MIPC PRESS

Merritt Island Presbyterian Church May 2025



Pastor Christina's Corner

For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. ~ Psalm 32:4

As I write this the weather has gone from nice and comfortable to the need to BLAST the AC. The heat has a way of zapping our strength and making us want to stay inside or migrate to cooler places.

And our snow birds have taken notice of the warmer temperatures and have started their annual migration north. We miss them while they are away and look forward to their return each year.

Our snow bird migration (and the heat) reminds me that soon summer will be here.

Ahhh, summer! Can you taste the lemonade? A time to get away, a time to relax and grab much-needed R & R. Vacations and weekend getaways may keep you away from church, but our congregation is still bustling with activity. The bills and the ministry of MIPC never take a summer holiday.

It's enormously helpful to the congregation's balance sheet if your gifts, tithes and offerings continue to come in regularly, even if you are away. Here are some ideas for staying current:

- Pay in advance: Plan ahead by offering more in the weeks in advance of your time away from church.
- ♦ Make it up: When you return, give a little more in the weeks that follow.
- Use banking bill pay: Most online banking services will write and send checks for you. Just plug in the church address, the amount of the gift and how often you want it sent. Viola! You're done!
- ◆ Enroll in electronic giving: Use the congregation's online giving portal to regularize your gift, tithe or offering.
- Give monthly, quarterly, or annually: Sometimes it's hard to anticipate how many Sundays you'll be away from church. Planning your gift, tithe or offering for monthly or quarterly can keep you current.

Pastor Christina's Corner

Of course, these methods are beneficial not only for the summer months, but also for the whole year through. Those who embrace giving as a spiritual discipline often find that their lives of faith are enriched and their sense of joy and fulfillment is deepened. Choosing a regular giving strategy can help you to discover the joys of generosity.

It is through your kindness and generosity that we continue to be able to be a beacon of hope and love within our community! I continue to be amazed at how active our church campus is with our preschool, those who use our Fellowship Hall (Scouts, AA, Square Dancers, Christ the King Church), and our own ministries (Kids Klub, One Purpose, and special events). Rarely is there a day when there is not activity of some sort at MIPC.

As we prepare to welcome the summer, may we continue to remember how our gifts and offerings help to provide welcome to those in our community.



With Love,
Pastor Christina

Preschool



April came in quickly and has also gone out quickly! We have stayed busy learning about community helpers and the life cycle of plants and flowers. Right now they are learning about the life cycle of butterflies.

We celebrated Easter and learned our Lord has risen.

All our renovations are completed and the Preschool looks amazing, with new roofs, new paint, and new bathrooms throughout.

Our VPK class is getting ready for Graduation on May 23. They had a great year of learning and growing. It's amazing how much they change in a year. It will be sad to say goodbye to some - but others will stay and join our Before and After program.

We are already planning our summer for the school age and VPK, including Vacation Bible School in July, and soon will be getting ready for our new school year to start.

God Bless,

Tammy Lewis & Robyn Mills, Preschool Co-Directors
Pat Smith, Preschool Elder

Preschool



Worship

As we step into the month of May, we pause to reflect on the deeply meaningful season of Lent and Easter that we've recently shared together as a faith community. This spring offered so many rich and memorable moments that reminded us of the power of worship, the joy of fellowship, and the gentle movement of the Spirit among us.

March 23rd marked the joyful return of choir rehearsals after worship, as we began preparations for Easter. That morning also brought a "Spontaneous Confetti Moment" (and a valuable lesson for me on the proper way to carry a three-hole punch). Many thanks to Craig Hill for swooping in and saving the sanctuary from becoming a work of modern art!

On March 30th, we were blessed by a moving rendition of Amazing Grace on the clarinet, beautifully performed by John Shuford.

On April 6th, we gathered at the Lord's Table for communion to prepare our hearts for the upcoming sacred journey through Holy Week.

Palm Sunday (April 13th) was a joyful and vibrant celebration, filled with palm fronds and fresh greenery from Pastor Christina's own yard. The service was made even more special by the musical gifts of John Shuford on clarinet, accompanied by Joyce Walker on piano.

On Maundy Thursday (April 17th), we shared in a reflective Service of Shadows and communion by intinction (with unleavened bread made by Pastor Christina using salt and honey from our own church community), honoring the deep mystery of Christ's final meal with his disciples.

The Good Friday prayer service on April 18th was an intimate and powerful time of worship. In an echo of the first witnesses to the resurrection, the service was attended solely by women—except for Dale, our devoted sound technician, who we named an honorary woman for the day.

Worship

Easter Sunday, April 20, burst forth with beauty and celebration! Colorful spring flowers adorned the sanctuary, stirring viola music by Heather McPhail lifted our spirits, and the voices of our MIPC choir (led by Jennavon and Jeana) rang out in joyful proclamation: Crown Him, the Risen King!

As we look ahead, the Worship Committee will soon gather to begin planning our summer sermon series. (Here's a little hint: It involves small, colorful building bricks that are fun to build with—but terrible to step on barefoot!)

We are so grateful for the many individuals who make our worship services possible each week—our preachers, liturgists, musicians, AV team, and coordinators. Your dedication and creativity help create a space where all are welcome to encounter God's presence.

If you feel called to be part of the Worship Committee, or if you have ideas, talents, or feedback to share, I'd love to hear from you. Please feel free to reach out at epigayle@gmail.com.

With gratitude and joy,



Gayle Allenback Worship Committee Chair

Mission/Outreach

Dear Friends, you have probably heard some things about the restructuring of PC (USA) in the area of overseas mission work. This letter we just received from Elizabeth and Dan Turk is long but certainly worth the time. If you have questions I will try to find the answers for you. Fred and I will be going to Madagascar this summer with a mission group. (a full copy of this letter, including photos, is available in the Narthex)

Cheryl Mahan

FJKM's Holistic Ministry (Madagascar)
Dan and Elizabeth Turk, Spring 2025

Dear friends: Greetings!

This is a bittersweet letter to write. It is our last letter to you as PC(USA) mission co-workers serving with PC(USA)'s partner church in Madagascar, the Church of Jesus Christ in Madagascar (FJKM).

As many of you may know, PC(USA) merged the Office of General Assembly with the Presbyterian Mission Agency into the Interim Unified Agency (IUA) in October 2024. This has led to the restructuring of some PC(USA) ministries. The IUA is embarking on a new pattern for global engagement with PC(USA)'s international partners. PC(USA) will no longer be sending mission co-workers as all mission co-worker positions have concluded. Some mission co-workers have been invited to participate in the new model where global ecumenical liaisons will interact with PC (USA)'s international partners. Sadly, we ended service on March 24, 2025.

Despite our sadness in concluding our time as PC(USA) mission coworkers, we give thanks for all that has been accomplished and for your faithful commitment to supporting the former Presbyterian Mission Agency (now the IUA), us, and the FJKM over these many years. FJKM's approach to mission is holistic. For the FJKM, preaching the Gospel goes hand in hand with meeting the needs of the people. We began serving with the FJKM in 1996 in response to FJKM's request to PC(USA) for health and environmental specialists. Since then, we have worked alongside FJKM colleagues to design and carry out programs to address the health concerns, poverty, and biodiversity crisis facing the people and country of Madagascar. Here's a small snapshot of what we (you, the FJKM, the former Presbyterian Mission Agency (now the IUA) staff, including Dan and Elizabeth) have been able to do together

Mission/Outreach

over the last two decades:

- · Helping train personnel and equip over 40 FJKM rural dispensaries for 20 years
- Accompanying the FJKM AIDS & Epidemics Committee as it fights the spread of HIV and COVID
- · Helping the Antanetibe community get out of poverty by growing tangerines
- · Establishing the Mango Palace, a fruit tree center for training farmers in fruit tree production and propagation using some of the world's best fruit tree varieties
- · Promoting native trees and working around protected areas to help protect Madagascar's unique biodiversity
- · Building water catchment systems and supporting schools in southern Madagascar

Ministering with you and the PC(USA) by living here in Madagascar and taking part in the daily joys and struggles that the church and people face has been an honor. We have learned so much about what it means to be a faithful follower of Christ from our FJKM siblings in Christ. Witnessing the joy of Christians in southern Madagascar whose lives are so difficult has deepened our understanding of what the joy of the Lord really means. We hope you have been inspired as you have heard about the lives and faithfulness of the FJKM and its members and partnered with them.

We encourage you to continue partnering with the FJKM and supporting its ministries. The Madagascar Mission Network is a Presbyterian network of churches and others who support the ministries of the FJKM. Being a part of the Madagascar Mission Network is a wonderful way to support the FJKM and keep up to date on its ministries.

Please be in prayer for the FJKM as it holds its General Assembly this August in southern Madagascar. Please continue to pray for the people of Madagascar as the poverty rate continues to increase.

For the present, we are continuing to serve with the FJKM at its request. Please pray for us as we discern long-term plans. One great joy coming up is our son Robert's wedding to Tatiana Gonzalez on May 18th in Chicago. Prayers for the wedding are also appreciated. For future email correspondence, please use daniellturk@hotmail.com. Thank you for your steadfast support of us and the FJKM church. Many wonderful things have been accomplished together in God's name. To God be the Glory!

Mission/Outreach

Family Promise of Brevard (FP)

We're continuing to plan our next FP hosting which will be September 28-October 5, helping to shelter Brevard's homeless families.

Cheryl was an overnight chaperone with our partner church, Grace Methodist, as they hosted during Easter Week. And she can report that Family Promise is back in full swing and there were three lovely families. So...we should expect several families, not just one like we had last January.

A nice development for MIPC's FP is that before September our less-thanattractive carpet in the Activities Room should be replaced with new flooring. We are also getting rid of unneeded things in the closets in the Activities Room so there will be a place for all those huge FP plastic bins. Right now they are mostly on top of the cabinets in the workroom and they are heavy to get down!

Thanks to all who approved and are working on this project, especially Milt!

Sharing Center of Central Brevard

Due to the ongoing Federal Government reorganization, vital funding for The Second Harvest Food Bank has been eliminated. Second Harvest is a crucial supplier of low-cost grocery and produce items to the Sharing Center of Central Brevard. Moving forward, they will strive to cover 50% of our food pantry requirements. However, The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which many of our clients rely on, will be eliminated immediately. This cut is severe. In 2024 alone, demand for this program surged by over 51%, to 3,254 clients and now, families who depend on it are left vulnerable. Though we are working to secure alternative food sources, we need your help now to bridge this gap.

Here at MIPC, we contribute to the Sharing Center through our budgeted donations, and also the box in the Narthex that is always open for your non-perishable food donations. There is a note by the box that outlines the most urgent food needs for the Center.

Thank you for your continued support of this worthy mission.

Knit with Love: Honoring Our Organ Donor Heroes in Central Florida

Organ, eye, and tissue donors are true heroes! Gifting life, hope, and healing to those in need.

Our very own Heavenly Handmade Group have graciously partnered with Central Florida's Organ Procurement Organization-Our Legacy, inviting our compassionate community to come together in a heartfelt initiative: knitting hope blankets for grieving families.

These three-feet-square blankets are more than just warm fabric—they are works of art, infused with love, gratitude, and the spirit of generosity. Each piece symbolizes the courage and kindness of our Organ Donor Heroes, honoring their incredible gift of life. With every stitch, volunteers weave comfort into the hearts of families, offering them a lasting tribute to their loved ones' life-saving legacy.

Anyone with a passion for knitting or crocheting can take part, and all colors and designs are welcome! Your unique creation will be tagged with love, ensuring families know their community stands beside them in remembrance and gratitude. If crafting isn't your forte, you can still make a difference by donating yarn as all contributions are warmly welcomed.

Through compassion and craft, we care for families, celebrate heroes, and save lives. Join us in stitching together hope for the future, one blanket at a time.

For more details on how to participate, you can contact members of our Heavenly Handmade group, visit Our Legacy's website at familycare@ourlegacyfl.org, or call them directly at (407) 543-4115.

Together, we can contribute to positive change.

Karlene Mohan Mission/Outreach Chair

Memorial Garden

MIPC Memorial Garden Work Day

A very successful workday was held on April 15, 2025 to get the Memorial Garden ready for Easter. Ten volunteers joined 2 workers from Change of Greenery. Those helping were Linda Serfozo, Pam and Brian Poland, Cheryl Mahan, Mike Smith, Milt Seapker, Marilyn and Craig Smoot, and Pat and Sterling Smith. Thirty new plants were planted in the garden: 10 Rosinflower, 5 Silkgrass, 5 Blazing Star, 5 Chapman's Goldenrod and 5 Blue Curl. After working, everyone enjoyed a delicious lunch provided by Pam Poland.

A special thank you to all who helped on our workday!





Stephen Ministry



In a nutshell, Stephen Ministry is Christ caring for people through people. Yet another way of looking at it is that Stephen Ministers serve as a "leaning post." Either way you look at it, Stephen Ministers share Christ's healing love with those who are hurting in the congregation and community.

Stephen Ministers are lay people providing one-on-one confidential Christian care to the bereaved, hospitalized, terminally ill, divorced, unemployed, relocated, empty nesters, and others facing a crisis or life challenge. MIPC has a strong Stephen Minister program in partnership with Grace Methodist Church.

If you know of anyone who might benefit from a Stephen Minister, please contact either Pastor Christina or Craig Smoot 321-223-4841.

Finance

	YTD as of 3/31/25
General Fund Revenue:	62,464
General Fund Expenses:	52,340
General Fund Net Revenue:	10,124
Preschool Revenue:	160,744
Preschool Expenses:	182,340
Preschool Net Revenue:	-21,596

March saw a positive result for both Church (+6981 for the month) and Preschool (+2382). This reduces the year's Preschool deficit and increases the Church's year to date surplus.

We expect to have some air conditioning replacement costs in the coming months, as summer approaches and AC is a priority. At least some of the funds for these projects will come from our endowment accounts.

We are pleased that final payment has been made to Macik Builders, which means our renovations to the Fellowship Hall and Preschool buildings (plumbing, bathrooms, and painting) are complete. We appreciate everyone's patience throughout our roofing and renovation projects! The result is a more beautiful campus and a much lower monthly water bill.

Mike Smith Finance Chair

Legacy Giving

Leave gifts to benefit Presbyterian congregations, ministries and causes.

Wills and other forms of legacy giving are essential components of estate planning – the process of managing your accumulated assets and determining what legacy you will leave through them, including your legacy of faith. The Foundation offers planning tools to help donors compose their legacy giving plans and to help churches support these efforts.

Did You Know?

- Wills and other estate planning documents provide an ideal opportunity to make a statement of faith and to give resources that will support your church or favorite mission for years to come.
- Suggested language is available that can help you add a bequest to your will easily (but you should consult your attorney before altering your will).
- Programs for pastors and congregations are available that will help you discuss estate planning in meaningful ways.

If you're ready to create your will as part of your estate plan, the Presbyterian Foundation has sample language and other information that you may find helpful. (These documents are designed to help you get started, but they don't replace a consultation with an experienced attorney.)

Once you've designated a ministry or congregation as a beneficiary in your will, you should notify your church or the other organization that they will be receiving a gift from you after your death. You may wish to give specific instructions on how you'd like to see the funds used. You should also share this news with your family so that they are aware of your wishes.

The booklets are available in the Narthex.



Kids Klub will perform "The S.A.L.T. Company" for their Spring semester. Save the date! You don't want to miss this wonderful show!

Performances are Saturday, May 3rd & Sunday, May 4th @ 4:00 p.m.







One Purpose Productions performances of "A View from the Pew" were amazing!

If you know anyone who might be interested in this amazing ministry for the Fall semester please contact Pam Poland, Faith Formation Ministries Associate @ 321-452-5689 ext.1003 or mipcffm@gmail.com.

Like us on Facebook! www.facebook.com/MIPCPerformingArts







Faith Enrichment Class Sunday Mornings 9:00 a.m. Session Room & Zoom



With Milt Seapker & Dave Hertzler

Jesus used parables, short stories with spiritual meanings, to teach and convey complex ideas in an accessible way to his audience. These stories, often drawn from everyday life, provided illustrations of kingdom principles and moral lessons.

Come join us in person or on Zoom!

The link to join will be sent out with your weekly bulletin.



Activities Room—Sundays at 10:00 AM

Merritt Island Presbyterian Church offers Children's Church for Preschool-6th grade. Class starts after the Children's Message in our Worship service beginning at 10:00 a.m. Come join us for Bible stories, Crafts and Games! If you are interested, know someone who might be, or would like more information please contact Pam Poland at 321-452-5689 ext. 1003 or mipcffm@gmail.com.

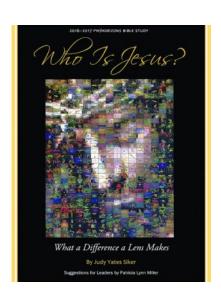




When we have infants or toddlers who need care during our worship service, Faith Formation Ministries can help. We have a rotation schedule set up for a wonderful group of volunteers. Our Ushers have a copy of the schedule, and can direct our guests to someone. For those who may not know, our new Nursery room location is in the church office next to Faith Formation Ministries.



Faith Formation Ministries Bible Study Group
Fabulous Fridays!!
May 2, 16 & 30 @ 2:00 p.m.



Our study is led by Julie Hill and is titled "Who Is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes"

Come join us for a time of Faith & Fellowship in the Activities Room every other Friday @ 2:00 p.m.

Please contact Julie Hill for more information and questions. cj2hill@bellsouth.net or 321-431-5333







Men's Bible Study Group

with Milt Seapker

Twice a month on Wednesdays @ 2:00 p.m.

Meeting dates: May 14th & 28th

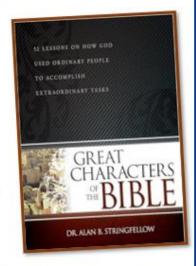
Location: 200 South Banana River Drive E11
Merritt Island 32952

Come join us for a time of Bible study and fun activities!

God chose to teach His spiritual principles through the successes and failures of His people.

Great Characters of the Bible is a 52-lesson study of 61 Bible characters who were not all that different from us. They experienced struggles, heartaches, successes, and failures. They battled fear, doubt, and worry. But they also give testimony to God's mighty hand moving through the ages, establishing His will through the lives of people like you and me.

Standing beside these men and women of the Bible will help you walk closer with God, who included their stories in His Word especially to teach you, to inspire you, and to guide and instruct you. As you share in their victories and defeats, you'll discover how each person was selected by God to fulfill a purpose. By studying them, you will see how the Holy Spirit equips and empowers you for greater service.



Please contact Milt at 910-580-9344 or <u>milton.s43@aol.com</u> if you are interested in attending.

We had a wonderful time at our

Easter Egg Stuffing Party

Here are some pictures to enjoy!















Vacation Bible School



Looking for fun volunteer activities this summer? Come and join Faith Formation Ministries for the week of July 14th-18th as we share the word of the Gospel with our Preschool children!

If you are interested in helping please call Pam Poland, Faith Formation Ministries Associate @ 321-452-5689 ext. 1003 or email mipcffm@gmail.com

Plans for FFM Activities:

- 1. Our committee met on Monday, April 7th @ 1:00 p.m. in the Session room and on Zoom.
- 2. These are the current and upcoming activities for 2025.
 - a. Children's Church is in Session for Spring classes.
 - b. Adult Faith Enrichment Class-Sunday mornings @ 9:00 a.m. in the Session Room and on Zoom. Our new study is on The Parables of Jesus led by Milt Seapker and Dave Hertzler.
 - c. Women's Ministry: Fabulous Fridays Bible Study group: May meeting dates are the 2nd, 16th & 30th @ 2:00 p.m. in the Activities Room. Our study is "Who Is Jesus? What a Difference a Lens Makes" led by Julie Hill.
 - d. Men's Ministry: Bible Study Group: May meeting dates are the 14th & 28th
 @ 2:00 p.m. led by Milt Seapker.
 - e. Kids Klub Spring performances: Saturday, May 3rd & Sunday, May 4th @ 4:00 p.m.
 - f. Vacation Bible School: July 14th-18th, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
 - g. 15th Annual Women's Retreat: Saturday, September 13th-Tentative
 - h. Fall Festival: Saturday, October 11th, 4:00-6:00 p.m.
 - i. 3rd Annual Preschool Christmas Pageant & Live Nativity: Monday, December 8th @ 4:00 p.m.
 - j. Our next committee meeting will be on Monday, May 12th @ 1:00 p.m.

Many Blessings to all!
Pamela Poland
Faith Formation Ministries Associate
Patricia Smith & Milt Seapker
Faith Formation Ministries Elders



Birthdays & Anniversaries



BUDGET UPDATE

MAY BIRTHDAYS:

1 Mike Smith

5 Don Webster

12 Stacy Boote

13 John Heenan

14 Karri Fjeldheim

23 Barbara Seaman

26 Marsha Strickland

26 Frances Fernald

YTD As of 3/31/25

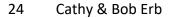
Actual Revenue: \$62,464

Budgeted: \$55,260

Actual Expenses: \$52,340

Budgeted: \$ 56,515

MAY ANNIVERSARIES:



25 Linda & Rob Serfozo





The deadline for input in the June newsletter is May 23



The MIPC Press is printed by the Merritt Island Presbyterian Church, 600 S. Tropical Trail, Merritt Island, Florida 32952.

Rev. Christina Greenawalt Pam Poland Leslie Mitchell Jennavon Brown Jeana Lutz Tammy Lewis Robyn Mills MaryLou Tipton Christi Griffith Pastor
Faith Formation Ministries Associate
Financial Secretary
Substitute Organist/Pianist
Church Vocalist
Preschool Director
Preschool Director
Performing Arts Director
Performing Arts Music Director

Each month, we feature an "Eco-Friendly Tip!" It's our way of helping conserve resources and preserve our beautiful Brevard beaches and waterways. Here's your May tip:



There's a wonderful local organization called Keep Brevard Beautiful. The mission of Keep Brevard Beautiful is to develop, motivate, educate and activate community partners to reduce litter, recycle, beautify, and sustain the environment for the benefit of Brevard County. They host regular clean-up and beautification projects all over the county. You can volunteer or donate at their website, keepbrevardbeautiful.org.

Do you have a tip to share? Contact mipresbyterian@gmail.com.

Please contact the church office if we can assist you in any way.



Office phone number: 321-452-5689

Preschool phone number: 321-453-1640

Office extensions:

1001: Reception1002: Leslie Mitchell

1003: Pam Poland 1004: Rev. Greenawalt

1005: Tammy Lewis1006: Robyn Mills

Email: mipresbyterian@gmail.com
Preschool email: MIPCPreschool@gmail.com
Website: www.merrittislandpc.org

Facebook: Facebook.com/Merritt.Island.Presbyterian.Church