

# **La Plata United Methodist Church**



**First Sunday After Christmas  
December 30, 2018**

# Café Worship (8:30)

\*You may leave your cell phones ON, but set to vibrate or silent, please\*

Music Before Worship  
Welcome & Centering

Mike Rainwater

\*Opening Prayer (Together)

Eternal Father, you gave to us of earth your special Son, so that we might know you, love you, and be delivered from our sins. Fill our hearts today with the joy of those who remember and trust; and we will lift our voices in glad praise to you this day and forever; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Greeting Each Other in the Name of Christ

Announcements & Invitations

Time of Prayer:

Sharing Our Week's Blessings & Trials, Requests,  
Silent Prayers, Pastoral Prayer  
The Lord's Prayer (Together)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

## Reload

Scriptures for the Day

See page 6

The New Testament Lesson

Galatians 4: 4-7

The Gospel Lesson

Luke 2: 8-20

The Message

Rev. Ed Chance

“The Shepherds Returned”

Sermon notes may be found on pages 7 & 8

Benediction

\*Please rise in body or in spirit



# Traditional Worship (11:00)

\*You may leave your cell phones ON, but set to vibrate or silent, please\*

## Prayer Before Worship

Almighty God, we celebrate your presence, in both its righteousness and mercy. Pour steadfast love into our hearts and give us an enduring faithfulness. Inspire us ever to sing your praises as holiness and power move us boldly to proclaim your name. Remind us this day, Father, that we are not alone, and that the soil beneath us is not all upon which we stand. Amen.

## Prelude, Lighting the Altar Candles, & A Time of Quiet Meditation

Linda Dent Mitchell

When the Prayer Before Worship has finished and the Prelude begins, please quiet yourselves in preparation for worship.

## Introit

Chancel Choir

“God of the Ages”

## \*Call to Worship (Responsively)

UM Hymnal, 829

Psalm 106: 1-5

## \*Opening Hymn

UM Hymnal, 227

“The Friendly Beasts” (vs. 1-4, 6)

## The Invocation (Together)

Our heavenly Father, we your humble children invoke your blessing upon us in this hour of worship. We adore you, whose nature is compassion, whose presence is joy, whose word is truth, whose spirit is goodness, whose holiness is beauty, whose will is peace, whose spirit is perfect freedom, and in knowledge of whom stands our eternal life. Unto you be all honor and all glory; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

## Passing the Peace of Christ

The Peace of the Lord be with you.  
And also with you.

Let us greet our neighbors and extend God's peace to each other.

## **Children's Moment**

Kathy Cox

## **Anthem:**

Chancel Choir

"The Promise"

## **Welcome, News & Opportunities**

## **The New Testament Lesson**

Galatians 4: 4-7

See page 6

The purpose of the law

## **Offertory:**

Chancel Choir

"Hear the Angels Sing"

## **Giving our Tithes and Offerings**

### **\*The Doxology**

UM Hymnal, 95

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise him all  
creatures here below. Praise him above ye heavenly hosts.  
Praise Father Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### **Prayer of Dedication** (Pastor)

### **\*Hymn of Preparation**

UM Hymnal, 217

"Away in a Manger"

## **The Gospel Lesson**

see page 6

Luke 2: 8-20

The Shepherds and the Angels

This is the Word of God for the people of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **The Message**

Rev. Ed Chance

"The Shepherds Returned"

Sermon notes can be found on pages 7 & 8

## **\*Closing Hymn**

UM Hymnal, 230

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

## **Benediction**

## Congregational Response

The Faith We Sing, 2080

**All I need is you, Jesus, all I need is you.**

**You are the source of all I need. All I need is you.**

## Postlude

Linda Dent Mitchell

\*Please rise in body or in spirit

Acolyte: Brooke Barber; Liturgist: Tom Hall

Organist: Linda Dent Mitchell; Chancel Choir Director: Pat Day;

Service Prayer Partner: Jan Saunders

*The flowers on the altar are  
given to the glory of God,  
from the congregation of  
La Plata United  
Methodist Church*



# *The Scripture Lessons*

## **Galatians 4: 4-7 (NRSV)**

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So, you are no longer a slave but a child and if a child, then also an heir, through God.

## **Luke 2: 8-20 (NRSV)**

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see--I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

# Sermon Notes

## “The Shepherds Return”

If you were to choose a character in the Christmas story that you would like to be, which one would you choose? Joseph? Mary? Would it be one of the Shepherds, or, maybe, an angel? I think I'd like to have been the angel who told the shepherds about the birth of Jesus. What a privilege that would have been to make that announcement, and then be surrounded by heavenly host saying, "Glory to God in the highest heavens, and on earth peace among those whom he favors." Or, maybe, I could have been a shepherd. Then, suddenly, the sky is aglow with heavenly light, and I'd hear the news that the world had been waiting to hear. How would you have reacted if you'd been there? Luke tells us that the shepherds, at first, responded with \_\_\_\_\_. Then it was over. The angels were gone. Listen to what happened next. When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let's now go to Bethlehem and \_\_\_\_\_ this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby, who was lying in a \_\_\_\_\_. When they \_\_\_\_\_ this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were \_\_\_\_\_ at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and \_\_\_\_\_ them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and \_\_\_\_\_ God." But they were changed. They would never be the same again.

I believe, three things can be learned from those shepherds of long ago. **(1) First of all, they investigated the evidence.** "When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another. 'Let's go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.'" I think that is one of our greatest weaknesses. If the Church is going to stand strong for the Lord, there will have to be Christians who know \_\_\_\_\_ they believe what they believe. We need to check the \_\_\_\_\_. The shepherds immediately left their sheep and went to find the baby Jesus. In Acts 17, we learn that the Bereans were more receptive than those in Thessalonica, and they welcomed the message very eagerly and examined the Scriptures every day to see whether these things were so. And many believed. **(2) Secondly, the shepherds shared the Good News.** They made known



what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were \_\_\_\_\_ at what the shepherds told them. They immediately started \_\_\_\_\_ people what they had seen and heard. Another weakness we tend to have is not being very \_\_\_\_\_. One reason we give for this is that we don't know enough. We're afraid that if we try to tell others about Jesus, they'll ask questions we won't be able to answer, and we'll be \_\_\_\_\_. There is a famous painting which portrays Christ holding a lamb while the adult sheep are all around him. It was inspired by the parable of Jesus leaving the 99 in order to find and bring to safety this lonely lamb. Can we see ourselves as that lamb brought to safety? Try to imagine yourself in His loving arms. That should propel you to share this marvelous \_\_\_\_\_ and love with others. **(3) Finally, the shepherds returned to their jobs.** The shepherds investigated the evidence; they shared the Good News. Then, they returned to their flock in the field. "The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, as it had been told them." There comes a time when we have to leave the \_\_\_\_\_. We can't stay there forever. At some point, we have to leave and go back to tending the sheep or go back to our work-a-day world. We have been to the manger. We have listened to the angels, and it was glorious experience. But now the work of Christmas begins. Are we ready? Christ is counting on us-you and me!



# CALENDAR

## **Sunday, December 30**

8:30a **Café Worship** (Sanctuary)

11:00a **Traditional Service** (Sanctuary)

## **Monday, December 31 - BLP Closed**

5:30p AA Mtg. - 12 Step Home Group (Rm. 104)

7:00p **Watch Night Service**

8:00p AA Mtg - Warner Group (Rm. 104)

## **Tuesday, January 1 Happy New Year - BLP and Church Office Closed**

## **Wednesday, January 2**

12:00p AA - Serenity Seekers (Rm. 104)

1:30p BLP Staff Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)

2:30p Food Pantry til 4:00 in the Bowie Annex

6:00p Beatitudes Puppets Practice (Rm. 110)

6:00p Horsemasters 4-H Club (FH1)

## **Thursday, January 3**

10:00a ABR Circle (FH2)

5:30p Cub Scout Pack 423 Leadership Mtg. (FH1)

6:30p Cub Scout Pack 423 Den Mtg. (Rms. 104, 106, 110 & FH1)

7:00p Disciple II (Rm. 102)

## **Friday, January 4**

## **Saturday, January 5**

8:30a Pastor's Prayer Partners (Rm. 110)

## **Sunday, January 6 - Holy Communion**

8:30a **Café Worship** (FH2)

9:45a Sunday School for all ages

11:00a **Traditional Service**(Sanctuary)

11:15a Kid's Church (Rm. 423)

12:00p Youth Group (YR)

12:30p Fellowship Ministries Meeting (Rm. 412/Conference Rm.)

## **Monday, January 7**

9:00a Meals & Hope Food Prep. (Kitchen)

5:30p AA Mtg. - 12 Step Home Group (Rm. 104)

6:00p Girl Scout Troop 1438 (Rm 110)

8:00p AA Mtg - Warner Group (Rm. 104)

## **Tuesday, January 8**

10:00a UMW Book Club (Parlor)

1:30p BLP 2's Team Mtg. (Rm. 412/Board Room)

6:30p Country Clovers 4-H Club (Rm. 104)

7:00p Evening Circle (Parlor)

7:30p Finance Meeting (Rm. 412/Conference Rm.)

## HERE'S THE SCOOP

**WATCH NIGHT SERVICE** - Please join us for our Watch Night Service on Monday, December 31 at 7:00 PM. The Watch Night service originated through John Wesley, the Founder of Methodism. They were also referred to as Covenant Renewal Services. Christians would gather and “wrestle with God, through prayer.” Dear ones, we look behind at the year—giving thanks for our blessings and asking forgiveness for those things left undone. Then we give glory to the One who gives us another year and another chance to be called faithful. Let us prepare our hearts for the year

**ABR CIRCLE** - The next meeting is Thursday, January 3 at 10:00 AM in Fellowship Hall 2, for a fun and informative session with a representative from the Humane Society of Charles County on the topic of “Animals in Winter.” They will bring live animals to assist. All women of the church are invited to join us for this presentation. Interested men are welcome, too!

Instead of the usual presentation fee, the Humane Society is asking for donations of items on the WISH LIST which is available on the information tables in Fellowship Hall 2 and the Narthex. A collection box will be available on December 30 for anyone wishing to donate.

We will follow the public-school policy for inclement weather. If the schools are closed, we will not meet and we will try to reschedule at a later date. However, we WILL meet if there is a delayed opening.

**YOUNG ADULTS** - On Sunday, January 6 Sunday School resumes and there is a new class! Young Adults are invited to gather in the upstairs parlor from 9:35-10:45 for a time of discussion and exploration. Also, on January 13 young adults are gathering at La Plata Panera at 5:30. This will be a time of fellowship and a decision about when and where to gather next month. All young adults are invited!

**FLOWER CHART** - The 2019 Flower Chart is now posted on the bulletin board in the narthex. Please stop by and choose a date to provide flowers to decorate the altar in honor or in memory of a special person in your life.

## **WORSHIP**

**WORSHIP SCHEDULE** - The Sunday morning worship schedule is: Café Worship at 8:30 AM in Fellowship Hall 2, and Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary at 11:00 AM.

**NURSERY IS AVAILABLE** - Nursery care for little ones (ages 0-4 yrs) is available during the 11:00 Sunday morning service. If your little one becomes unsettled and is in need of more care, please contact an usher who can direct you to the nursery or to the rocking chairs in the back. We are grateful to the staff and volunteers that help us provide a nursery each week. If you would like to volunteer in the nursery, please contact Alyssa Wheeler.

If you are a parent or a grandparent of young children, or you just want to spend some time with the youngest in our congregation, consider signing up to volunteer in the Nursery. To volunteer, or for information, contact Alyssa Wheeler at [awheeler007@gmail.com](mailto:awheeler007@gmail.com).

**HEARING ASSIST DEVICES** - are available, please see an usher to get one.

## **SERVICE & CARING**

**BRICKS** - We now only need 3 more reservation forms to be able to send the list to the engraver, so if you have been thinking about getting a brick, now is your chance! Give me a call in the church office and I will get your information to add to the stack. Once we have 25 bricks, I will send them out to the engraver and have them installed once they are done. There are a number of \$100, \$500 & \$1,000 bricks remaining for purchase.

**FOOD PANTRY NEEDS YOUR HELP** - The Food Pantry is requesting your donations of the following items, grape jelly, canned peaches, pears, mandarin oranges, applesauce, (no peel off cups please), pasta meal bags, baked beans, soups, children's juice boxes, snack items for kids (individual wrapped cookies, cheese crackers etc.) and empty egg cartons. You may place your donated items in the Food Donation Box in the front entrance. Pet food donations are always appreciated. You can also make monetary donations, just write "Food Pantry" in the memo line of your check, or give online.

## **FAITH SHARING**

**HAS GOD BLESSED YOU?** - When God answers our prayers, or provides healing, or helps us find a job or get a promotion; when God has touched our lives – we have a responsibility to tell others what God has done. This is a great way to start a conversation about our faith with those who know us. Tell them how you feel about being touched by God, or how God has answered your prayers.

**PLEASE INVITE YOUR FRIENDS** - It is the simplest and most effective way to share Christ with others: just invite your friends to church with you. Most people who grew up as Christians and who aren't in a church say they just haven't found a church they like, and because no one has invited them. Most people if you ask, will say yes to an invitation. Just ask them to come to church for a special event, or special Sunday, or to hear a sermon you think will help them.

**MAKE A NEW FRIEND TODAY** - As you enter Church today to worship, look around and see if you can find someone you don't know. During Passing of the Peace, make a point to introduce yourself to them and invite them to join you in an activity of the Church. If you can't get to them during the Passing of the Peace, hang around for a bit after worship and strike up a conversation with them. In time you'll discover if they are long lost members, or here for the first time. Either way, you get to make a new friend.

Thank you for being one of the friendliest and most caring congregations around.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

**STEWARDSHIP** - Please be sure that the outer doors close firmly and are locked when you leave the building. Turn out the lights when you leave a room. Turn off the heat/air conditioner in the room you are using. These are all things we can do to keep our building secure, our members safe, and our operating costs down.

**CHURCH WEBSITE** - To go directly to our church website on your mobile phone, you can scan this little black box with your cell phone's QR Reader app. Put your phones camera over this graphic, and it will take you to our website, or key in [www.laplataumc.org](http://www.laplataumc.org).



**SCHOLARSHIPS** - The Baltimore-Washington Conference will once again be offering college scholarships for the Fall 2019 semester. Students can apply January 3 - March 7, 2019 through an online application system. Scholarships are available to students attending or enrolling in accredited colleges and universities in the United States. Students must be an active member of a church for at least one year and be attending (or will attend) an accredited college or university within the United States full-time. Students will need to provide their official transcript (high school or college) and contact information for two church references (pastor and another member of the church). In addition, the student must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale.

See The Grapevine for more news!!

# Our Prayer List

Karyl Beveridge is in Charles Regional Hospital.

Susan, Jeff and Stacey Morris and families are so grateful for the most generous outpouring of sympathy expressed in so many ways for George's funeral, obvious and behind the scenes. Thank you for your love and for making our final farewell so very special.

Katrina Gessner - is home and doing well. She is grateful for all the prayers of the congregation.

Joyce Dean - is at home awaiting test results. She requests no visits, but appreciates cards and prayers.



## **Continue praying for these friends & loved ones:**

Christina Kingsbury  
Jennifer Carpenter  
Mike Merritt  
Larry Johnson  
David Beatty  
Sharon Ferguson  
Rollie Hower  
Rosalie Snyder  
Bob Huffman  
Crystal Rupprecht  
Stephanie Williams  
Jerome Church  
Sonny Rupprecht  
Lennis Bridgett  
Tom Berry  
Barbara Rowe

Alyssa Buckler  
Hailey Sellers  
Laurie Hamilton  
Jim Harmon  
Mary Pat Berry  
Mike Byrd  
Ted Rogers  
Jennifer Hamer  
June Hanson  
Don Stapleson  
Landin Richards  
Charles Snyder  
Trevor Brown  
Randy Hill  
Bruce Richardson  
Keith Winters

Jennifer Hancock  
Julie Burch  
John McPherson  
Justin Williams  
Marion Craft  
Jason Morrison  
Patricia Buckler  
Sharon Biasatti  
Madelyn Donaldson  
Mary Ann Bivens  
Renee Nash  
Laurie Hamilton  
Doug Williams  
Diana Church  
Don Rowe  
Chris Rogers

## Our Church Staff & Church Leadership

Rev. Dr. Susan E. Boehl	Senior Pastor
Rev. Ed Chance	Retired Pastor / Visitation
Corrie Roberts	Youth Leader
Karen Hamner	Church Administrator
Patricia Day	Choir Director
Linda Dent Mitchell	Organist
Cheryl Reckeweg	Hand Bell Choir Director
Laurie Smith	Church Treasurer
Archie Verdiglione, Sr.	Building Superintendent
Jim & Dina Harris	Church Sextons
Bill Riley	Groundskeeper
Julie Robbins	Preschool Director
Trish Carruth	Asst. Preschool Director
Eugene Bradford	Administrative Council Chair
Archie Verdiglione, Sr.	Lay Leader
Kevin Robbins	Board of Trustees President
Rick Boggs	Staff-Parish Relations Chair
Zana May	Finance Committee Chair

### Our Church Motto for 2018

"We are trusting in God's providence to lead us and bless us as we go through a year of change and growth"



On Facebook go to 'La Plata Umc'  
and click on 'Like Page'  
to see our LIVE broadcasts



3 Port Tobacco Road  
La Plata, Maryland 20646-2824  
Office: 301-934-2288  
Email: [laplataumc@gmail.com](mailto:laplataumc@gmail.com)  
On the web: [www.laplataumc.org](http://www.laplataumc.org)  
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