



# The Messenger

The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd  
Olney, Maryland

December

2020

## **“A Sign for You”**

*“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”*

–Luke 2:11-12 (ESV)

After generations of Christmas pageants, shepherds have come to seem like a natural part of the Christmas story. But to the shepherds themselves, it must have seemed like the angel had shown up at the wrong address. After all, shepherds were considered the lowest of the low. Think about it: What kind of guy takes a job working the graveyard shift guarding somebody else’s sheep from thieves and wolves? The kind of guy who can’t get a job doing anything else. Respectable people considered shepherds to be a bit shifty. In fact, the rabbis listed shepherds as one of the classes of people who weren’t allowed to give testimony in the Jewish court, because they weren’t trustworthy enough. Yet these are the people whom God chooses to tell about the birth of his Son. Because it is for people like this that his Son was born: “Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

“This shall be a sign for you,” says the angel to the shepherds. “You will find the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

I’ve always thought that the angel’s sign was a bit odd. After seeing the glory of the Lord and hearing the singing of the heavenly host, the sign of a baby lying in a feed trough must have seemed terribly anticlimactic. If the shepherds don’t believe a multitude of angels that the Messiah is born, they’re hardly likely to be convinced by seeing a baby in a barn. If anything, actually seeing this kid and his parents amid the dirt and manure of the stable might have made them wonder if the angel wasn’t in fact mistaken. Nothing seems less lordly, less majestic than the circumstances of this baby’s birth.

But as I read the story again, it occurs to me that maybe the sign of the manger wasn’t meant to convince them that God’s Son had been born—after all, seeing an angel probably convinced them that something divine and out of the ordinary was going on.

Rather, I suspect that the sign of the manger was perhaps meant to signify the even more unbelievable part of the angel’s message—that this child was born for *them*. After all, when the angel appeared shining with the glory of the Lord, Luke tells us that the shepherds were terrified—literally. Luke’s Greek says that they “feared a great fear.” And so would you. They probably expected to be struck dead any second for their sins. And yet the angel comes with good news: a Savior has been born for the sake of these shepherds.

To prove it, the Lord has hidden away his magnificent, terrifying glory inside the form of a tiny baby, lying not in some lofty, inaccessible palace, but in a barn where even the shifty and disreputable are welcome. The Creator of the universe lies helpless and impoverished so that the lowest of the low will know that he has come to save them...which means that the baby in the manger is God’s sign for us, too.

No matter who you are, no matter what your failures, even if you are the lowest of the low, the Creator of the universe has crossed the distance between heaven and earth to be with you, to save you from everything that separates you from him, to raise you up to the heights of heaven.

The baby in the manger is God’s guarantee. Jesus of Nazareth—the babe in the manger, the man on the cross, the king of heaven—is the sign of God’s love for *you*—this Christmas and always.

Pastor Tim

# About People . . .



We continue to pray for:

. . . . God's care for our Good Shepherd family: **Bob Gill** for continued healing as he begins PT this coming week; **Melissa & Toni**

**Deedy** (continued healing from COVID 19); **Joyce Sheppard** (former member of LCGS) home recovering following hospitalization;

. . . God's care for our relatives and friends: **Jim S.** hospitalized with breathing troubles (friend of Jim and Jill R.); **Lois Smith** (friend of Jill R.) under hospice care.

. . . . New Life: Birth of **Charlotte Grace Mahoney** to Hope North & Colyn Mahoney on Thanksgiving Day, November 26: Birth of **Abigail Hope Gordon**, daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth Gordon (and little sister to Hannah Faith), born November 28.

. . . . Thanksgiving: Engagement of **Brianna Hoffman to Justin Ray** on Thanksgiving Day, November 26: Test results came back negative for cancer for **Lil Hoik** (Matt Quinn's aunt).

. . . Military serving our country: **Seth M.** stationed in Korea (Darlene M. request); **Trevor W.** now serving in North Carolina (Brianna H. request); **Libby S.** (friend of Jeanne B.) stationed in Ankara, Turkey; **Raphael** (neighbor of the Hoffman's) Marine Corps; **Mike H. Jr.** deployed (friend of Ron & Cindy M.)

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## For those who serve on the front lines of the pandemic:

Sarah King	Elena Wilson
Sarah Edsinger	Vicki Wilk
Thomas Gordon	Robert Seggel
David Hillhouse	Rosemary Sampogna
Deb Harman	Molly Mullen
Paul Fowler	Kathy Nicholson
Mike Rajnik	Phil Nicholson
Christine Birch	Dawn McCann
Judi Seggel	Sungjoon Ryou
Lori Falck (Dolores Falck's daughter-in-law)	



## Ordering Christmas Poinsettias (DIFFERENT THIS YEAR)



ORDER  
YOUR  
POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias are available for purchase to beautify our sanctuary during the Christmas season. You have a choice of colors (red, white, marble) and how many you want. You may also buy them in honor or in memory of loved ones or friends.

Please submit your request using the Google Form at <https://tinyurl.com/LCGS-poinsettias>. The cost is \$17 per plant for a 7" pot with 8-12 blooms. You may send your payment via the church's PayPal account or by check mailed to LCGS, with a memo indicating that it is for poinsettias. **Reservations due by Friday, December 11.**

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## Voters Meeting



Sunday, December 13, 2020

9:00 a.m.

via Zoom

Please plan to join us.

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## LifeLight Bible Class Begins again in January (part 2 of Genesis)

If you would like to join this group, contact Kathy Nicholson at [kathylifebalance@aol.com](mailto:kathylifebalance@aol.com). We do two sessions per year and this is the second nine-week session. The cost for each study booklet of the materials is \$10.00 per session. New members are always welcome.

# Youth Ministry

## OGSLY

Olney Good Shepherd Lutheran Youth  
(High School)

OGSLY welcomes our latest confirmands, **Connor Wilson, Nicole and Regan Carrasco, Vittoria Satterlee, and Lucas Wald.** Their enthusiasm has already impacted our group text messaging! We look forward to their participation during our 10:00 Sunday School meetings, 7:00 "Study Sessions" on Thursdays, and 7:30 Friday evening social sessions.

During Sunday School OGSLY is finishing up our eight weeklong series about understanding parent and teen relationships. We are about to start another series called, A Biblical Worldview. This study will define what a worldview is, help us understand our own world view, and see the importance of looking at the world from a biblical perspective. We will examine what God says about important philosophical issues and work on our own biblical worldview by which to live.

In preparation for Christmas, OGSLY is participating in two activities. We are packing boxes for Operation Christmas Child and delivering them to the home of Angela Hoffman by December 4<sup>th</sup>. Thankfully, Angela has graciously volunteered to take the contributions to the distribution center. In addition, we are participating in our annual Secret Santa event virtually this year. Our youth will send notes of encouragement by mail and secretly deliver small gifts to their Secret Santa's. The reveal date will be December 20<sup>th</sup> during Sunday School.

Our youth are continuing to do the best they can to cope with these difficult times. It seems that more and more people in our church family are contracting the virus. OGSLY prayers include those people and others. Being together virtually is what we must work with right now and those who participate welcome the opportunity. **For those who have not joined us, you are welcome, come join us!** Just click on the links in your text messages from Colette. It'll be worth it; you will be uplifted!



### IN DECEMBER

- 1 – Jeanne Z.
- 2 - Tammy C & Tim L.
- 4 - Kathie T.
- 7 - James M.
- 8 – Shelley B. Kyle E, Nathan W.
- 10 – Anthony B.
- 11 - Taylor D, Kathy E,  
Jacob W.
- 14 - Laura H., Sarah S.
- 15 – Michelle S.
- 16 - Bernd L., Jennifer L.
- 18 - Glenda E.
- 20 - Robert B., Kevin W.
- 23 - Greg C.
- 25 - Lora B., Jay T.
- 29 - Christina F., Adam H.



### IN DECEMBER

- 18 - Nathan & Dawn M.
- 22 - Carlos & Kyle E.
- 27 - Mark & Cindy K.
- 30 - John & Cheryl M.

*Congratulations!!*



"Nobody remembered to bring birthday cake?"

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com  
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**C.A.R.E.**  
**(Caring and**  
**Respecting**  
**Everyone)**

(Saturday Morning LCGS Men's Group)



### SATURDAY MORNING

The Men's Group will meet on the first Saturday of each month from 7:30-9:30 a.m. and will get together on Zoom to discuss topics from the Bible.

### SUNDAY MORNING CLASSES

Pastor Tim's Bible Class from 9:30-10:15 a.m. on Zoom

#### Children's Sunday School

Children's classes at 8:45 with Cindy King. Contact her at [cindyk5@verizon.net](mailto:cindyk5@verizon.net) and she will send you a link to join the class.

#### High School Sunday School

OGSLY meets Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Contact Steve Gordon for more information.

### OTHERS

Book Club – Sunday, December 13 on Zoom at 6:00 p.m.

LifeLight Bible Class – Monday Night on Zoom from 7:00-9:00 p.m. beginning again in January - Kathy Nicholson

Women's Bible Class with Pastor Tim  
Thursday mornings 10:30-12:00 noon on Zoom – 1-2 Fascinating Bible Stories

#### Advent Schedule of Services

Wednesday nights - 7:00 p.m.

December 2, 9, 16

via Zoom



Book Review Group

### **The Good Shepherd Book Club**

will meet on Zoom

**Sunday, December 13, 2020**

**You will be notified about  
How to join the group.**

### **“How Far to Bethlehem ”**

Written by Norah Lofts

A story about the journey of Joseph and Mary to the stable and after the Baby was born, the three Wise Men who heard the story, then went to see Him. After hearing about the Child's birth, Herod considered Him to be a threat to his reign of power and decided to try to find Him and have Him killed. God intervened and made that effort fail by having the Wise Men return another way to their own country.



The deadline for the January 2021 newsletter is **Sunday, December 20**. Please email articles to [nancy.wald@olneygoodshepherd.org](mailto:nancy.wald@olneygoodshepherd.org). or leave them in the newsletter mailbox in the copier room

Thanks, Nancy

You are invited to join one or more of these groups. Call the office at 301-774-9125 for information, or to contact the people in charge, or

email at: [office@olneygoodshepherd.org](mailto:office@olneygoodshepherd.org)

**Christmas Gifts for Families**

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## Will be **DIFFERENT** this year

Normally we give needy families holiday baskets and there is a display board with sign-up sheets in the Narthex with details about each family member as well as where to place your gifts.



### Christmas Holiday Baskets, Gifts & Food

HOWEVER, with the pandemic, rather than giving gifts to our families, we would like for you to participate in **GIVING GIFT CARDS**. Please buy your gift cards in any amount, but in \$25.00 Increments from K-Mart, Kohl's or Target. Then either bring them to church or mail them to the Church in care of the Board of Social Ministry. **Please make sure the office receives the cards by Friday, December 18th**.

The Board of Social Ministry thanks you for your participation.

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### Signs and Wonders

Sign outside a Delaware church: "Each of us is an innkeeper who decided if there's room for Jesus."

"Christmas is God showing His terms of endearment."

"Criss-eyed people have the best vision."

"Humility is a great virtue until we're proud of it."

"**SOMETHING** small IS COMING!"

- From Joyful Noiseletter



Thanks so much to the people who have managed to drop off food for the Food Pantry even with the church building often closed. The primary receivers of this ministry have been to Pastor Aurelio Magarino's congregation - Aurelio picks up 6 bags every month.

These are a few items that we always need:

- Peanut butter (prefer smooth)
- Canned fruit
- Cereal
- Dried black beans or rice (1 lb. bags)

#### **A few things to consider when you donate food items:**

- We would ask you to **not 'over size'** the foods (e.g. peanut butter, pasta sauce) as the distribution is 1 grocery size bag per person, and in that bag we put all of the items on the food pantry list (provided we have them) and this will fill the bag.
- Please try to avoid glass containers.
- Please check 'Best by' dates - we do not give out items past this date.

Montgomery County has many food resources for residents in need during this time, but with your continued help, we are able to meet Pastor Magarino's observed need.

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### **Bible Verse to Remember**

#### Isaiah 9:6

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

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### **For a live streamed service**

If you have an upcoming special occasion and would like to SIGN UP FOR FLOWERS for a church service, you can still do that. Contact the office and if there is no answer, leave a message to let Connie know what date you want and the reason. Generally, flowers are in honor or memory of an event such as a birthday, anniversary or something else. We just need to know the date, the event and your name. The cost is a total of \$50 for ONE on each side of the altar (\$25 per vase). If two people sign up the cost can be shared. The cost for a large arrangement in front of the altar is \$50.



Thank you to those who have so faithfully provided the flowers that are in front of the altar each Sunday morning during our live streamed services. When the warm days of summer were here, some of them used flowers from their yards but otherwise the following people are taking turns at purchasing and arranging them each week:

**Angela Boerger**  
**Matt Quinn**  
**Connie Strachan**  
**Rachel Vincent**

Please know how much we appreciate your efforts on our behalf.

## **Christmas Joy**

(A sonnet)

*Rejoice! Rejoice! for  
Christmas Day is here.  
We join the shepherd, angel  
host, and kings  
in glorifying God. All heaven  
sings  
the birth of Him who brings  
salvation near.  
All earth resounds in joyful  
praise to hear  
that some of peace and love.  
On angel wings,  
our song ascends to God, 'til  
heaven rings  
as well. It's Christmas Day!  
Arise and cheer!  
Within our hearts, we come and  
kneel before  
his manger bed, and offer there  
our self,  
our gift of love, to him, who gave  
himself,  
his gift of love, to him, who gave  
himself,  
His gift of love, to each of us.  
Once more,  
our joy escapes in song, and we  
exclaim  
with all the earth his glorious,  
precious name.*

- Doug Ridley  
Cambridge, MD

From Joyful Noiseletter  
December 2019



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**The deadline for the January issue is  
Sunday, December 20, 2020**

**Current Sunday Worship Services  
are live streamed at 11:00 a.m.**

Sunday School – Zoom classes only  
Check for Times.