



MECHANICSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
300 East Simpson Street • Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-6596
717-697-0351 • www.mechpresby.org
December 31, 2017 • First Sunday of Christmas • 11am

She Pondered BY LISLE GWYNN GARRITY inspired by Luke 2:15-20

When the shepherds see the newborn Messiah (confirming that their angelic night vision wasn't just a sleep-deprived hallucination), they deliver the angel's words to the new family. All are amazed by this pronouncement, except for Mary. She takes it all in, rolling the words over and over in her head, planting them deep in her heart: "Good news . . . great joy . . . all people . . . a savior . . . the Messiah . . . a sign . . . wrapped in cloth . . . lying in a feeding trough." Why does she ponder these things if she already knew them?



I imagine Mary committing these words to muscle memory; she internalizes them so deeply within herself so that the words won't leave her – especially when the time comes for her baby son to be tested and tried and executed. Like the baby in her arms, these words become a part of her, filling like breath in her lungs.

I began this piece with a chaos of dark marks, smudging the entire paper black with charcoal. Then, starting from the middle, I began to draw with an eraser, etching the faces of Mary and her baby from the shadows. The result displays mother and child inextricably intertwined as light radiating amidst the darkness.

~ LGG

Prelude

*I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day
Away in a Manger*

J. Marks
M. Weaver

*We are extraordinarily grateful to Mike Weaver for providing our Prelude, Offertory, and Postlude today!
Thanks, Mike, for sharing your talents this Christmas season with the people of MPC!*

Welcome & Concerns of the Church

During this time, please take a moment to sign the pew pad and pass it along the pew, taking note of the persons sitting with you so you can greet them warmly by name.

Centering Prayer

*Introit #132, vv. 2

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

IN DULCI JUBLIO

*Call to Worship

Psalm 148

Praise the LORD from heaven!

Praise God on the heights!

Praise God, all of you who are his messengers!

Sun and moon, praise God!

All of you bright stars, praise God!

You highest heaven, praise God!

Do the same, you waters that are above the sky!

Let all of these praise the LORD's name

because God gave the command and they were created!

God set them in place always and forever.

God made a law that will not be broken.

Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all you ocean depths!

Do the same, fire and hail, snow and smoke, stormy wind that does what God says!

Do the same, you mountains, every single hill, fruit trees, and every single cedar!

Do the same, you animals, wild or tame, you creatures that creep along and you birds that fly!

Do the same, you kings of the earth and every single person, you princes and every single ruler on earth!

Do the same, you young men – young women too! – you who are old together with you who are young!

Let all of these praise the LORD's name because only God's name is high over all.

Only God's majesty is over earth and heaven.

*Hymn #134

Joy to the World

ANTIOCH

If you have a prayer request you would like to share with the pastors, please fill out a card from the pew rack and pass it to the center aisle where an usher will collect it during the first hymn. Please let us know of any changes.

*Welcoming a New Year

A new year stands on our doorstep
ready to enter our lives' journey.

Something in us welcomes this visitor:

**the hope of bountiful blessings
the joy of a new beginning
the freshness of unclaimed surprises.**

Something in us rebuffs this visitor:

**the swiftness of the coming
the boldness of the entrance
the challenge of a year's good-bye.**

Something in us fears this visitor:

**the unnamed events of future days
the wisdom needed to walk love well**

the demands of giving away and growing.

A new year stands on our doorstep.
with fragile caution we move
to open the door for its entrance,
our hearts leap with surprise,
joy jumps in our eyes,
for there beside this brand new year
stands our God with outstretched hand!

God smiles and gently asks of us:
can we walk this year together?

And we, so overwhelmed with goodness,
can barely whisper our reply:
"Welcome in!"

*Response #159, v.1 *O Sing a Song of Bethlehem* KINGSFOLD
*O Sing a Song of Bethlehem of shepherds watching there,
and of the news that came to them from angels in the air.
The light that shone on Bethlehem fills all the world today.
Of Jesus' birth and peace on earth the angels sing always.*

*The Passing of God's Love and Peace
The Peace of Christ be with you... **And also with you.**

Children's Moment

We invite children to remain in worship. There is a nursery available for infants through 5 year olds.

Response #121, v. 4 *O Little Town of Bethlehem* ST. LOUIS
*O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us; abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!*

Prayer for Illumination

First Lesson Isaiah 61:10-62:3 O.T. p. 692
Hymn #101 *No Wind at the Window* COLUMCILLE
Second Lesson Luke 2:22-40 N.T. p. 86
Sermon *Fearfully Hopeful* Mark A. Allio
*Hymn #123 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* CAROL

*Declaration of Faith The Apostles' Creed
Our church states its faith and bears witness to God's grace in Jesus Christ by using eleven creeds and confessions. In its earliest form the Apostles' Creed dates back to 180 AD. The word 'catholic' refers to the entire Christian church; 'quick' means living:
I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Offering of Tithes & Gifts

11am worshippers: Please place the top sheet of the fellowship pads in the offering plates.

Offertory *O Holy Night* A. Adam

*Response #144, v. 4 *In the Bleak Midwinter* CRANHAM
*What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man, I would do my part; yet what can I give him: give my heart.*

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Hymn #250**

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

PROMISE

***Charge & Benediction**

***Postlude**

Lo! How a Rose E'er Blooming

M. Praetorius

*** Please greet one another in Christ's name ***

VISITORS: Welcome! Information about MPC can be found in the packets in the pews. If you are interested in additional information, please ask anyone around you or contact one of the pastors. Fair trade coffee and snacks are served after worship in the Gathering Area just outside the Sanctuary doors. This is also where you will find the restrooms, including baby changing stations. Children's worship kits are located in the back of the Sanctuary. Worship aids are available from the ushers. We're glad you're here!

We are saddened to learn that Jean E. Updegraff died December 10, 2017. She and husband Bob, joined MPC in 1981 and were faithful members of the mailing crew. Jean is survived by daughters, Betsy and Connie. Jean's funeral service will be January 6, 2018 at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Camp Hill.

The regular Sunday Worship and Sunday School schedule resumes next Sunday.

Poinsettias may be picked up, as we can no longer deliver them to nursing homes.

There will be a brief congregational meeting during the January 7, 2018, 11am worship service for the purpose of hearing a report from the Nominating Committee.



One of the attributes of the Presbyterian denomination is that we are a connectional church. Our Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly connections provide us resources and support as well as avenues to help others in times of need. Every member is assessed a per capita of \$25 that goes towards these areas of ministry. We appreciate our members' contribution toward their per capita so that it doesn't come out of the general operating budget. Thank you.

Service Cancellation – In the event that church services or events need to be cancelled due to inclement weather, we urge members to tune into ABC Channel 27 WHTM-TV or check the church's website: www.mechpresby.org. You can also subscribe to the church's emails at this address. Please share the information with others in an effort to reach everyone.

A time of personal prayer is offered following the service. If you would like to pray with a pastor and one of the officers of the church, please meet them by the prayer room near the pulpit following the worship service.

If you or a family member is hospitalized or in need of pastoral care, call 717-896-0131 at any time. It will connect you to the church office and one of the pastors.

Ministers	All members of the congregation
Senior Pastor/Head of Staff.....Rev. Kathryn Z. Johnston.....	kjohnston@mechpresby.org
Associate Pastor for Youth & Young Adults Rev. Mark A. Allio.....	mallio@mechpresby.org
Director of Music Mark McKeever	mmckeever@mechpresby.org
Christian Education Director Cathay Snyder	csnyder@mechpresby.org
Playful Beginnings Director.....Karen P. Taylor.....	playfulbeginnings.mpc@gmail.com
Mission Relations.....	www.pcusa.org/missionconnections
Find us online!	www.mechpresby.org • Twitter: @mechpresby • Facebook: Mechanicsburg Presbyterian Church

More People Caring

Participating in Worship:
Greeters: Jean George, Catherine Gray, Ed Rogers
Ushers: Lynne Zerbe, Scott Rogers, Alan Vandrew, Larry Lichty
Reader: JoAnne Miller
Liturgy: Sanctified Art
Fellowship Hour: Esther Mullen

2018 Offering Envelopes are available for you to pick up in the Gathering Area. If you can't find a box of envelopes with your name and would like them, please call/email the church office (717-697-0351).



The Sr. High and Adult Mission Trip: We will be going to the Tampa area **July 9th – 16th**! Cost will be \$275 (family rate will be \$175 per person). If you or your teen are interested **we need to know by January 14!**

Jan. 7 – Family Movie Night – *Shaun the Sheep: The Movie* - 6-8 PM: Everyone is invited to join us! Kids, parents, grandparents and teens!

Jan. 14 – Youth Group – 6-8 PM

Jan. 21 – Sky Zone and Dinner(ish) – Meet there (95 Gateway Dr.) at 4:45 PM. Cost is \$20 for two hours of jump time and a slice of pizza and a drink. We'll finish up at 7 PM.

Jan. 28 – Baked Potato Brunch

Questions or comments: contact Mark Allio
 (717-697-0351 or mallio@mechpresby.org)

If you would like to make contributions recorded for this year, they must be received in the office by December 31, 2017 for this year's financial statements.

WEEK OF DECEMBER 31 – JANUARY 7, 2018		
SUN	11 AM	Morning Worship
MON		Happy New Year
TUE	9:30/12/7 7 PM	Annual Reports Due P. W. Circles Board of Deacons
WED	9:30 AM 6:30 PM 7 PM 7:45 PM	Playful Beginnings Bells of Celebration Hbg. Bike Club Chancel Choir
THU	6:30 PM 7 PM	New Officer Training Word & Wine
FRI	6:15 AM	Men's Bible Fellowship
SAT	8:30 AM	Session & Deacon Retreat
SUN	8:15/11 AM 8:15/11 AM 9 AM 9:35 AM 11 AM 3 PM 6PM	Worship & Communion Ordain/Install Officers Westminster Choir Sunday School Special Congregational Mtg. Boy Scouts Family Movie Night

Plan to join us in **Adult Topics next Sunday** as everyone's favorite storyteller, Helen Bensing, joins us as part of our Heritage of Wisdom series. A member of MPC since 1981, Helen has served as a Deacon as well as shared personal stories through many Children's Moments. Many of you have heard bits and pieces of her life story, come, join us, and hear more about Helen's life and faith journey.

Save the Date! After the holidays, it's time to unwind and treat yourself to our annual Women's Retreat. This year we will have the Rev. Mim Harvey from Stop The Violence present our program on the book of Ruth. We will have a brief worship service followed by our program and light lunch. Reserve January 27 for what will be a very informative and enjoyable morning. Snow date will be February 10.

2018 Flower Calendar – The new calendar to sponsor 2018 chancel flowers is located on the bulletin board in the Breezeway. Two vases (\$15 each) need to be

sponsored each week. To sponsor a vase, enter your name on the date of your choice.