

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

February 2024



ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

- Upcoming Events
 - Support Classes
 - Table for 8 Dinner Group
 - Mission Spotlight
 - Events Recap
-



Current Sermon Series

God's Word is filled with epic stories, perplexing characters, and miraculous moments, all connected, telling the story of our amazing God! Join us from now through April as we look at different passages from the breadth of Scripture - Genesis to Revelation - to behold the unfolding revelation of God's character and his love for humanity that flows from cover to cover.



Join us for this special service
February 14th, 7:00PM
In the Sanctuary

Upcoming Event Highlights

February 14th - Ash Wednesday Service
February 15th - Unwrapped: A Bible Presentation Event for 3rd-5th Graders
February 24th - Iron Sharpens Iron Men's Equipping Conference
March 2nd - Church Grounds Work Day
March 24th - Eggstravaganza with egg hunts, games, crafts, food and fun!
March 28th - Maundy Thursday Service
March 31st - Easter - A Day of Celebration and Renewal

For more information and details, visit mandarinpres.com or the Church Center app.

Upcoming Support Classes

GriefShare

GriefShare is a friendly, caring group of people who will walk alongside you through one of life's most difficult experiences. GriefShare is for people grieving the loss of a family member or friend.

Our next GriefShare class will begin on February 21, 2024 and run through May 15, 2024. Classes are 6:00pm to 8:00pm, Wednesdays in Classroom #6 on the Loretto Road Campus.

LOSS OF A SPOUSE™

Loss of a Spouse helps men and women grapple with the challenges of losing a spouse. This two hour seminar features an inspiring video that's filled with moving stories, practical advice and a variety of perspectives on spousal loss. After the video, you'll have the opportunity to discuss what you learned with other participants. You'll discover that you're not alone in your grief.

Our next Loss of a Spouse Class will be on February 10, 2024, from 10:00am to Noon in the Chapel on the Mandarin Road Campus.

To learn more or to register for the above, visit griefshare.org or contact Carla Mayo at cmayo@mandarinpres.com.

Anchor Support Group

Anchor groups are open, ongoing support groups for individuals affected by mental health challenges and/or their supporters. Led by trained facilitators, Anchor groups provide an opportunity for people to find safe community, encourage one another in their walks of faith, and pursue mental wellness. Meetings are on Tuesday evenings. For more details, contact Stephen Monks at steefen77@hotmail.com or 904.269.7360.

MPC Dinner Group



Table for 8 is a great way to meet new people at MPC. We will form groups of 8 people who meet monthly to share a meal and get to know one another. Someone will host the dinner and provide the main course. Others will bring a side, a salad, dessert, etc.

Hosting will be shared within the group. You can even co-host with someone.

Every three months, you'll have a chance to switch to another Table for 8 dinner group and meet even more people! What a fun way to connect with others!

If you have any questions, please get in touch with Iris Cruice at viriswood@bellsouth.net. You can sign up on the Church Center app.

MPP Registration

Mandarin Presbyterian Preschool has a few spots left in our three-year-old program for the 2024-2025 school year. Our 2024-2025 VPK and two-year-old classes are full, but we are accepting names for the wait lists. We will begin registration for our Preschool Summer Fun at MPP program in mid-February. For more information, please call Lee Samuels at 680-6406.

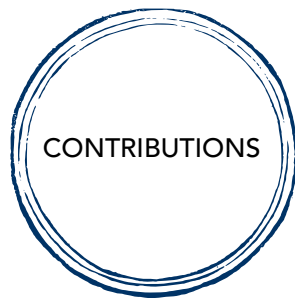
FINANCIAL UPDATE

Praise God for All of Our Blessings

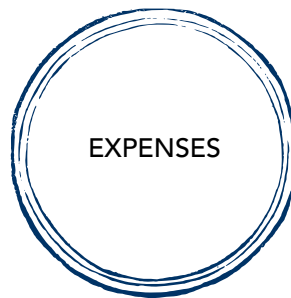
2023 Year-End Update

Psalm 119:90

Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures.



\$2,718,395



\$2,472,988



\$245,407

Thank you for your faithful giving to MPC!

2024

BUDGET:	\$2,825,677
YEAR-TO-DATE PLEDGES:	\$1,817,596

Psalm 89:1

I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known your faithfulness to all generations.

J.O.Y. (Just Older Youth)



FEBRUARY JOY LUNCHEON

Join us for our JOY Luncheon on February 8th at 11:30am in the Fellowship Hall to celebrate National Chocolate Month!

RSVP by Feb. 6th at 904-680-9944.

Hope to see you there!

Save the Date

Mark your calendars! Our congregation is organizing a workday on Saturday, March 2nd, at the Loretto Road Campus, where we will focus on a Spring Clean-up.

We will start at 8:30am and finish at 11:00am. Please wear comfortable clothes that are suitable for working outside and wear closed-toe shoes for safety. Bring work gloves, bug spray, sunblock, and water to ensure your comfort.

Our primary focus will be trimming hedges, removing low branches overhanging the parking lot, trimming crepe myrtles, and cleaning planted beds. If you have loppers, pruners, and other yard-care tools, please bring them!



Great Banquet

Presidents Day. Leap Year Day. Valentine's Day. A plethora of opportunities for gift giving. What to give the one you love? The GREAT BANQUET'S got you covered. Give the gift of a weekend away. 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.

Upcoming Spring Weeekends

Women's weekend: April 4-7

Men's weekend: April 18-21.

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

Daily Bread Food Pantry Update

Into this new year, guest visitations to our Daily Bread Food Pantry and Clothes Closet remain vibrant after weekly guest visitations trended upwards throughout 2023. To recap: At year's end, our 75+ plus faithful volunteers have contributed to the weekly distribution of three grocery bags full of canned and packaged dry goods along with breads & pastries, fresh fruits & vegetables, and dairy products – occasionally some meat products!! Weekly distribution averaged just over 55 households (including >145 individuals) during 2023. Additionally, over 20 guests each week took advantage of various items from the Clothes Closet. We at MPC are genuinely blessed to be a blessing to those in our community who need food and clothing assistance.

	<i>Food</i>	<i>Clothing</i>
Total 2023 Food Pantry Distributions to Guests	2801 (up 18%)	823 (up 43%)

Congregation-wide steady food donations have stoked the Daily Bread Food Pantry (Ministry) fires for over ten years!

Rotary Club of Mandarin, BSA Troop 321, Stetson Kennedy Foundation, and numerous other groups and individuals have combined to contribute a steady flow of food, clothing, and monetary gifts to power Daily Bread Food Pantry operations.

We appreciate and are grateful for your prayers for this ministry and our guests as we continue stepping joyfully toward Jesus in support of our neighbors in need. God has indeed shown His light on this ministry. The love and support our covenant partners have consistently given since our first day has enabled us to be a consistent beacon and positive provisioner in our community.

Praises to all with blessings and gratitude,
Daily Bread Food Ministry (Pantry & Clothes Closet Volunteers)



MPC Meals on Wheels

Hello Church! It's been a minute since we've shared information with you about your Meals on Wheels ministry. It's been an eventful four months.

MPC supports a Meals on Wheels ministry that serves as many as 20 residents daily in the Mandarin area (32223 and 32257), for a lunchtime meal Monday through Friday. We currently serve 11 clients. The church has conducted this ministry for decades and purchased meals at a reasonable cost from Westminster Woods retirement community. In late August last year we learned our costs would increase 270 percent, which forced the ministry to seek alternatives. We found a fit in Aging True, a non-profit federally funded program to support the national Meals on Wheels ministry in Duval and Clay Counties. We transitioned to their food service and became a "drop site" October 1st.

We still use an army of volunteers to deliver the meals, a smile and some brief conversation in a routine that now takes less than two hours from start to finish. And yes, we are in need of a couple of new volunteer teams. Currently, the second Monday of every month is open. We begin the route at the MPC offices on Mandarin Road and most of our volunteers deliver just once a month. It's a great volunteer opportunity for retired couples. If you'd like to explore volunteering opportunities, please give the church office a call at 904-680-9944 and they will put you in contact with an MPC Meals on Wheels coordinator. Finally, please consider supporting this ministry with your prayers for our clients and the army of volunteers who serve them. Thank you.





JACKSONVILLE, FL
2.24.24

Iron Sharpens Iron Men's Conference is coming to MPC for its 8th year! Visit mandarinpres.com/isi for more details and registration.

For any questions or to connect, contact:
Chris Davis:
cpdavis1180@gmail.com - 904.382.0771
or Bob Graumann:
bob.graumann@ironsharpensiron.net - 860.573.5195



- March 9th: Chicks & Eggs, 9am-11am
- July 31st: Summer Soiree, 7pm-8:30pm
- October 5th: Burgers & Bunco, 11am-2pm
- December 7th: Jingle & Mingle, TBD

All dates/times subject to change
per church calendar

Find us at
mandarinpres.com/womensministry or on
Facebook at MPC Women's Ministry

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: J1:9 Ministries

*Mandarin Presbyterian Church supports a variety of missions around the world and locally.
The focus this month is J1:9 Ministries.*

In 2015, a group of Jesus followers started J1:9 Ministries Foundation, Inc.. The genesis of J1:9 was fueled by a deep passion for missions in Central America and locally in North Florida. Three times, God tells Joshua to be 'Strong and Courageous, do not be afraid or discouraged'...Joshua 1:9. In Isaiah 6:8-9, Isaiah tells God, 'Here I am...send me!' and God responds, 'Go!' J1:9 circles in prayer these scriptures - asking our Lord Savior for strength and courage to be comfortable being uncomfortable, to have humble and servant's hearts, and to go when God says, "Go!"

The beginning years of J1:9 were filled with numerous mission trips and construction projects. After several years, J1:9 began expanding throughout Central America, where today, there are J1:9 projects in Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and beginning in 2024, El Salvador. In North Florida, J1:9 has partnered with local Churches and nonprofit organizations on various projects.

J1:9 completed the first Pastor Training facility in San Miguel Chicaj, Guatemala. This facility trains local Mayan Indians to become Pastors and share the Gospel in Mayan Villages throughout the northern region of Guatemala. The El Salvador project will be similar and serve remote areas of El Salvador. J1:9 provides all the funds to complete these projects, including wages for the local workers who face a severe shortage of work.

Most people likely recognize J1:9 for its world-famous Shrimp Boil fundraising event! J1:9 is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that volunteers run with 100% of proceeds going to the Kingdom! Join us on April 13, 2024, at the Sullivan's (Pat and Beth) for an exciting evening! For more information, please visit J1:9 Ministries (j19ministries.org).



MPC Kids Ministry Event



Parents of 3rd - 5th graders, join us for dinner and a special service honoring your child which will culminate in the presenting of Bibles to each of them. Parents & older siblings are welcome to attend in support of the 3rd, 4th, & 5th graders attending. We ask that younger siblings wait until they are in 3rd grade to attend this faith formation milestone event for themselves. Go to mandarinpres.com/kidsevents or the Church Center app to register.

Mark Your Calendars

SAVE THE	KKAMP JUNE 9-13
SCAMP JUNE 24-28	DATES 
REGISTRATIONS OPEN 3.4.24	WINSHAPE JULY 15-19

Visit mandarinpres.com for the Spring 2024 Middle and High School Ministry Calendars.

January Event Highlights

Cover to Cover in 100 Days



God is doing something amazing at MPC! We have more than 600 participants embarking on our Cover to Cover in 100 days Bible Reading adventure! Join us as we pray for everyone on this spectacular journey.



Getaway with God & the Gals Women's Retreat



We are happy to report that we enjoyed another wonderful "Getaway with God and the Gals" retreat in Amelia Island! It was a rejuvenating experience featuring Laurie P. Short as a dynamic speaker, delving into the themes of faith, doubt and the mysterious timing of God. Margie Wilson and Robyn Zomorodian lead spiritually enriching, worship filled moments while Danielle Caplin, Cauleen Stepp, Jennifer O'Brien and Joan Lehmann made sure we had delightful and memorable entertainment! The time away gave us the opportunity to reflect, recharge and express gratitude for the moments spent in the company of God and this amazing group of women. Grateful for our time together to gather and grow in God's word! - Women's Ministry

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

We had an exciting Cover to Cover in 100 Days kickoff on January 23rd and 24th. We have more than 600 people registered to read the Bible with their Pastors and church. The Session will be specifically praying for each small group and the Pastors as we begin this journey to dig deeper into the Word of God.

Once again, MPC will be hosting Iron Sharpens Iron. This one-day conference is on February 24th and is for men 13 years of age and older who want to see their families, communities and lives changed for Christ! You can register through the MPC website.

Our Kids and Student Ministries are off to an excellent start this year. We cared for 64 children while their parents enjoyed 'Parents Night Out'. CRAVE had 101 students attend the first meeting of the new year. For the first time, we will have a Spring Mission trip for our Middle School students. God is doing great things in the lives of our Next Generation.

We want to hear from you! At any time when you 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.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:16-17)

Please join the Session as we continue to pray for our church, our community, our world.



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