

La Plata United Methodist Church



First Sunday of Advent
December 3, 2017



Café Worship (8:30)

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

Gathering Music

Mike Rainwater

Welcome

Please stand, if able

Opening Prayer (Together)

Most Loving Heavenly Father, we come to worship you and give you thanks as we think back on all the ways you have provided for our needs and blessed us. Lord, you have taught us many lessons through our experiences in the past, and we come before you with hope that those lessons will prepare us to be more faithful to you and more loving toward our neighbors, today and tomorrow. In Jesus' holy name we pray. Amen.

Greeting Each Other in the Name of Christ

Please be seated

Lighting the Advent Candles The Candle of Hope
The Ryan & Laurie Mudd Family

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 7
Old Testament Lesson	Isaiah 64:1-5, 8-9
Gospel Lesson	Mark 13:24-37

The Communion Meditation Rev. Bruce Jones
“The Lessons of Christmas Past”
(Sermon notes can be found on page 8)
Please stand, if able

The Sacrament of Holy Communion
Invitation & Instructions, Confessions, Assurance,
Consecration, Sharing in the Sacrament, Thanksgiving

Benediction

Departure Music



Mike Rainwater

Liturgist: Don Purdy
Service Prayer Partner: Jeanette Tull
Communion Steward: Rita Riley
Servers: Rev. Bruce Jones, Jim Risley,
Archie Verdiglione, Sr. & Donna Burket

Traditional Worship (11:00)

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

Prayer Before Worship

God of Past, Present & Future; continue to lead us in the paths of righteousness for your names sake as we travel this journey of Advent toward the birth of your Son. Amen.

Prelude, Prayer & Meditation & Lighting the Altar Candles,

Linda Dent Mitchell

When the Prelude begins, those who wish to pray together at the front are invited to come forward; others may quiet themselves in meditation or pray the prayer printed above silently to themselves during this time.

Introit:

Steve Hancock

“Spirit of the Living God”

Please stand, if able

Call to Worship (Responsively)

from Psalm 80

Shepherd of Israel, listen! You, the one who leads Joseph as if he were a sheep. You who are enthroned upon the winged heavenly creatures.

Show yourself before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh!

Wake up your power! Come to save us!

Restore us, O God! Make your face shine so that we can be saved!

Restore us, God of heavenly forces! Make your face shine so that we can be saved!

Let your hand be with the one on your right side – with the one whom you secured as your own – then we will not turn away from you!

Revive us so that we can call on your name. Restore us, Lord God of heavenly forces! Make your face shine so that we can be saved!

Opening Hymn

UM Hymnal, 196

“Come Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

The Invocation (Together)

Most Loving Heavenly Father, we come to worship you and give you thanks as we think back on all the ways you have provided for our needs and blessed us. Lord, you have taught us many

lessons through our experiences in the past, and we come before you with hope that those lessons will prepare us to be more faithful to you and more loving toward our neighbors, today and tomorrow. In Jesus' holy name we pray. 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.

Please be seated

Lighting the Advent Candles

The Candle of Peace

The Don & Kathy Stapleson Family

Welcome, News & Opportunities

The Old Testament Lesson

See page 7

Isaiah 64:1-5, 8-9

Offertory:

Steve Hancock

"Somebody's Prayin'"

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

UM Hymnal, 202

"People, Look East" (vs. 1,3,4)

The Gospel Lesson

See page 7

Mark 13:24-37

No one knows when he will come

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

Thanks be to God.

Please be seated

The Communion Meditation

Rev. Bruce Jones

"The Lessons of Christmas Past"

(Sermon notes can be found on page 8)

Communion Song

UM Hymnal, 629

"You Satisfy the Hungry Heart" (vs. 1-2)

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

INVITATION & INSTRUCTIONS (Pastor)

PRAYER OF GENERAL CONFESSION (Together)

Most Holy & Gracious God; we come and bow down before you on our faces, recognizing that we have disappointed you, and ourselves by some of our behavior. We have uttered words harshly, and used words that do more harm than good. We have done things that we should not have done, and we looked past opportunities to do good, and help others. We confess that our motivations and designs do not first go to serving or pleasing you. We often are so engrossed in our own ideas and our own plans, that we fail to listen for your plans, or follow your instructions. Forgive us we pray, Almighty God, not because we deserve your forgiveness, nor because we ask for it, but on account of your Son, whom you sent to take our sins away. We commit ourselves to changing our ways, and to serving you more fully. Amen.

PRIVATE PRAYERS OF CONFESSION (Silently)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Pastor)

CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS (Pastor)

SHARING IN THE SACRAMENT (Everyone)

PRAYER OF GRATEFUL THANKSGIVING (Together)

We praise you, Lord, God of great mercy and love. We thank you, Father, that you care for us so much, even in the midst of our messing up and doing wrong. We are in awe, that while we were still in our lost condition, you sent your Son Jesus to be born, live and then die for us, so that our sins could be forgiven. We bless your name, and will sing your praise for you have indeed done marvelous things on our behalf. Thank you, God. Thank you, God. Thank you, God. Amen.

Please stand, if able

Closing Hymn

UM Hymnal, 218

“It Came Upon the Midnight Clear” (vs. 1,2,4)

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 & Praise Songs of 2016

Acolyte: Haley Holcomb; Liturgist: Tom Hall
Organist: Linda Dent Mitchell; Chancel Choir Director: Pat Day
Soloist: Steve Hancock
Service Prayer Partner: Sandy Tull
Communion Steward: Lesa Richardson
Communion Servers: Rev. Bruce Jones, Sylvia Mudd,
Rev. Ed & Wilmeta Chance

*The Flowers on the Altar
are to the glory of God, and in loving
memory of our family members
who are no longer with us,
given by The Sheffield Family.*



The Scripture Lessons

Isaiah 64:1-5, 8-9 (CEB)

If only you would tear open the heavens and come down!

Mountains would quake before you like fire igniting brushwood or making water boil.

If you would make your name known to your enemies,
the nations would tremble in your presence.

When you accomplished wonders beyond all our expectations;
when you came down, mountains quaked before you.

From ancient times, no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any
god but you who acts on behalf of those who wait for him!

You look after those who gladly do right; they will praise you for your ways.
But you were angry when we sinned; you hid yourself when we did wrong.

But now, Lord, you are our father.

We are the clay, and you are our potter. All of us are the work of your hand.
Don't rage so fiercely, Lord;
don't hold our sins against us forever, but gaze now on your people, all of us.

Mark 13:24-37 (NIV)

"But in those days, following that distress,

'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light;
the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

"At that time people will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great
power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four
winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens.

"Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its
leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these
things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. Truly I tell you, this
generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.
Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

"But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor
the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that
time will come. It's like a man going away: He leaves his house and puts his
servants in charge, each with their assigned task, and tells the one at the door to
keep watch.

"Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house
will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster
crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What
I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!' "

Sermon Notes

“The Lessons of Christmas Past”

I want all of us to think back to the _____est Christmas we can remember. In our Advent Bible Study, we are looking at elements of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol to see what it is about the story that helps Ebenezer Scrooge change. Scrooge endures visits from the three Ghosts of Christmas: the Ghost of Christmas Past, Present, and Future.

As I tie these messages for Advent and Christmas together, the story of A Christmas Carol and these midnight _____, may help us have a framework with which to travel through this Advent season.

I want to invite you now to close your eyes and drift back to the earliest Christmas you can remember. Perhaps your childhood Christmases sort of run together, but imagine where your family's Christmas tree stood in your home. How were gifts arrayed? Were they all wrapped? Or open and displayed with separate gifts for each child?

What lessons did you learn about _____, about giving, about receiving, about _____ or about Santa when you were little?

Here are a few thoughts on what we might have learned.

- 1, _____
- 2, _____
- 3, _____

In the Isaiah passage for today, Isaiah expresses what so many of us truly wish about God. “If only you would tear open the heavens and come down! If you would make your name known to your enemies, the nations would tremble in your presence.”

It would be so much easier to _____, to trust in God, to see God at work if God would just come down and be with us. Well, that's what God did in _____. He came down and lived among us, he performed amazing miracles and showed us that God is both real and trustworthy. God fulfilled the promises made in scripture and Jesus promised he would come back. One of the first lessons we learn is that God _____.

Another lesson is that _____ us and _____ about us, and God blesses us when we live the way God calls us to live. When we do good, live righteously, and show love and caring to others, God makes so many things in our lives go better.

Now, unlike Christmas, the coming of Christ at the end of the world is _____. The Gospel lesson makes it very clear that nobody will know.

CALENDAR

Sunday, December 3 - 1st Sunday of Advent - Holy Communion

- 8:30a **Café Worship Service**
- 9:30a Disciple I-Fast Track (Rm. 102)
- 9:45a Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00a **Traditional Service** (Sanctuary)
- 11:15a Kid's Church (Rm 104)
- 3:00p Youth Group trip to PTP

Monday, December 4

- 5:30p 12 Step Home Group - AA (Rm. 104)
- 6:00p Girl Scout troop 1438 (Rm. 110)
- 7:30p PMNS "The Redemption of Scrooge" (Rm. 102)
- 8:30p AA Meeting - Warner Group (Rm. 104)

Tuesday, December 5

- 7:30a Community Round Table - at Panera Bread
- 6:00p Men's Emmaus Reunion Group (FH1)
- 6:00p Women's Emmaus Reunion Group (Parlor/ Rm. 405)
- 6:30p 4-H Mounted Wanderer's (FH1)
- 6:30p Country Clovers 4-H Club (Rm. 104)
- 7:00p Disciple II/Fast Track (Rm. 110)
- 7:00p Evening Circle (The home of Julie Robbins)

Wednesday, December 6

- 9:00a Meals and Hope Food Prep. (Kitchen)
- 9:30a Wednesday Morning Bible Study (Rm 110)
- 12:00p AA Meeting - Serenity Seekers (Rm. 104)
- 1:30p BLP Staff Meeting (Rm. 412/Board Room)
- 2:00p Food Pantry - open till 4:00 (Bowie Annex)
- 5:30p Beatitudes Practice (Rm. 110)
- 6:30p **Wednesday Night Service - M & M** (FH2)
- 7:00p Cherub Choir & Crimson Angels Practice (Rm. 423/Music Rm. & Sanctuary)
- 7:30p Chancel Choir Practice (Adult Choir Room/ Rm.100)

Thursday, December 7

- 10:00a ABR Circle (Parlor)
- 12:00p ABR Circle Christmas Luncheon (FH1)
- 6:00p Carillon Choir practice (Sanctuary)
- 6:30p Cub Scout Pack 423 (FH1)
- 7:00p Jesus in the Gospels (FH2)

Friday, December 8

Saturday, December 9

- 9:00a Youth Group Drop N Shop (Education Wing & FH1)

Sunday, December 10 - 2nd Sunday of Advent

- 8:30a **Café Worship Service**
- 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)
- 1:30p Sagepoint Service

Program News

WORSHIP

WORSHIP SCHEDULE - On Sundays, Café Service at 8:30 AM in the fellowship hall and Traditional Worship in the sanctuary at 11:00 AM. Sunday school classes are at 9:45 AM for all ages.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICE - "M&M" which stands for 'Meal & a Message.' Bring or pick up what you'd like to eat for supper and join us around 6:30 PM for some great fellowship. Worship begins at 7:00 PM. You may arrive anytime from 6:30 to 7:00 to eat your food, or you may just come for the service. If you don't have a supper, you are always invited to stop by our 'Food Court', known to most people as the Sonic Drive-In next door. This service will focus on the intimacy of worship, on prayer and sharing what God is doing in our lives. Scriptures will be shared and we will dialogue around what they teach us, Sunday's sermon will not be repeated.

CHRISTMAS CANTATA - This year the Chancel Choir will be singing Lloyd Larson's "Holy Night of Miracles" with accompaniment. They will be performing the cantata only once, at the 11:00 service on December 17. This would be a good Sunday to attend the Café Service for the message, and then attend the Traditional Service for the great music.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES - We will celebrate the birth of Jesus with three services of worship, 4:00, 7:30 & 11:00 PM at 7:00 PM our Carillon Choir, our hand bells, will provide a mini concert. Please invite your friends.

ALTAR FLOWERS - The 2018 Flower Chart is now posted on the wall 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.

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 worshippers. 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.

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

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS - On December 17 and 24 our church will be decorated with poinsettias. Please use the envelope in your bulletin to order your poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one. If you do not use your envelope, please recycle it in the basket in the Narthex.

FELLOWSHIP

ABR CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON - Today is the last day to buy your ticket for the United Methodist Women's ABR Circle Christmas Luncheon to be held on Thursday, December 7, at 12:00 PM in Fellowship Hall 1. The cost of the tickets are \$10 per person, and you must buy your ticket in advance. **NO TICKETS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR.** This year the ladies are having a catered Baked Potato Bar with lots of delicious toppings, salad and desserts. We are asking that you bring an unwrapped gift for a child or teen to be donated to the Charles County Children's Aide Society.

CHRISTMAS CAROLING - Please join the Fellowship Ministry team for our annual Christmas Caroling on Sunday, Dec 17. We will gather in Fellowship Hall 1 for a delicious soup and sandwich luncheon provided by committee members immediately following the 11:00 AM service. After eating, we will board a school bus to visit church members who have not been able to attend services. We will return NLT 4:30 PM. Wear your Santa hat and "crazy holiday" sweaters / clothing to show your Christmas spirit. (You may win a prize?) Families are welcome and lyrics are provided to all of your favorite carols. Contact Cheryl Smith @ 301-752-1386 or the Church office for any questions.

DISCIPLESHIP

ALPHA - Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for the Alpha Celebration Dinner on Sunday, January 7, at 5:00 PM in Fellowship Hall 1. If you have already attended an Alpha course, come to dinner and invite a friend or family member to join you. If you haven't attended the Alpha course, but are curious to know what it's all about, come to dinner and find out. Just write Alpha dinner in the red fellowship folder or call Karen in the Church office to sign up. The winter course will begin on Sunday, January 14 and run through March 25, with the Holy Spirit weekend on Saturday, March 3.

SERVICE & CARING

YOUTH GROUP - The youth group Drop N Shop fundraiser is scheduled for next Saturday, December 9, from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. Our youth will watch your children (birth – 5th grade) while you get some Christmas shopping done. Please register with Polly Boggs, at pollyaboggs@gmail.com no later than Thursday,

December 7. Each child will need to bring a snack and a lunch. The children will be making a gift and a Christmas card, and will go outside if the weather permits, so dress your children appropriately. The cost is simply a donation to the youth group to help cover the cost of our Manidokan and Rock retreats.

CHRISTMAS ADOPTED FAMILY - Each year at Christmas, we adopt a local family or two, from our partner school, Matula Elementary. This year we have two families with 10 children total, a mixture of boys and girls, ranging from 1 to 9 years of age. Take a tag from the Christmas tree in the foyer, and purchase the specific item that is listed there. Please bring all unwrapped items, back to church no later than December 13th. Thank you in advance for your generosity, this church is truly a blessing to our community.

LITTLE RED STOCKINGS - There are Little Red Stockings on the information table for you to take home, fill up with quarters and place in the offering plate. The Board of Child Care appreciates your support of their ministry to help the children and their families who are in the foster system and the adoption process. Thanks in advance for your help.

CREATIVE CIRCLE - The quilt made by the Creative Circle group sold at the Holiday Shoppe for \$600. They will donate the money to World Vision and Heifer International. Creative Circle meets on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month in Room 106 and new members are always welcome.

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.

APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT - The ASP team is selling Butter Braids to help support their efforts to go to West Virginia next summer. Please look for the ASP table, or go to the church website and click on the Butter Braid link to order your braids. Orders for pre-Christmas delivery need to be made by December 8.

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

BUILDING SECURITY - Please do not exit out the front (Rt. 6) door. It does not close properly from the outside, and has been found open on many Monday mornings. The church and Blessed Lambs Preschool staff arrive early in the morning, and they would not want to be surprised by someone who has come in the church during the night.

UPDATE YOUR ADDRESS - If you have changed addresses or phone numbers in the last 3 years, please contact the church office at 301-934-2288 or email us at laplataumc@gmail.com and update your information. We would like to have the most current addresses and phone numbers for our new directory.

Our Prayer List

Sonny Rupprecht - fractured his foot and may need surgery.

Lloyd Bowling - is at Sagepoint for rehabilitation after a hospital stay.

June Hanson - is in St. Mary's hospital with a bladder infection.

Becky Dean - Joyce Hancock's niece, has been diagnosed with cancer of the eyelid. She will begin chemotherapy and radiation soon.

Celeste Church - Jesse Combs' granddaughter is in the hospital with an abscess on her ovary.

Iris Dickerson - would like to thank everyone for their prayers, they helped the old bones in her back heal. May God Bless you, we have a wonderful church.



Continue praying for these friends & loved ones:

Christina Kingsbury

Jennifer Carpenter

Kevin McKay

Lillian Leiman

Chris Moorhouse

Sharon Ferguson

Stephanie Williams

Rosalie Snyder

Dorothy Jackson

Drey Thomason

Crystal Rupprecht

Howard Viguers

Ginger Jones

Bonnie Thompson

Peggy Gessner

Gavin Richards

Harryette Hower

Sal Alsizio

Alyssa Buckler

Hailey Sellers

Barbara Williams

Jim Harmon

Greg Kenney

Mike Williams

Sonny Davis

Jennifer Hamer

Katrina Gessner

David Smith

Don Stapleson

Duke Deldeo

Landin Richards

Bev Nuzzi

Buddy Bowling

Mike Merritt

Jimmy & Dorothy Roberts

Sharon Biasatti

Jennifer Hancock

Julie Burch

John McPherson

June Hanson

Marion Craft

Jason Morrison

Patricia Buckler

Russ Melvin

TR Gandee

Robert Altiero

Jerome Church

Linda Belanger

Christine Tressler

Sam Barber

Laurie Hamilton

Charlie Parsons

Dianna Barrick

Randy Hill

Our Staff

Rev. Dr. Bruce A. Jones	Senior Pastor
Rev. Ed Chance	Retired Pastor / Visitation
Gwen Rodriguez	Pastoral Intern
Susan Matteson	Program Director
Corrie Roberts	Youth Leader
Karen Hamner	Church Secretary
Patricia Day	Choir Director
Linda Dent Mitchell	Organist
Cheryl Reckeweg	Hand Bell Choir Director
Kevin Bennear	WOW Worship Leader
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

Our Church Motto for 2017

"Worshiping and growing in fellowship & knowledge of Christ. Maturing from membership to discipleship: for us, for others, and for Jesus' sake."



'Friend' us on Facebook: [La Plata Umc](#)



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