

La Plata United Methodist Church



**The Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 11, 2018**

Café Worship (8:30)

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

Gathering Music

Mike Rainwater

Welcome & Centering

Please stand, if able

Opening Prayer (Together)

Most Benevolent and Gracious God; we come before you to worship you this morning aware of all the trouble and difficulty we sometimes find ourselves in. Of course, we try to fix things ourselves first, before realizing that only you can save us and help us. Forgive us Lord, for our foolishness and thank you God for helping us get out of the troubles we are in. Teach us to turn to you first and early for all our needs, through Jesus Christ our Lord, we pray. Amen.

Greeting Each Other in the Name of Christ

Please be seated

Prayer for Churches in Transition

See page 4

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 pages 7

Old Testament Lesson

Numbers 21:4-9

The Gospel Lesson

John 3:14-21

The Message

Rev. Bruce A. Jones

“Lift Up Your Eyes”

(Sermon Notes can be found on page 8)

Benediction

Please stand, if able

Departure Music



Mike Rainwater

Liturgist: Don Purdy

Service Prayer Partner: Joyce Hancock

Traditional Worship (11:00)

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

Prayer Before Worship

Dear God, I don't know why you are so good to me. I know I haven't been as good as I should. And I don't know why you love me so, but I am grateful you do. And I don't know why you forgive my sins, but without that, I would be lost for sure. 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:

Crimson Angels

"He is Exalted"

Please stand, if able

Call to Worship (Responsively)

from Psalm 107

Give thanks to the LORD, for God is good; God's love endures forever.

Let the redeemed of the LORD say this — those God redeemed from the hand of the foe, those gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.

For we cried out to the LORD in our trouble, and God delivered us from our distress.

God led us by a straight way to a city where we could settle.

Let us give thanks to the LORD for God's unfailing love and wonderful deeds for us, for the Lord satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Let us give thanks to the LORD for unfailing love and wonderful deeds for us, for God breaks down gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron.

Some became fools through their rebellious ways

And suffered affliction because of their iniquities.

Let us give thanks to the LORD for unfailing love and wonderful deeds for us.

Let us sacrifice thank offerings and tell of God's works with songs of joy.

Opening Hymn

UM Hymnal, 378

“Amazing Grace” (vs. 1-3) †

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.

Anthem:

Cherub Choir

“He’s the Children’s Savior”

Children’s Moment

Bruce Jones

Please be seated

A Prayer for Churches in Transition (Together)

Almighty and Everlasting God, we know that you are at work in our lives, and in the lives of others who are affected by this time of change in the life of our church.

We ask for your Holy Spirit to be upon Rev. Susan Boehl, that as you prepare her to come and be a part of this church and this ministry, you may fill her with hope, courage, joy and optimism about the future. Use her to move us forward in your divine plan for us. And may we surround her with love, support and affirmation, knowing that she is the one you have chosen to lead us into the next chapter of this church’s life and history.

Bless each one of us here, and our whole church family. Bless our ministries so that all that we do, all that we are, and all that we will be, may be firmly in your hands. We trust your love. We trust your goodness. We trust that you have our best future in your heart. We pray all this in Jesus’ holy name. Amen.

Welcome, News & Opportunities

The Old Testament Lesson

See page 7

Numbers 21:4-9

Moses lifts the bronze snake on a pole

Offertory:

Crimson Angels

“Love in Any Language”

Please stand, if able

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

Hymn of Preparation

The Faith We Sing, 2088

“Lord, I Lift Your Name on High” (2x)

The Gospel Lesson

See page 7

John 3:14-21

Jesus speaks with Nicodemus

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

Thanks be to God.

Please be seated

The Message

Rev. Bruce A. Jones

“Lift Up Your Eyes”

(A place to take Sermon Notes can be found on page 8)

Please stand, if able

Closing Hymn

UM Hymnal, 159

“Lift High the Cross”

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

† Among the top 50 Favorite Hymns & Songs of 2017

Acolyte: Ashton Gordon; Liturgist: Joyce Dean

Organist: Linda Dent Mitchell; Cherub Choir Co-Director: Linda Dent Mitchell;

Cherub Choir Co-Directors: Sherry McConnell, Judi Gordon, Rev. Sue Carns;

Service Prayer Partner: Carol Sorenson

*The flowers on the altar
are to the glory of God.*



The Scripture Lessons

Numbers 21:4-9 (NIV)

They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!"

Then the Lord sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people.

The Lord said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, they lived.

John 3:14-21 (NIV)

Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him."

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Sermon Notes

“Lift Up Your Eyes”

Have you ever tried to play _____ with a small child?

I remember trying to teach my girls. Invariably, when an object is coming at them, they will _____ their _____, turn sideways, and then cry when it hits them. "The _____ cannot hurt you so long as your eyes are open."

When the Hebrews were wandering in the desert ...

Because they griped, God sent poisonous snakes among the people, and many people got bitten, and many of them died.

The smart Hebrews quickly figured out this was a _____ for their complaining against God, and against Moses. God told Moses to fashion a _____, put it on a pole and hold it up.

You and I are not all that different from the Hebrews of so long ago.

As we have seen, no matter how hard we pray, God doesn't always remove the _____ we have caused from our lives. God does immediately offer us forgiveness and _____, if we look to him and confess our sins. So while the Hebrews would have been happier if the snakes had all gone away, the better lesson which God was teaching them was that they need to look up at the pole to find their redemption.

That's the point that Jesus made with _____. Just as the people were saved from the snakes (a recurring symbol of sin, temptation and _____) by lifting their eyes to the bronze snake on the pole, so will people be saved from their sins, when they lift up their eyes to look upon Jesus as he hung on the pole of crucifixion.

We are all really good at getting ourselves in _____. Sometimes it is just little stuff, and sometimes we really screw up. God doesn't need to send incidents of _____ since the trouble we get ourselves into does a pretty good job of punishing us on its own.

We can cry out to God, to _____ our problems, but God doesn't simply take the consequences of our sins away.

We all know of people who have gotten themselves in really big trouble and find that the consequences _____ them for the rest of their lives.

Experimenting with drugs ...

Every sinful venture brings consequences. Every act of selfishness has a _____. Life may have those consequences, but God is ready and willing to forgive us, if we lift our eyes toward Jesus and accept that God will _____ us.

CALENDAR

Sunday, March 11

- 8:30a **Café Worship** (FH2)
- 9:30a Disciple I-Fast Track (Rm. 102)
- 9:45a Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00a **Traditional Service** (Sanctuary)
- 12:00p Youth Group (YR)
- 1:15p He Choose the Nails - Bible Study (Rm. 102)
- 1:30p Sagepoint Service
- 4:00p Alpha course (FH1 & 2)

Monday, March 12

- 5:30p 12 Step Home Group - AA (Rm. 104)
- 6:00p WCBA (Preschool Board) Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)
- 7:30p PMNS - "Fearless" (FH2)
- 8:30p AA Meeting - Warner Group (Rm. 104)

Tuesday, March 13

- 7:30a Community Round Table - at Panera Bread
- 10:00a UMW Book Club (Parlor)
- 1:30p BLP 2's Team Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)
- 6:00p Creative Circle (Rm. 106)
- 6:00p Men's Emmaus Reunion Group (FH2)
- 7:00p Disciple II Fast Track (Rm. 110)
- 7:30p Finance Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)

Wednesday, March 14

- 9:30a Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Rm. 110)
- 12:00p AA Meeting - Serenity Seekers (Rm. 104)
- 1:30p BLP 4's Team Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)
- 2:00p Food Pantry (Bowie Annex)
- 5:30p Beatitudes Practice (Rm. 110)
- 6:00p Evening Circle (Rm. 412/Board Room)
- 7:00p Cherubs & Crimson Angels practice (Rm. 423/Music Room)
- 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice (Adult Choir Room/ Rm.100)

Thursday, March 15

- 1:30p BLP 3's Team Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)
- 6:30p Cub Scout Pack 423 (Rm. 104, 106 & 110)
- 7:00p Jesus in the Gospels (Rm. 102)
- 7:30p SPRC Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)

Friday, March 16

- 4:00p Lion's Club Spaghetti Dinner (FH1)
- 6:30p Youth Game Night (YR)

Saturday, March 17

Sunday, March 18

- 8:30a **Café Worship** (FH2)
- 9:30a Disciple I-Fast Track (Rm. 102)
- 9:45a Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00a **Traditional Service** (Sanctuary)
- 12:00p Youth Group Family Lunch (Off Site)
- 1:15p He Choose the Nails - Bible Study (Rm. 102)
- 1:30p Youth Group Photo Scavenger Hunt
- 5:00p Alpha course (FH1 & 2)

KEY: FH1=Old Fellowship Hall, FH2=New Fellowship Hall, Rm. 104=Old Youth Room, Rm. 106=Old Conf. Rm #1, Rm. 110=Old Conf. Rm. #2, Rm. 102=Old Parlor BLP=Blessed Lambs Preschool, M & M=Meal & a Message

Program News

WORSHIP

OUR REGULAR WORSHIP SCHEDULE - On Sundays, Café Service is at 8:30 AM in Fellowship Hall 2 and we have Traditional Worship in the sanctuary at 11:00 AM. Sunday school classes are at 9:45 AM for all ages.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES - There will be a **Maundy Thursday Communion Service** on Thursday, March 29, here in our sanctuary at 7:00 PM. And there will be an **Ecumenical Good Friday Pilgrimage** the following day from noon to three. This service will begin at Grace Lutheran Church at noon, then we will walk to Sacred Heart Catholic Church and have a brief service there. Then we will walk down the street to Christ Episcopal Church for another brief service, and then walk down to this church for the concluding service, and a time of refreshments. A bus will take those who cannot do the long walks, and will take all worshipers back to their cars in the parking lot of Grace Lutheran. This is an important community event, to which all people are invited.

SUNRISE SERVICE - Sunrise service will be held on Easter Sunday, April 1 at 6:30 AM at Gilbert Run Park. After Sunrise service breakfast will be served in Fellowship Hall 1.

ATTENDANCE PADS - The attendance sheets come to the church administrator and she records all the information and sends it off to where it needs to go. She also tracks attendance for each of the worship services and this information is passed on to our Congregational Care Ministry Team so that they can send a note to those folks who have been absent from church for a few weeks. **Please write all the names of your family on the pad so that attendance at worship can be recorded accurately. Remember there may be more than one family in the congregation with the same last name, so if you just put your last name on the pad there is no way to know which family it is. Also, please be sure to write the service you are attending on the pad, Café, 11:00, or one of our special services.**

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

NURSERY IS AVAILABLE - Nursery care for little ones (ages 0-4 yrs) is available during the 11:00 Sunday morning service. Please be considerate of the other worshipers. If your little one becomes unsettled and distracting, please step out

of the service. An usher 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 or Carrie Summers.

FELLOWSHIP

COFFEE HOUSE - The Fellowship Ministries team has scheduled our 2nd annual Coffee House for Saturday, March 24 at 7:00 PM. Now is the time for you to let us know if you would like to participate on our stage. You can sign up online by going to this link: <https://form.jotform.co/40097256406858> or visiting our web site www.laplataumc.org, or contact Pat Brennan at (301) 934-0334h, (240) 346-4080c. The stage will be available on Friday, March 23, 2018, from 7:00pm for you to practice with equipment and try out the space. This is a sure way to end that cabin fever you have been experiencing! Mark your calendar so you will not miss this evening of fun and fellowship!

YOUTH GROUP - Registration for summer camps through the Baltimore Washington Conference is now open. West River and Manidokan offer week long summer camps for kids entering 2nd- 12th grade. Fliers for both camps are on the table in the narthex. Scholarships are available for any child or youth from our church. Contact Corrie Roberts, our church camp contact, or check out: bwccampsandretreats.com.

SPAGHETTI DINNER - The La Plata Lions Club will hold its annual Spaghetti Dinner in our Fellowship Hall on Friday, March 16. from 4:00 until 8:00 PM. Tickets are available at the door; adults are \$10.00, children 6-10 are \$5.00 and children 5 and under are admitted free. There will be door prizes, live entertainment, and all proceeds are used for local projects. Please consider joining the Lions for an enjoyable evening of food, fun, and fellowship.

SILENT AUCTION - The 2018 LPUMC Silent Auction plans are underway and we need your support. This year our Silent Auction will be held on Saturday, April 21. Make plans to come out to enjoy fun and fellowship while you bid on your favorite treasures. If you have any items that are of good quality, that are antiques, collectibles, baked goods, vacations, like new or new items, or if you wish to donate your services, please fill in the form located in your bulletin and put it in the offering plate, or send it to the office. All donations are due no later than April 8 at 12:00 noon. You must call Joyce Dean to make arrangements to drop items off at her home.

Please stop by the Silent Auction Table and see Louise Stine to pick up a few Solicitation letters to take to local businesses.

WOMEN'S TEA - Save the date for the Women's Day Tea, Saturday, May 19, 2018.

DISCIPLESHIP

PASTOR'S MONDAY NIGHT STUDY - Pastor Bruce's next Monday Night Study will be a look at our Apostles' Creed. What do we believe as Christians, and why do we hold these things to be foundations of our faith? Using a new book by Adam Hamilton, Rev. Jones will lead this six-week class that begins on Monday, March 19. It will run every Monday through April 30. This is the last formal class that Pastor Bruce will be teaching. To sign up, please write Creed on the Fellowship folder, or call the church office at 301-934-2288.

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY - Our Wednesday Morning Bible Study will begin a new class on March 28. "Slightly Bad Girls of the Bible" is by Liz Curtis Higgs and looks at different 'Bad Girls' of the Bible, like Hagar, Sarah and Rachel. This 8 week study will wrap up about May 16. Please let Corrie Roberts know by March 18 if you would like her to order you a book. Everyone is welcome to come, we gather at 9:30 AM in room 110!

SERVICE & CARING

BRICKS FOR SALE - We are still selling bricks to be engraved and placed below the bell tower to benefit our building fund. The bricks range in price from \$100 - \$1,500. Please stop by the church office in order to hand pick the location of your brick and choose your engraving. Please share this idea with anyone you think will want an opportunity to participate. If we sell all the bricks, we will raise nearly \$88,000 for the Building Fund.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS YOUR HELP - Our church's food pantry is requesting that we bring in the following food items: canned vegetables, fruit and soup, macaroni and cheese, shell pasta, cereal, peanut butter, grape jelly, and children's pouches or boxes of juice. Please remember that pets need food too and our food pantry also accepts pet food. You may also make a monetary donation.

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.

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.

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.

ADMINISTRATION

WINTER WEATHER NOTIFICATIONS - If wintry weather is predicted on a Sunday morning, the leaders of the church will make a decision around 6:00 AM and decide whether to cancel Café Worship or cancel both services. Sunday School will be cancelled if both services are called off. If only Café is cancelled, we will make a separate decision about Sunday School. We will let the congregation know by posting a message on Facebook (our church page is "La Plata Umc") and by posting a notice on our web site's homepage.

DONATIONS - Please check with the church office before "donating" items to the church, then we can notify the proper program or ministry to pick them up or put them away. If you simply drop things off, no one knows who they belong to or what to do with them.



Our Prayer List

Bobby Boyce - is home recovering from Cardiac Arrest.

Chris Rogers - has been released from Rehab.

Sharon Bowie - is recovering from shoulder replacement surgery.

Jerome Church - Jesse Coombs' grandson-in-law, received a new liver last week.

Jesse would like to thank the congregation for their prayers.

Renee Nash - Cheryl Smith's sister, and also her nieces.

Pete Barbour - Jesse Coombs' neighbor - having a lot of heart trouble

Continue praying for these friends & loved ones:



Christina Kingsbury
Jennifer Carpenter
Kevin McKay
Lillian Leiman
Chris Moorhouse
Sharon Ferguson
Rollie Hower
Rosalie Snyder
Dorothy Jackson
Drey Thomason
Crystal Rupprecht
Bill Sigmon
Landin Richards
Sonny Rupprecht
Celeste Church
Larry Johnson
June Hanson

Alyssa Buckler
Hailey Sellers
Barbara Williams
Jim Harmon
Mike Merritt
Mike Williams
Ronnie Lucas
Jennifer Hamer
Katrina Gessner
David Smith
Don Stapleson
Duke Deldeo
Christine Tressler
Bev Nuzzi
Charlie Parsons
David Beatty
Lloyd Bowling

Jennifer Hancock
Julie Burch
John McPherson
Sal Aloisio
Marion Craft
Jason Morrison
Patricia Buckler
Sharon Biasatti
TR Gandee
Robert Altiero
Becky Dean
Linda Belanger
Randy Hill
Sam Barber
Laurie Hamilton
Jimmy & Dorothy Roberts

Our Church Staff & Church Leadership

Rev. Dr. Bruce A. Jones	Senior Pastor
Rev. Ed Chance	Retired Pastor / Visitation
Gwen Rodriguez	Pastoral Intern
Karen Hamner	Church Administrator
Corrie Roberts	Youth Leader
Patricia Day	Choir Director
Linda Dent Mitchell	Organist
Cheryl Reckeweg	Hand Bell Choir Director
Laurie Smith	Church Treasurer
Ed McKenzie	Building Superintendent
Jim & Dina Harris	Church Sextons
Bill Riley	Groundskeeper
Julie Robbins	Preschool Director
Trish Carruth	Asst. Preschool Director
Eugene Bradford	Administrative Council Chair
Kevin Robbins	Board of Trustees President
Rick Boggs	Staff-Parish Relations Chair
Scott Sheffield	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"



'Like' us on Facebook: "La Plata Umc"



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