

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

April 2024



ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

- Upcoming Events
 - Plan for Your Future
 - Mission Spotlight
 - Events Recap
-

Featured Events

April 13th - Serve the City

April 25th - Plan It Forward

April 28th - New Sermon Series

May 4th - Daddy/Daughter Dance

Middle School Mission Trip



Over the March 15th weekend, a group of thirteen middle school students and five leaders traveled to Orlando to work with Serve Orlando and minister to various ministry organizations in the area.

On Friday, the group volunteered at two different locations. They visited Clean the World and were impressed by the soap museum and the history of soap sales and advertising. After that, they learned about the Wash Foundation and their mission to reduce hotel soap waste by recycling unused and wasted soap and distributing it to third-world countries. Their task was to pack new bars of soap into boxes, tape them up, and prepare them for shipment. They managed to pack a total of 18,500 bars of soap!

In between, they enjoyed the fresh air in a local park. At Straight Street, the students helped with the daily dinners served to downtown Orlando's homeless and poverty-stricken areas. They served water, provided utensils and napkins, and served fresh, hot meals to over 175 people. The students had great conversations and gave kind words of encouragement to everyone they spoke to.

On Saturday, the group served 2 locations. Each student continued to work hard and be the light of Christ to everyone they encountered!

Mission Trip Cont'd



They began Saturday at Orlando Children's Church at First Baptist Maitland. Here, students played games like soccer, basketball, jump rope, etc., with over seven busloads of students. After outdoor time, they went inside for coloring, Bible story time, and small groups led by pairs of our students! After the kids left, the students enjoyed lunch together in a big group and a fun break before heading to their next destination. Their second stop was the Christian Service Center, where they were given a list of tasks, from cleaning to organizing a kitchen and its walk-in, and many other needs around the facility. As a team, they divided and conquered. Once a job was finished, everyone helped anyone else around them who might have needed it.

On Sunday, the group started at First Baptist of Orlando, where they were taught that Jesus is the True Vine. Without Him, we can do nothing, but if we abide in Him, we can be a part of the great things God has planned.

After that, they headed back to the Christian Service Center, where they worked with SALT (Serving And Loving Others). They helped with the weekend laundry and shower trailers, handed out free clothes, and sorted donations of hygiene products for the homeless community. The night ended with a surprise trip to Congo River Mini Golf and Dairy Queen!

Finally, on Monday, the group served at the only homeless shelter for Seminole County Rescue Outreach Missions. They made bagged lunches and served them to all the clients of Rescue Outreach Missions.

God was at work during this entire trip. Students were left with a new perspective on the blessings God has given them, but they also know that mission work isn't done just on our weekends but involves serving others and putting others' needs before their own every day.

We hope to have many more of these trips to come!

Upcoming Classes



Join us for Overcome, an 8-week series designed for anyone experiencing mental or emotional health challenges or supporting a loved one with the same. Under the guidance of trained facilitators, group members meet in a small group setting that emphasizes safety and respect while building relationships and exploring Biblical truths about hope in the midst of suffering.

The next session is April 2nd - May 21st. Register at [Mandarinpres.com/overcome](https://mandarinpres.com/overcome).

For any questions, contact Stephen Monks at steefen77@hotmail.com or 904-269-7360.

DISCOVERY Classes



For those interested in learning more about our mission and becoming members of MPC.

Visit our website at mandarinpres.com/discoveryclass

Join our Discovery Classes on April 28th and May 5th. Visit mandarinpres.com/discoveryclass for details.

Plan for Your Future



Plan it Forward

INVESTING FOR YOUR FUTURE & LEGACY

Thursday, April 25th (6:00 - 7:30pm)
mandarinpres.com/planitforward

MPC invites you to "Plan it Forward" - an informative evening designed to help you invest wisely in your future and create a lasting legacy.

Join us for an evening of sharing best practices. Listen to fellow MPC members share their experiences and expertise on:

- Estate Planning
- Assisted Living Planning
- Memorial/Funeral Planning
- Church Financial Structure
- Donor-Advised Funds

Gain valuable insights from industry experts! Register at mandarinpres.com/planitforward.

MPP Summer Camps!

Mandarin Presbyterian Preschool will be holding preschool summer camp for 3, 4, and 5 year olds for five weeks this summer. Registration has started and spots will fill quickly! If you are interested and need more information, call Lee Samuels at the preschool office at 904-680-6406.

For the 2024-2025 school year, we have a few remaining spots in our threes program. All other classes are waitlisted. We'd be happy to talk with you if you want to hear more about our amazing preschool program!

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Praise God for All of Our Blessings

2024 Financial Update

	CONTRIBUTIONS	EXPENSES	NET INCOME/LOSS
February 2024	\$329,207	\$204,060	\$125,147
Year-to-Date	\$602,124	\$409,775	\$192,349

Thank you for your faithful giving to MPC!

High School Scholarship Fund



In 1994, an endowment fund was established through a generous donation from an MPC covenant partner. This fund was to be used to provide an annual scholarship to a deserving High School Senior, who is a member of MPC. The first award was made in 1995; at least one scholarship has been awarded every year since.

Some may not be aware that additional donations can be deposited into the fund, which can increase the annual scholarship amount that can be awarded.

If anyone is interested, or feels led, to donate and help increase this endowment fund (and the resulting annual amount given to the award recipients), you can do so at any time! Simply select High School Scholarship Fund via the MPC website or the Church Center app (the "Giving" tab dropdown will have an option for the High School Scholarship Fund), or donate via check or other any other asset (stocks, bonds, etc.).

Thank you for your consideration, and for supporting our very talented youth in their future endeavors through this amazing annual award!

Respectfully, MPC Trustees

**J.O.Y.
(Just Older Youth)**



Join our April Luncheon
on Thursday, April 11th
at 11:30am Tee Time
in the Clubhouse (Fellowship Hall).

We'll kick off the Masters...JOY-Style,
So Get Ready to Parrrtee!

Cost is \$7.00 per person
Please RSVP by April 9th
Contact us at 904-680-9944

serve the city

April 13, 2024



Get ready to make a difference! Our first Serve the City day is just around the corner!

We have a variety of volunteer opportunities lined up, including meal packing for Mission of Hope, mulch delivery & spreading, CRM Thrift Shop, gardening, HabiJax welcome baskets and lots more. There's something for everyone! We're excited to serve our community and spread some joy.

Go to mandarinpres.com/servethecity to sign up!



Life can be like drinking saltwater. Or eating cotton candy. The one just makes us more thirsty; the other is fun for a bit but results in an energy crash. Got a thirst for more out of life? Have a hunger for more of Jesus? The Great Banquet has you covered! The Great Banquet is a 72-hour weekend getaway to explore Jesus and grow deeper in your faith as guests eat, laugh, sing, pray and learn together.

Visit nefgb.com or contact Jeff Arnold
at jeffarnold@mandarinpres.com for more information.

Upcoming Great Banquet Dates:

Women's weekend: April 4th-7th

Men's weekend: April 18th-21st

Mark Your Calendar



J1:9
SHRIMP BOIL 2024

←→

● APRIL 13, 2024
4:00 PM SOCIAL HOUR
6:10PM DINNER SERVED

Live music, great food, sink the boat contest, auctions, raffles AND MORE!

 **INDIVIDUAL: \$50**
10 GUESTS: \$500

1136 FRUIT COVE ROAD, ST JOHNS, FL 32259.
FOR MORE INFO CONTACT:
WEBSITE: J19MINISTRIES.ORG | (904) 710-1834



JOIN US FOR

**Splish Splash
Daddy/Daughter
Dance Bash**

MPC DADDY DAUGHTER DANCE
SATURDAY, MAY 4TH
6:00 - 8:00PM
MPC COURTYARD
\$35 PER DADDY/DAUGHTER
\$15 FOR ADDITIONAL DAUGHTER(S)
RSVP: MANDARINPRES.COM/DANCE
**IN THE EVENT OF RAIN, DANCE WILL BE
HELD IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL**

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 (904-859-4996/hesterrandy632@gmail.com) or Wayne Gaff (904-318-0002/w.gaff@comcast.net), with any questions.

Mission Spotlight: Barnabas International

Mandarin Presbyterian Church supports a variety of missions around the world and locally. The focus this month is Barnabas International and the ministry of MPC's Paul and Maribeth Niager.

Paul and Maribeth Niager have been working in the field of membercare for missionaries for 29 years. Membercare involves providing intentional encouragement to missionaries to help them stay committed to their mission. For the past 25 years, they have been with an organization called Barnabas International, a ministry of encouragement, enrichment and edification to missionaries worldwide.

The Niagers live in Jacksonville, Florida, are members of Mandarin Presbyterian Church and have two adult daughters, Natalie and Valerie. While their base is in Florida, they have a global focus, serving missionaries worldwide.

Paul and Maribeth travel to different countries, meeting missionaries on their turf and providing them a safe place to share their experiences. They understand that missionary life can be challenging, and they offer validation, support, and guidance to help them through their struggles. Sadly, statistics reveal that only one in three missionaries return to the field after their first term.

The Niagers also work with local churches to support missionaries with whom they have partnerships. Missionaries often visit them in Jacksonville for a few days to debrief the realities of their lives on and off the field. Additionally, Paul and Maribeth conduct workshops on interpersonal skills for missionaries, as it is the number one stressor for missionaries.

Both the Niagers have Masters of Arts in Biblical Counseling under the teaching of Dr. Larry Crabb and Dr. Dan Allender. That training, in addition to ten years in a private counseling practice, continues to be invaluable in their opportunity to sit with missionaries from around the globe.

Romans 12:15 is a defining verse for them. "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." Pray Paul and Maribeth would have a humility that invites global workers to feel safe speaking of their heartfelt concerns.

Finally, the Niagers are humbled by the diverse ways MPC has embraced their ministry of supporting those on the frontlines of missions.

Paul and Maribeth at a retreat for leaders to have space to unpack all they carry in guiding their mission organizations.

For more information on Barnabas International, please visit www.barnabas.org.



MPC Next Gen Ministry

JOIN OUR TEAM

We Are Hiring!



Kids Ministry Assistant: This 20-hour/week position provides support for our Kids Ministry. The job includes preparing curriculum, weekly updating of database, website, and social media, communication with parents, and Sunday morning support. Contact Wendy Greer at wgreer@mandarinpres.com.

Sunday Morning Nursery Team: 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. Contact Wendy Greer at wgreer@mandarinpres.com for details.

Next Gen Summer Intern: Are you able to bring energy and enthusiasm wherever you are? Do you like a challenge? Do you want to have a purposeful summer where you grow in your faith and impact our community for Jesus? If so, go to mandarinpres.com/jobs for more details about joining our team of interns.

MPC Kids Camps



It's going to be an exciting summer! Summer Camps at MPC are open for registration!

For Kids Camps, go to mandarinpres.com/kidsevents to register. For any questions, contact Wendy Greer at wgreer@mandarinpres.com.

- K-Kamp: June 9-13
- SCAMP: June 24-28 (waitlist available)
- WinShape: July 15-19

For our Middle School Camp, go to mandarinpres.com/msevents to register. For any questions, contact Jen Loehle at jloehle@mandarinpres.com

- Southwind: July 16-21

Call for Volunteers! If you are a member of the congregation and available to help with mulch deliveries, please sign up at mandarinpres.com/servethecity

MULCH 4 MISSIONS

March Events Recap



March was a wonderful month at MPC! First, we would like to thank everyone who attended our Workday event on March 2nd. A small but dedicated group of volunteers filled a 30-yard dumpster with trimmings as we pruned crape myrtles and improved the hedge along Loretto Road and County Dock. We would also like to give a special shoutout to the MUGS volunteers who came out on Friday, March 1st, to double our effort. We are glad to restart this event that the church held in prior years, and we look forward to the next one!

The Chicks & Eggs Women's Ministry Breakfast on March 9th was a delightful morning filled with fellowship, food and spiritual nourishment. Cindy Althouse guided us in worship and Wendy Greer delivered an enlightening message. Wendy focused on Matthew 11:28-30 and encouraged us to understand who Jesus is, spend meaningful time in His presence, and lay our burdens at His feet. We hope that all in attendance walked forward with renewed faith, knowing that in Him, we find rest for our souls.

Lastly, we had a blast at our annual Eggstravaganza event on March 24th! It was a blessing to see the kids enjoy the inflatable obstacle courses, pony rides, petting zoo, guessing games and egg hunts. We can't forget to mention the snow cones, cotton candy and cookies! Thanks to all of our volunteers who make this event a success year after year!

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

While the Session did not meet in March, we continued praying for our church, community and world.

March was a very busy time for our MPC family. Our Middle School students traveled to Orlando on their very first mission trip over their break from school to volunteer with Serve Orlando. This small but mighty group showed the love of Jesus everywhere they went. Mulch for Missions is in full 'bloom' as outdoor spring cleaning begins.

Our annual community Eggstravaganza was an 'eggcellent' event. Many of our church members volunteered their time to ensure our guests had a great time. If you go by the number of cookies decorated and the lines for cotton candy and snow-cones, it was one of our most well-attended events!

We kicked off our Serve the City initiative in March. On April 13th, MPC will have a day where our MPC family is volunteering at many different organizations and missions around Jacksonville. There are activities where even our youngest disciples can participate. If you're not available to serve or are physically unable to serve, you can be in prayer for those in the community serving. You can sign up on Sunday mornings after each service or go to the MPC website for more information.

Holy Week is always a special time at MPC. Palm Sunday was our Family Day of Worship, where all worshippers had time to pray specifically for their relationship with Jesus, their family, their church, our city and many other areas. Maundy Thursday is our reflective service as we remember the suffering that Jesus took upon Himself so that we would not be punished for our sins. And Easter, the best day of the year! Because He lives, we have hope for life eternal.

We want to hear from you! At any time when you may have a question or just want to say hello, you can reach out to us individually or you can email the Session at elders@mandarinpres.com.

"This is how God showed His love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love; not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (1 John 4:9-11)

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