

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

**November 2023**



## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

- Middle School Ministry Weekend
- MPP Registration 2024-2025
- Stewardship 2024
- Advent/Christmas 2023
- Upcoming Events



Middle School Ministry after the annual “Messy Games” competition at the Hang 10 October Weekend.

## Middle School Ministry Hang 10 “Wilderness” Weekend

On the second weekend of October, around 90 middle schoolers, leaders, and work crew went to North Florida Christian Camp for a fun-filled weekend. The weekend was packed with activities such as games, campfires, singing, and small group activities, all themed around Wilderness. The Middle School Hang 10 program's 6th, 7th, and 8th grade groups had an amazing time getting to know each other better. Additionally, the leaders had the opportunity to invest more in their small groups.

Buses arrived on Friday evening, and the weekend commenced with worship, games, and a short message by Shane Padgett. Shane is the Family and Next Gen Pastor at Warren Baptist Church in Augusta, Georgia.

On Saturday, the kids were invited to spend alone time with God and watch the sunrise over the lake.



**Congregational Meeting**  
**Sunday, November 12th**  
**10:00 am**  
**Between Services**

We will be electing Elders, Deacons, Trustees and the next Nominating Committee for the 2024 year.



MPC will be ringing the Salvation Army bells at the Mandarin Oaks Publix from Dec. 9th to Dec. 20th. You may sign up in the Church Lobby beginning November 12th or by scanning the QR code.

## Hang 10 Weekend Continued



During Saturday, groups of campers gathered in small numbers for devotion time together. Afterwards, they participated in outdoor "messy games" and team races, and then enjoyed various activities by the lake such as kayaking, paddleboarding, the blob, swimming, and slip-n-slide.

Following dinner with their small groups, everyone gathered again for evening worship, games, and a message from Shane. The evening ended with worship songs around the campfire and talks from High School Leaders Kaitlynn Ellis, Lily Perlmutter, and Drew Ade.

Sunday morning marked the end of the camp activities with a final set of worship and devotion led by Shane. The kids then boarded the buses and arrived back at the Loretto Road Campus just as the second service ended. A big thank you to all the volunteers who generously gave their time and talents to make this weekend unforgettable!

It was a huge success!



Join us as MPC continues to study the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew 5-7, one of the most famous passages in the Bible. Jesus delivers this sermon early in His career and sets the stage for how His ministry will unfold and how He will want His followers to live. It is a sermon that truly comforts the afflicted and afflicts the comfortable. Join us as we continue to study this powerful message together this fall.



## STEWARDSHIP 2024

As we enter Stewardship season, we are reminded that when we let our light shine, we make a kingdom impact. And when we put our gifts to good use, we fulfill the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19 of making disciples of all nations.

Part of our commitment to faith is through our financial giving. We hope that you'll be moved to pledge your commitment to our church for the coming year. Your generosity enables MPC to worship together, teach children how to follow Jesus, and care for people in the community and across the world.

We cannot express how much your commitment means to MPC, as we continue to journey forward into the coming year. Starting November 1st, you can offer your pledge on our website or complete a pledge card available at the Sanctuary Information Booth in the Church Lobby or our Mandarin Road Office. Pledge cards will also be mailed to all members and regular guests.

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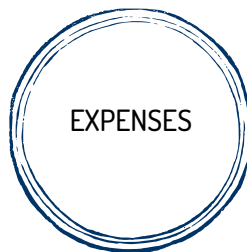
## September Financial Report

Thank you for your faithful giving to MPC!



September  
9/1-9/30

\$161,038



September  
9/1-9/30

\$224,680



September  
9/1-9/30

(\$63,642)

YEAR TO DATE  
1/1-9/30

\$1,618,709

YEAR TO DATE  
1/1-9/30

\$1,781,558

YEAR TO DATE  
1/1-9/30

(\$162,849)



## We're Hiring!



### Event Childcare

This part-time position covers childcare needs on weekdays, evenings, and weekends (outside of Sunday morning). Looking for people 16 years and older with childcare experience.

### Kids Ministry Assistant

Part-time position (15-20 hrs/week). Provides administrative support for our Kids Ministry. Includes curriculum, computer and social media support.

For job descriptions, contact Wendy Greer at [wgreer@mandarinpres.com](mailto:wgreer@mandarinpres.com).

Please share with anyone that may be interested!

## Get Involved!



Contact Amy Wilson at [amytravis1016@att.net](mailto:amytravis1016@att.net)



Contact Bill Vasko at [bvasko@mandarinpres.com](mailto:bvasko@mandarinpres.com)

## Mandarin Presbyterian Preschool

Mandarin Presbyterian Preschool will start registration for the 2024-2025 school year on November 1, 2023! Church members with children who will be two, three, or four can sign their child up for our amazing program.

Space is limited, so call early to reserve your child's spot. For more information, or to register, please call Lee Samuels at 680-6406.



**Mandarin  
Presbyterian  
Preschool**



Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse that collects and delivers shoebox gifts filled with fun toys, school supplies and personal care items to children in need around the world. MPC will be participating again this year. Pick up your shoebox Sunday morning. The last day to drop off filled shoeboxes is November 12th.

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## Meals on Wheels Ministry

Hello MPC Family! We wanted to update you on the Meals on Wheels ministry here at MPC.

As you may know, we have been serving up to 18 residents in the Mandarin area (32223 and 32257 zip codes) with a lunchtime meal Monday through Friday, at no cost to many of them. However, we recently faced a challenge when we were told that the cost of our meals from Westminster Woods retirement community would increase by 270% in September, which forced the ministry to seek alternatives for our clients.

After much consideration and several meetings, we have now partnered with Aging True, a federally funded non-profit that supports Meals on Wheels programs in Duval and Clay Counties.

Aging True has assessed all of our clients and our current cost share for meals is zero dollars. This gives us the flexibility to fund short term needs or provide holiday meals, something Aging True does not do.

This new partnership has been a huge blessing. Aging True also provides many senior assistance programs we've struggled to find services for such as financial, mental health and other needs.

They are an answer to prayer in many ways.





Join us December 9th from 11am - 2pm for food, fellowship, entertainment and a silent auction! Cost to attend is \$10 and childcare is available to those who pre-register by December 4th! Register here: [mandarinpres.com/womensministry](http://mandarinpres.com/womensministry) or visit the church center app.

Calling all the ladies! We invite you to visit the Women's Ministry webpage on the church website, [www.mandarinpres.com](http://www.mandarinpres.com). Here, you will find "Save the Date" notices for our upcoming events, giving you ample time to mark your calendars and prepare in advance.

There is even a current opportunity to book your hotel room for the retreat in 2024!



Don't miss this family event with pancakes, Christmas crafts, photo booth and Advent activities...all while wearing your pajamas!

Join us on Sunday, December 3rd in the Fellowship Hall on the Mandarin Campus at one of the two seating times: 4:30pm or 5:30pm.

There is no cost, but registration is required. Register online on [mandarinpres.com/events](http://mandarinpres.com/events) or the Church Center App.

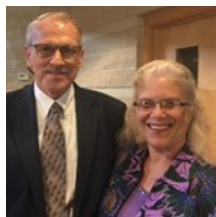


Please join us for our November JOY luncheon, as we celebrate Friendsgiving on Thursday, November 9th at 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall. Cost is \$7.00 per person and RSVP's are due by November 7th by calling the church office at 680-9944. We are still collecting recipes for the "Friendsgiving Cookbook" from anyone that would still like to participate. Recipe books will be distributed at the November 9th event.

See you there, Sweet Friends!



## Mission Spotlight



Ron and Doris Weeks are missionaries with Redemption Works International (RWI). They are currently based in Mbandaka, Democratic Republic of Congo where the Equator intersects the Congo River. They work primarily with the congregations of remote, rural churches along the Congo River and its tributaries. Travel between churches often involves lengthy trips by dugout canoe.

RWI has three primary areas of ministry: Audio Bible distribution via The Proclaimer, Farming God's Way, and English Instruction.

The Proclaimer is a solar-powered audio New Testament that is provided in a variety of local languages and is given to those who can't read and to church workers, who organize listening groups.

Farming God's way is a tool that combines Biblical, Technological, and Management principles to empower the less fortunate to help themselves. RWI teaches Biblical stewardship of the land and faithful use of the limited resources. Farming God's Way leads to increased crop yields, which enables farmers to better feed their families and often results in excess produce that can be sold to provide much needed income.

Ron and Doris also provide English instruction in the area they serve. MPC is blessed to support Ron and Doris Weeks of Redemption Works International. [Watch Video Here!](#)

## Men's Ministry

### Huddle Up! Guy Time

Monday, November 13th at V's Pizza Mandarin, 6:30-8:30pm

For All Guys - Invite a friend - Come when you can - Leave when you have to  
**Huddle Up Overtime!** – hang out longer if you want to watch Monday Night Football: Bills vs Broncos

### Men's Tuesday Bible Studies

6:00-7:30pm in Room 9 on the Loretto Road Campus

Led by Rodney Bias ~ 904.236.2221  
and Matt Minota ~ 904.872.4159  
Childcare available

7:00am at Cracker Barrel in Orange Park  
Led by George Currie ~ 904.716.2286

### College and Career Men's Discipleship

2nd and 4th Thursday each month at the home of Garrett Rigby

Led by Garrett Rigby ~ 904.312.4297  
and James Garrow ~ 904.440.3880



### MINISTRY TEAM

Chris Davis | 904.382.0771 | Head Coach  
Bob Graumann | 860.573.5195 | Head Coach  
Mike Kash | 704.654.5258 | Connection Captain  
Garrett Rigby | 904.312.4297 | College & Career Captain  
Doug Straatsma | 904.525.0180 | M.U.G.S. Captain

**Receive Ministry Notifications via WhatsApp**  
"MPC Men's Ministry" ~ Text Mike Kash to sign up

**Operation Christmas Child** - The last day to drop off filled shoeboxes is November 12th.

**Pancakes & Pajamas** - Unpack your Christmas jammies and select one of the two seating times (4:30 or 5:30 pm). It will be a night full of syrup, sprinkles, pancakes and fun on December 3rd in the Fellowship Hall on the Mandarin Campus! Kick off the season of Advent with your family in a fun and meaningful way! This event is free but requires pre-registration on our website or the Church Center app.

**Poinsettias** - We are offering an opportunity to give poinsettias in memory or honor of loved ones. They will be displayed in the church Christmas Eve. Place your order online at [mandarinpres.com/poinsettia](http://mandarinpres.com/poinsettia) or with the church bulletin insert. Plants are \$10 each. The deadline to order is Sunday, December 17th.

**Salvation Army Bell Ringing** - MPC will be ringing the Salvation Army bells at the Publix at Mandarin Oaks (corner of San Jose Blvd. and Mandarin Road.) Dates begin Saturday, December 9th and go through Wednesday, December 20th. You can sign up in the Sanctuary lobby on Sundays or scan the bar code on the first page.

**Alternative Gift Market** - You have the opportunity to join our congregation in supporting a number of missions both local and abroad. Purchase meals for a day for a local family, or chickens & goats through World Vision, or even send a child to a Young Life Camp; the possibilities are endless. AGM will be available on Sundays, December 3rd, 10th and 17th.

**Annual Christmas Music Celebration** - Come enjoy an evening of music and scripture at 7:00pm in the Sanctuary on Sunday, December 10th. Hear the Christmas story with special music by the Sanctuary Choir, Concert Band and Handbells!

**Angel Tree Project** - Every child deserves to experience the joy of Christmas morning. The Angel Tree program helps to make that happen. Angel Tree tags (wish lists) will be available for pick up from the Angel Tree in the Sanctuary lobby on November 12th and 19th. All items need to be returned to church by Sunday, November 26th. Your participation can make a difference in a child's life this Christmas. Thank you for considering being a part of this wonderful program.

**Blue Christmas Service** - Blue Christmas is a gentle, contemplative service for those who are carrying pain or loss during this season of celebration. The Blue Christmas service is Thursday, December 21st at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall on the Mandarin Road Campus. Childcare is available with RSVP to [wgreer@mandarinpres.com](mailto:wgreer@mandarinpres.com).

#### **Sunday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Services**

- 10:00am - Combined Morning Service, music by Worship Team (identical to 7pm service later that night)
- 4:30pm - Family and Children's Celebration with live Nativity
- 7:00pm - Candlelight Christmas Message, music by Worship Team
- 9:00pm - Candlelight & Communion Christmas Message, music by Sanctuary Choir & Concert Band
- Please note activity bags will be provided for kids during the 10:00am and 7:00pm services. Childcare will be provided for kindergarten and younger children.

**Monday, December 25** - The church will not gather on Christmas Day.

**Sunday, December 31** - Combined Morning Service at 10:00am



## Just a note from the Session

Here are a few key notes from the October Session meeting.

MPC welcomed 23 new Covenant Partners in October. Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered in My name, there am I among them." Jesus is surely at MPC!

Lots of amazing things are happening at MPC this fall! We are looking forward to the Legacy Grandparenting Summit, our Fall Fest on the River and welcoming Pastor Peter Kasirivu, Senior Pastor at Gaba Community Church and President of Africa Renewal Ministries in Uganda, as well as a long-time friend of Pastor Stepp. He will be speaking at both services on October 29th and he will preach on the Sermon on the Mount. All are invited to join Pastor Kasirivu and Pastor Stepp in our very first Global Church Forum on Monday, October 30th. We will hear what God is doing in Africa. You can register on the MPC website or the Church Center App.

There will be a congregational meeting between services on November 12th. At that time, we will be electing Elders, Deacons, Trustees and the next Nominating Committee for the 2024 year.

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](mailto:elders@mandarinpres.com).

We continue to pray for our church, our community and our world! We serve a mighty God!



(Left to right)

Front Row: Carol Yelinek, Rev. Dr. Andrew Stepp, Chris Davis, Danielle Caplin

Middle Row: Bob Graumann, Kim Harris, Curt Etheridge, Joan Pooley

Back Row: Craig Henderson, Rosa Heard, Matt Balanky, Rev. Jenn Arnold, Rev. Jeff Arnold  
(not pictured): Hawley Smith III and Tami Shepler

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

The Mandarin Road Campus doors have been re-keyed. If access to the building is essential to your ministry, please get in touch with  
Carla Mayo:  
[cmayo@mandarinpres.com](mailto:cmayo@mandarinpres.com)

*Thank You*

Church Office  
11844 Mandarin Rd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32223

Sanctuary Address  
2501 Loretto Rd.  
Jacksonville, FL 32223

Contact Us:  
904.680.9944  
[info@mandarinpres.com](mailto:info@mandarinpres.com)

[mandarinpres.com](http://mandarinpres.com)