

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



April 2025

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

- **First Quarter Update**
 - **Financial Update**
 - **Leadership Announcement**
 - **Upcoming Events**
 - **March Event Recap**
 - **Session Update**
-



New Cross Installation

We're delighted to share that our new wooden cross has been installed! A heartfelt thank you goes to Doug Straatsma for sourcing the lumber, and to both Doug and Mark Anderson for skillfully assembling and installing this beautiful symbol of our faith.

Our previous cross, which stood faithfully for many years, unfortunately succumbed to the forces of Hurricane Helene last fall. Years of weathering, natural decay, and insect damage had weakened its structure, making it unable to withstand the storm's powerful winds.



Join us as we celebrate the joy and hope of Easter! For full details, go to mandarinpres.com/easter.

Maundy Thursday Service

Thursday, April 17th, 7:30pm - Sanctuary

Join us for a unique worship experience that will allow you to connect with Christ's sacrifice in an intimate way. We will have a separate event for children in grades 1-5, and nursery care will be available for children in kindergarten or younger. If you need to register your child for nursery care, please email Beth at bwolfram@mandarinpres.com.

Easter Sunday Services

Sunday, April 20th - Three Services Offered

- 6:30am Sunrise at the Mandarin Cemetery
- 9:00am at our Church Campus with music led by the Sanctuary Choir & Concert Band
- 10:30am at our Church Campus with music by the Worship Team

We ask if you are able, please park at our Office Campus on Mandarin Road on Easter Sunday so that we can make room for our guests and first-time attendees! We will have a shuttle service for both campuses.

First Quarter at MPC

We continue to be amazed by God's work at MPC, and the first few months of 2025 have already exceeded our expectations!

We are thrilled that more than 600 kids and students have already registered for summer camps and high school mission trips—programs that are helping fulfill our calling to develop an enduring faith that is known and fully alive in our next generation. Equally exciting is the response to our "Get A Grip" Bible Study, with more than 300 people answering the call to move closer to Jesus and dive deeper into the Word.

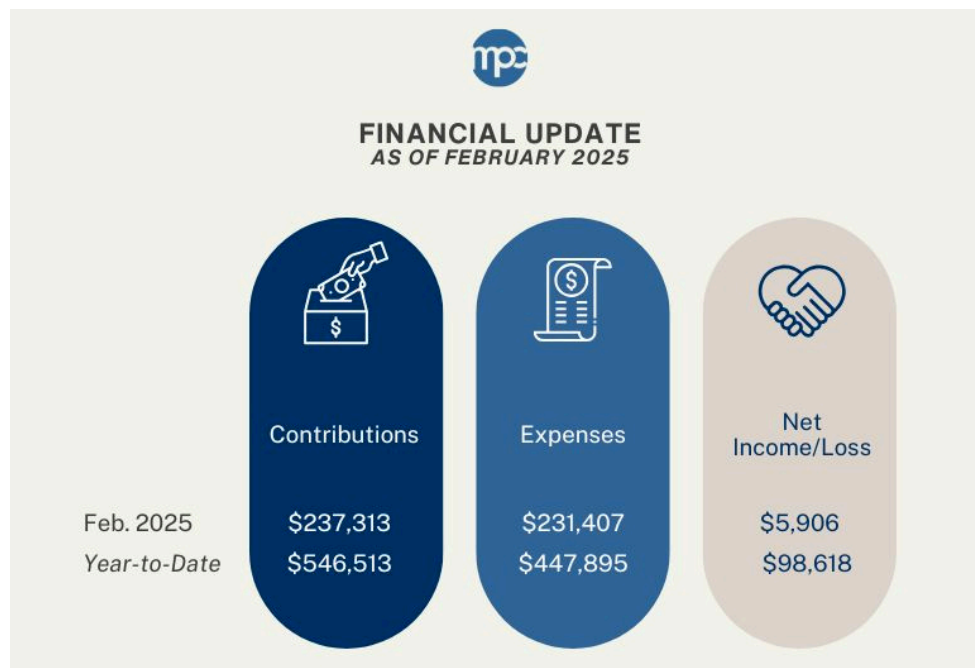
Furthermore, our recent Serve the City volunteer event demonstrated the powerful impact we can make together. Two hundred volunteers completed several community projects, including:

- Packing 23,856 meals for Hunger Fight
- Assembling 200 grocery bags for Three Grains of Rice
- Preparing 100 bread loaves for Waste Not Want Not
- Creating 18 care packages for Meals on Wheels
- Many additional projects at Seamark Ranch, City Rescue Mission, HabiJax and our prayer team!

We're grateful for each of you and your commitment to serving others and taking steps closer to Jesus. We can't wait to see how God continues to work through MPC throughout 2025!



Give online: mandarinpres.com/give.



Recurring donations provide the most reliable support for our ministries. They're easy to set up and help us plan effectively. Need assistance? Contact Anne Petrone: (904) 680-9944.

Thank you for your generous support!!

Leadership Announcement



We are thrilled to announce that Devyn Nelson, our current MPC pastoral intern, will be transitioning into the role of Assistant Pastor of Discipleship!

In this pivotal role, Devyn will focus on nurturing spiritual growth throughout our congregation, equipping and encouraging individuals to deepen their relationship with God and strengthen their connections with others.

Devyn's passion for discipleship and his heart for mentoring, which he has already demonstrated during his time as our pastoral intern, make him the perfect fit for this important position. We're confident his leadership will have a meaningful impact on our church family.

He will be graduating from Dubuque Theological Seminary in April and concurrently wrapping up his pastoral ordination with ECO.

Please join us in welcoming Devyn to his new role!



Mandarin Presbyterian Preschool is accepting registrations for "Summer Fun at MPP" - our dynamic preschool camp for ages 3-5 years old and open to all campers - it's not required to be an MPP student. Each week features unique theme-based activities that spark curiosity and joy in young learners. For more information, call or email Lee Samuels at the preschool office at 904-680-6406 or lsamuels@mandarinpres.com. Space is limited, so sign up quickly!

Session dates and themes:

1. May 27-29 – Hakuna Matata Mindfulness and Meditation
2. June 3-5 – Castles, Dragons, and Fairy Tales
3. June 10-12 – Galaxy Explorers
4. June 17-19 – Moana's Luau
5. July 29-31 – Rascally Robots

J.O.Y. (Just Older Youth)



JOY FARMERS MARKET

Please join us in the LOBBY of the Church Campus on Thursday, April 10th, 11:30am

Join us for our April JOY luncheon followed by a visit to our mini farmers market. You never know what you might find....

The cost is \$7.00 per person. Please RSVP by Tuesday, April 8th at 904-680-9944.

MPC Men's Luncheon

The MPC Men's Fellowship Luncheon is held the second and fourth Wednesday of every month. We meet in the Fellowship Hall from noon until 1:15pm. We strive to have a guest speaker at one of the monthly meetings and have a discussion based on the previous Sunday's sermon at alternate meetings.

We have a lunch of sub sandwiches with the fixings on the side, along with potato salad, chips, drinks and dessert. The cost of lunch is \$8.00.

All men of our church and guests are invited to join us. Please consider joining us for fellowship, prayer, interesting guest speakers and discussion.

Please contact Randy Hester at 904-859-4996 or hesterrandy632@gmail.com or Wayne Gaff at 904-318-0002 or w.gaff@comcast.net with any questions.

Great Banquet



If April showers bring May flowers, what do Mayflowers bring? Pilgrims! This classic joke has stood the test of time! Speaking of something that never gets old, the Great Banquet, a 72-hour weekend retreat designed for guests to come together to eat, laugh, sing, pray, and grow deeper in their faith as they explore Jesus, is coming up in April. We are hosting Great Banquet weekends #66 and #67 this month: from April 3-6 for women and April 24-27 for men. That's a tremendous amount of grace and love being shared!

Join us for this wonderful experience by visiting nefgb.com or contact Jeff Arnold at jeffarnold@mandarinpres.com.

Mark Your Calendars



Experience the transformative power of the Great Banquet—an immersive 72-hour spiritual retreat. Go to nefgb.com for all the Great Banquet details for the upcoming Women's (April 3-6) & Men's (April 24-27) weekends.



Join the annual J1:9 Ministries Shrimp Boil on April 12th, starting at 4pm! Enjoy an evening filled with live music, delicious food, refreshing drinks and plenty of excitement! All proceeds will benefit partners in Central America who are sharing the Gospel. Visit j19ministries.org for more details.



Save the date for our annual Eggstravaganza event! Bring the family to enjoy an afternoon of egg hunts, inflatable obstacle courses, pony rides, a petting zoo, crafts, snacks and more! For more information about this event, visit mandarinpres.com/eggstravaganza.



Share in the beautiful Easter tradition of dedicating an Easter Lily in memory or honor of loved ones. These beautiful flowers will be displayed in the Sanctuary on Easter Sunday with your dedication in the bulletin. To order your Easter Lily, go to mandarinpres.com/easter - order by April 13th!



Join us for a unique worship experience that will allow you to connect with Christ's sacrifice in an intimate way. We will have a separate event for children in grades 1-5, and nursery care will be available for children in kindergarten or younger. For more details, go to mandarinpres.com/easter.



Join us as we celebrate the joy and hope of Easter! All are welcome – bring family and friends to share in this meaningful celebration of hope and new beginnings. We will have three services: 6:30am, 9am and 10:30am. For all the details, visit: mandarinpres.com/easter.

Event Recap: March

Women's Ministry: Grab & Gab



The Women's Ministry hosted Grab and Gab with the Grounds of Grace coffee bus on March 2nd. It was a wonderful time to slow down, sip and connect! The women of MPC enjoyed meaningful conversations over delicious coffee and collected much-needed items for MPC's Daily Bread Food Pantry, supporting local families in need. It was a great time for fellowship, good coffee and a chance to give back!

Music Ministry/Tech Team Appreciation Lunch



On March 23rd, we hosted a special lunch to thank our Music Ministry & Tech teams. We are thankful for all the talented individuals who create beautiful worship week after week!

Serve the City



Thank you to our amazing 200+ volunteers who made our 2nd Annual Serve the City event incredible! From organizing groceries and packing meals to community clean-ups, creating care packages, and praying for our community, you showed what it means to love and serve our neighbors. Your hands and hearts made a real difference in our city!

Just a note from the Session



(Left to right)

Front Row: Curt Etheridge, Tami Shepler, Rev. Jenn Arnold, Danielle Caplin, Rev. Dr. Andrew Stepp

Middle Row: Frank Talbot, Carol Yelinek, Rosa Heard, Kim Harris, Penny Kievet, Chris Davis

Back Row: Rev. Jeff Arnold, Matt Balanky, Hawley Smith III, Bob Gillander

March Session Update

Our 2nd annual Serve the City Day on March 8th was a blessing as we served God and our community. MPC volunteers helped with various projects across our community. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who served, prayed and supported our teams in the field.

Easter at MPC begins with Eggstravaganza on Sunday, April 13th. This community-wide celebration features egg hunts, pony rides, crafts, food and fun. We encourage you to invite your friends and neighbors to join you. Our Maundy Thursday service will be held on April 17th, offering a reflective time to connect with Christ's sacrifice. Easter Sunday, April 20th, will include three services: a sunrise service at 6:30am, traditional service at 9:00am and contemporary service at 10:30am. Complete information on all Easter activities is on our website at mandarinpres.com/easter.

Don't forget that it's mulch time for our High School ministry. You can help by purchasing mulch, delivering mulch (no truck needed), as well as spreading mulch. All the details are on our website at mandarinpres.com/mulch.

The Kids Ministry is seeking volunteers for our summer camp opportunities: SCAMP, K-Kamp and WinShape. There is no better way to serve God than through nurturing our youngest disciples. Imagine the difference you can make in a young life. As Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these" (Matthew 19:14, NIV). You can sign up to volunteer on the Kids Ministry page of our MPC website or by contacting Pastor Wendy Greer directly at wgreer@mandarinpres.com.

Our core values continue to drive all that we do: Jesus First, Every Generation, Deep-Spirited Community, Courageous Faith, and Whole-Life Generosity. The Session invites you to join us in prayer during this Lenten season as we remember God's love poured out through Jesus Christ—in His death on the cross and in the hope we receive through His resurrection.

We're Hiring

We are looking for adults (18 and older) with childcare experience to work on our Sunday morning nursery team. This position includes implementing curriculum, communicating with parents and caring for children 0-2 years old. For more information, please contact Wendy Greer at wgreer@mandarinpres.com. Please share with anyone that may be interested!

Office Campus
11844 Mandarin Rd.
Jacksonville, FL 32223
904-680-9944
info@mandarinpres.com

Church Campus
2501 Loretto Rd.
Jacksonville, FL 32223



mandarinpres.com



@mandarinpres



@mandarinpres



@mandarinpresbyterianchurch