

# MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



March 2023



Group of MPC Middle School 8th graders attending the Ash Wednesday Service on February 22.

## Summer Camps

MPC Kids Ministry is excited to announce three Summer Camp options for kids this year!

K-Kamp, SCAMP, and WinShape Camps will be offered during the summer. There is an option of an overnight camp and camps that will meet on our church campus.

You can check out details of each camp at [mandarinpres.com/kidsevents](http://mandarinpres.com/kidsevents). Camp registrations for all three open March 6!

**KIDS CAMPS @ MPC**  
**REGISTRATIONS OPEN 3.6.23**  
K-Kamp June 11-15  
SCAMP July 10-14  
WinShape July 31-Aug. 4  
Info @ [mandarinpres.com/kidsevents](http://mandarinpres.com/kidsevents)

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**MULCH 4 MISSIONS**  
Summer Mission Trips Fundraiser  
Support our missions teams this summer both local and abroad by purchasing your mulch with MPC!  
Order online at [mandarinpres.com/mulch](http://mandarinpres.com/mulch)

### Mulch Season Is Here

Support our missions teams this summer both local and abroad.

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# MPC MEALS ON WHEELS

Earl Bittner, Meals on Wheels Coordinator

Hello Church! I struggled this month to get a grip on what to say to you all about our Meals on Wheels ministry. We, like the Daily Bread Food Pantry, continue to see our numbers rise. We now serve 18 residents in the Mandarin area (32223 and 32257 zip codes) each day for a lunchtime meal Monday through Friday. And there doesn't appear to be a down turn in that need anytime soon.

As I enter my third year serving along side some of the most marvelous of volunteers for this ministry, I often find myself worrying about the dumbest things, aka finances. Even though our expenses for meals pale in comparison to what the Pantry spends each month, we still expend more than \$1000

each month, so there's that. God always provides and you, our wonderful congregation, always ensure we have enough, so I'll just try remember what Paul said in Philippians 4:6 and be anxious no more. Thanks for always providing.

One final note before I close. Please consider saying a prayer for our delivery volunteers from time to time. It takes roughly three hours to complete our tasks with Westminster and our clients each day and during those trips we encounter crazy drivers and, at times, some pretty heartbreaking circumstances with some of our clients. Thank you.

If you know of someone who may need our services or have any questions about MOW, call me at (904) 868-6067 or send an email to: rebittne@bellsouth.net or Van Hogan at (904) 631-8309 or email: vhogan@bellsouth.net. Thanks for your support to this ministry!

## Update from the Daily Bread Food Pantry

Guest visitation to the Food Pantry and Clothes Closet remains consistent. On average, we distribute approximately three grocery bags full of canned and packaged products, breads and pastries, fresh fruit and vegetables, and dairy products to 45 - 50 households per week (more than 120 individuals per week). Fifteen to twenty guests each week browse the Clothes Closet for clothes for work and play! We (MPC) are truly blessed to be a blessing to those in our community that need food and clothing assistance!

It may sound crazy, but one of our more pressing needs is paper grocery bags. If your shopping is packaged in paper sacks, save them and donate to us by placing in the marked Pantry bins at the Sanctuary or Church Offices.

Any and all canned and packaged goods are terrific food donations, along with gently worn outerwear clothing articles (no shoes or undergarments, please).

Lastly, we appreciate and are grateful for your prayers for this ministry and our guests as we near our 10-year anniversary. God has truly shown his light on this ministry, and the love and support our congregant partners have consistently given since our first day has enabled us to be a positive provisioner in our community. Praises!

*With Blessings, MPC Daily Bread Food Pantry Volunteers.*



## PRELIMINARY FEBRUARY FINANCIAL REPORT

Thank you for your faithful giving to MPC!

CONTRIBUTIONS

**FEBRUARY**  
**2/1 - 2/28**

\$178,265

**YEAR TO**  
**DATE**

**1/1 - 2/28**

\$389,710

EXPENSES

**FEBRUARY**  
**2/1 - 2/28**

\$169,266

**YEAR TO**  
**DATE**

**1/1 - 2/28**

\$338,238

NET INCOME/LOSS

**FEBRUARY**  
**2/1 - 2/28**

\$8,999

**YEAR TO**  
**DATE**

**1/1 - 2/28**

\$51,472



# MPC Men's Ministry News: Recap - Iron Sharpens Iron Conference

Thank you for your tremendous and sustaining support for hosting this national conference. This completes our 7th year hosting ISI with over 1700 men having attended since 2017.

This year.... 240 men from 41 Churches and Groups representing 14 local and national ministries participated. Men of all ages, 13 and older, traveled to MPC from South Carolina, Georgia and NorthEast Florida.

The most common feedback we get EVERY YEAR is how welcoming the vibe is when the men come onto our campus!!! Our MPC culture of hospitality and serving shined all day long!

Forty five men attended from MPC, including our Tech Team and Curt Etheridge & The Kingdom Band, to God be the Glory!

Thank you, thank you, thank you all!

Bob Graumann,  
MPC Men's Ministry leader



 presents:

# EGGSTRAVAGANZA

Games • Inflatables • Crafts • Petting Zoo • Egg Hunts

## Sunday, April 2 from 3:00 - 5:30pm

Details at  
[mandarinpres.com/kidsevents](http://mandarinpres.com/kidsevents)



This series began in January and continues through Easter.

## Sermon Series continues...

### “Momentum”

In an article entitled “The Secret to Generating Momentum in Your Church,” Carl Kuhn describes what it takes for us to gain momentum as a church.

Using the formula for momentum (momentum = mass x velocity), he articulates it this way: “If every person in our church (MASS) takes one step per week (SPEED) toward Jesus (DIRECTION), we have unbelievable momentum.”

In the midst of all the other distractions in life, we want to spend this spring focusing our hearts and minds on Jesus and taking one step closer to Him every week. This sermon series will center on stories about Jesus from the Gospel of Matthew. My prayer is that in this series we would be drawn to the beauty and power of the Savior and hear His invitation to a deeper walk with Him.

**MULCH 4 MISSIONS**  
 Summer Mission Trips Fundraiser  
[mandarinpres.com/mulch](http://mandarinpres.com/mulch)

This year is our 16th year of raising funds by selling mulch! We use these funds to support our overseas mission partners and send our high school students on summer mission trips. This summer we are going on two mission trips. We are sending a team of High School students to serve in Costa Rica and a team to serve in DeLand, Florida! In Costa Rica, they will be participating in ministry projects such as prayer walks, kid ministry, feeding centers, and more. In DeLand, they will be serving with local ministry organizations where they will be doing projects such as home repair, kids clubs, visiting seniors, and helping individuals with special needs.

We are excited to see God move this summer! Any money that is raised beyond the trip cost will go to our overseas partners to help with their ministry needs. Trips of this size are no small undertaking and we will again be selling mulch to offset the cost.

We have pine bark nuggets, natural blend, red, brown, black cypress and pine straw available for pickup, delivery, and delivery & spread. Due the large volume of orders we receive, we are limiting zip codes for delivery and spread for the season.

If you have questions about what you ordered last year, please email [mulch@mandarinpres.com](mailto:mulch@mandarinpres.com) or call our mulch phone, 904.525.3237.

If you are a member of the congregation who would like to help with Thursday & Friday deliveries, please visit our [mandarinpres.com/mulch](http://mandarinpres.com/mulch) page and go to the bottom of the page to sign-up to volunteer.

Thank you for your support of Mulch 4 Missions!

Visit our *Mulch* page to place your order and support our missions teams!

## Northeast Florida Great Banquet Spring dates



Upcoming Spring Weekends  
Womens #58  
March 23 -26

Mens #59  
April 13 -16

For more information visit:  
[nefgb.com](http://nefgb.com)

## MPC Men’s Luncheon

The MPC Men’s Luncheon takes place at noon in the Fellowship Hall on the Mandarin Road Campus on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month.

Please contact Randy Hester for more information. **Phone 904-859-4996 or email: [plsalesco@aol.com](mailto:plsalesco@aol.com).**

# MPC Disaster Recovery & Relief Team

## ***Disaster Relief ... Now What?***

The trailer has been delivered, supplies have been delivered to multiple churches for multiple projects ... the question becomes, "Now what do we do?" It is very common that six months out from a disaster, the interest in the recovery wanes. Folks leading disaster recovery efforts find the six-month mark as a time when it becomes harder to get volunteers, tougher to complete projects, and the next tropical system seems just around the corner. Likely within the next six months, some areas of Florida will be dealing with another weather disaster!

At Mandarin Presbyterian, we made a commitment to collaborate with our brothers and sisters at Grace Church in Cape Coral, and the surrounding area. Our plans are to stay on course until one day, likely at least 18 months from now, the folks at Grace tell us their work is as complete as it can be. Regardless of what may happen somewhere else, we feel called to stay, and finish the work God tells us to complete!

## ***So, what now? What do we do now?***

### **First, let's thank all the folks who have made what we have done already possible:**

Those who have given of their time building the trailer, and/or traveling to Cape Coral to serve: Tom Hughes, Pat Sullivan, Jerry Althouse, Emil Albertini, Jenny Ohayon, Pat Hardy, Beth Sullivan, Janet Elliot, Butch Elliot, Caleb Rigby, Garrett Rigby, Cody Rigby, Charles "Deuce" Garland, Craig Henderson, Devin Kelly, Doug Straatsma, Jeff Anderson, John Sutton, Mark Anderson, Palmer Bell, Vernon McDaniel, Wayne Petrone, and Scott Leech.

### ***The many congregations, organizations, and individuals who have given financially.***

Companies that have made possible various donations from space to build the trailer, to supplies donated, to flooring material and installation, to discounts in needed supplies: Garland Transport, Moyer Marble and Tile Company, and Thompson Ace Hardware.

### ***Second, we prayerfully set our long-term goal:***

Our long-term goal is to send at least twelve crews, of at least four people per trip, over the next year, down to Grace, while building a network of Covenant Partners who will work with us.

Next Trip: March 5-10. Go for the full week, or take advantage of one of the short trip options – Sunday, March 5, return later in the day on March 8, or travel down on Thursday, March 9 and return on Sunday, March 12! Join Pat Sullivan and Jerry Althouse the week of March 5 in our continued partnership with Grace Church.

***Interested? Contact Pat Sullivan @ [ipsully@bellsouth.net](mailto:ipsully@bellsouth.net), 904-318-7450 or Jerry Althouse @ [jerryalthouse@gmail.com](mailto:jerryalthouse@gmail.com), 614-402-2972. More trip details to come.***

# HELLO FROM THE SESSION

Here are a few key updates from our February Session meeting:

Save the Date! We will have a Congregational Gathering on Sunday, April 23rd, beginning with one service starting at 10:00am. Pastor Stepp will give his 'state of the Church' message and the 2023 budget will be presented. The congregation will have an opportunity to participate in the Session/Deacon conversations on where we see God leading MPC in the future. You will not want to miss this Sunday!

We will have two guest Preachers in March: Michael Miller from The Micah Project will be preaching on March 5 and we are happy to welcome back Leo Ackon, who will be preaching at the end of March.

Pastor Jenn Arnold shared recently that MPC would host a WinShape Camp this summer. WinShape Camp is part of the WinShape Foundation started by S. Truett Cathy and his wife Jeannette. The Cathy's are the founders of Chick-Fil-A. The Mandarin Chick-Fil-A is excited to partner with MPC this summer as we host a week long camp early August. Stay tuned for ways that you can help – perhaps by funding a scholarship for a camper, making snacks for the week or even doing laundry for a college student who is serving that week. This is such a great opportunity for MPC to share Jesus with children who may not know Him and to serve our community.

The sermon series for 2023 promise to be thought provoking and soul searching as we study God's Word. We will be studying the book of Ephesians and we will hear Jesus' words as He gives His sermon on the Mount.

The Session considers it a privilege to pray for our Covenant Partners during our Session meetings.



**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.)**

Our next Session meeting is March 27. Please join us in prayer during this Lenten Season as we remember the love of God that is poured out through Jesus Christ on the cross in His death and the hope we receive through His resurrection.

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# Upcoming MPC Women's Ministry Retreat Event

'Getaway with God & the Gals' Women's Retreat - April 29th!

Join our women's ministry as we spend a weekend in beautiful Amelia Island with special guest speaker, Annie Pajcic. Annie is founder of 'Thou Art Exalted' Ministry.

The cost of the retreat is \$30 for the day and will include lunch, snacks, drinks and activity! Retreat time is from 10:15am to 6:00pm on Saturday.

Location: Hampton Inn & Suites Amelia Island - Historic Harbor Front in Amelia Island; option to spend night on 4/28 and 4/29.

**\*\*Hotel rooms must be reserved by 3/27 in order to get discounted rate. \*\***

Details and registration at [mandrinpres.com/womensministry](http://mandrinpres.com/womensministry).



Retreat Speaker:  
Annie Pajcic

Find out more about Annie at her website, [ThouArtExalted.com](http://ThouArtExalted.com)

## MPC Ushering Ministry



According to Webster's dictionary, an usher is an officer or servant who has the care of the door of a court, hall or chamber. At MPC, an usher has a servant's heart and has care of a door leading into the sanctuary and has care of tithes and offerings collected. Did you know it takes 24 volunteers every Sunday to usher and collect the offering?

We ended 2019 with nine usher teams plus alternates (104 volunteers in total). Like many other things, COVID changed the structure of our usher teams and for the last couple of years, a small group of volunteers have been serving in this capacity. Well - it's time to expand our group of faithful volunteers and to share the joy of serving the Lord. No experience required; the only qualifications are smiling faces and willing hearts. If you would like to join the ushers and be part of the team who cares for the sanctuary doors and all who enter and who cares for the collection of tithes and offerings, then the MPC Usher Ministry is the place for you.

If you would like to join this ministry or if you have any questions, please contact Carol Yelinek at 904.262.8429 or [dcyell@comcast.net](mailto:dcyell@comcast.net). Remember, God does not call the equipped, He equips the called. Mark 10:45a "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve....."



**J1:9 Ministries Hosts:**

### Annual Shrimp Boil

J1:9 Ministries invites you to join them for their annual Shrimp Boil on Saturday, March 4 at 4:00pm at the home of Pat and Beth Sullivan.

Live Music, Great Food, Drinks, and more! Proceeds benefit impoverished people both locally and in Central America.

For ticket information and event details, visit [j19ministries.org](http://j19ministries.org).

# Easter

at 

## Holy Week Devotional

Beginning Palm Sunday, a daily on-line devotional will be available via email subscription. If you receive the MPC e-news email on Thursdays, the devotional will come to your subscribed email account automatically. If you would like to subscribe, visit our website at [mandarinpres.com/newsletter](http://mandarinpres.com/newsletter).

**Maundy Thursday Service** - Thursday, April 6th at 7:30pm in the Sanctuary on the Loretto Road Campus.

## This Easter season we will have the following services available:

Sunrise - 6:30am - Mandarin Cemetery. • Traditional Service - 9:00am with music led by the Sanctuary Choir & Brass • Contemporary Service - 10:30am with music by the Worship Team.

## J.O.Y. (Just Older Youth) March Event



Join us for our March JOY Luncheon as we celebrate St Paddy's Day a little early on Thursday, March 9 at 11:30am in Fellowship Hall.

Get your green on, because *everyone is Irish on St. Patrick's Day!* LET THE SHENANIGANS BEGIN!

Cost is \$7.00 per person. Please call the church office (904.680.9944) by Tuesday, March 7 to RSVP or email Anne at [apetrone@mandarinpres.com](mailto:apetrone@mandarinpres.com).

## Upcoming Events

Eggstravaganza - April 2

Easter Sunday - April 9

All-Church Gathering - April 23

New Members' Discovery Class - April 30 and May 7

K-Kamp - June 11 - 15

SCAMP - July 10 - 14

Southwind MS Camp - July 19 - 23

### Church Office:

11844 Mandarin Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32223

### Sanctuary Address:

2501 Loretto Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32223

### Contact:

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

### Website:

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

