC
to 73256

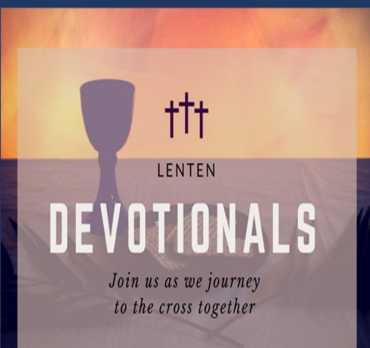


Join us for
Lunch Bunch
on Tuesday, March 21

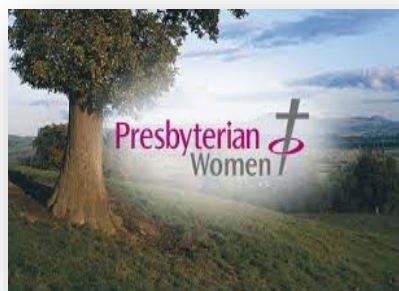


"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine".
... Proverbs 17:22

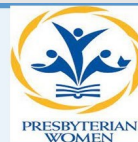
We will enjoy a presentation by Renea Henderson who enjoys making people laugh as she also drives home vital points about joyful living.



Lenten Devotionals:
Check the church
Facebook page daily
(@MallardCreekPC)
or pick up a hard
copy for the week on
Sundays during
worship.



It is VOTING SEASON at MCPC.



The Honorary Life Membership
is conferred upon a woman
in recognition of faithful service in some area of
the church's work.

Voting for the honorary will be held during the
months of February and March.

Ballots are located in the Gathering Space by the
voting box.

If you have question please reach out to Robin
Fuller or Connie Wallace.



SAVE THE DATE: MAY 20, 2023



STOP HUNGER NOW.



Community Easter Egg Hunt
Saturday, April 1st -- 1:00-2:00pm
Outdoors near gym & playground
All ages are welcome to come join the fun!
We need lots of adult volunteers too!

Elder duty for March: Kristy Maddux, Mark Johnson, Brian Wasko

Deacon duty for March: Amy Spittle, Sue Bishop, Sheila Letica,
Tom Baker, Rob Moore



***** Mark your calendars ***
and sign up for our upcoming
Bonclarken Retreat - May 10-12.**

Our theme this year
is "Those Were The Days" and will be a
very uplifting and fun time for all
attendees.

Contact Carl Hatton, Margaret Hatton,
Jimmy Walker, or Polly Walker for more
information.

Special Prayers



Nancy Moore - mother of Rob Moore	Elizabeth King	Bobby Brown	Caroline Williams
Debra Johnson	Shirley Hunter	Cecil Massey	Donna Seaford
Lynn Kelley	Juanita Untz	Roy Kinnamon	Elaine Lord
Larry Carroll - husband of Ann Carroll	Ruby Downing	Dennis Lord	Guy Eberhart
Andy Marcus - brother of Rachel Rodden	Donnie Oehler	Ken Christenbury	Carolyn Sheehan
Pat Smith - mother of Mary Baker	Frances Christenbury	Hope Moon	Mack Downing
LaVern Winter - father of Tammy Alford	Suggie Christenbury	Joana Lovette	Cy Alexander
Matthew Lee - friend of Karen Kosmoski	Dale McLaughlin	Ann Brown	Betsy Killian
Scott Karriker - friend of Chris Mingus	Carlita Hunter	Linda Wallace	Ned Blackwell
Jimmy Rodgers - son of Frances Christenbury	Donna Garrison— wife of Eddie Garrison		
Mike Drake - friend of the congregation	Barry Henson - brother-in-law of Perry Deaton		



April Birthdays



						1 Timothy Johnston Kristy Maddux Molly Rice
2 Will Armistead Emily Rose Hank Poston Michael A. Semon	3 Marleen Alexander Scot Barrett	4 Chuck Strong, Jr.	5 Julia Brown Chris Alessi	6 Juanita Untz Gabriel Lapalombella	7 Emily Holt Jackson Oehler Wren Alexander	8
9 Debbie Freidlander Jean Helms Lee Ann Oehler Ashley Gullledge	10 Earlene Craver Anne Eberhart Eddie Garrison Page Gupton Bobbie Lisi Julie Mingus	11 Mary Snow Allston Oehler April Carte	12 Jessica Rainstein	13 Pam Beard Daniel Messina Christine Shankey	14 Doris DeArmon Faye Stanley Tom Baker	15 Taylor Jones Kristina Sheppard
16 Danny Ndingwan	17 Sue Oehler Anne Quattlebaum Andy Brown Sophia Johnson	18 Kalie Barrett	19 Brenda Garrison Easton Cochran	20 Mason Coore	21 Ben Alford	22 Robin Fuller
23 Jean MacNeil	24 Bonnie Hodges Dave Richards Brice Dixon	25 Shirley McKay Kayla Serepca	26 Emily Shankey	27 Susan Mach Amy Oehler Holly Oehler Hayden Love	28 Ann Brown Ashley Smith Abigail Yates	29 Carolyn Stubbs
30						

Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church
1600 W. Mallard Creek Church Road
Charlotte, NC 28262



www.mallardcreekchurch.org

The Rev. Rob Watkins
The Rev. Hunter Roddey
Mrs. Andrea Thomas
Mrs. Claudia Perez
Mr. David Barnaba
Mrs. Kristy Maddux

Senior Pastor
Transitional Associate Pastor
Director of Children & Youth Ministry
Administrative Assistant
Director of Music
Preschool Director