

PLATTEVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Learn God ~ Love God ~ Share God ~ Serve God



Mary provided half of Jesus' DNA. Where did the other half come from?

Our Advent sermon series is based on the book *The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem* by Adam Hamilton. I love Adam Hamilton's stuff. He is highly

intelligent, a deep thinker, and he asks questions of the Bible and archeology that I would never think to ask. Hamilton is the founding pastor at The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, one of our UMC mega churches. Hamilton has a very large staff that allows him to take time away to research and write highly in-depth sermon series that lead to books. *The Journey* is one of three books that we have used about the life of Jesus. For those who have been involved in small groups, Hamilton has taken us by video to the Holy Land. This time, we see the sites that are traditionally associated with Mary's annunciation, the landscape from Nazareth to Bethlehem, Jesus' birth, etc. There is a small group Thursdays at 1:30 doing this study.

When I was rereading the first chapter of the book last night, the above question jumped out at me in a new way. I have always thought it amazing that God became a human being. I have wondered how the essence of God could become human consciousness. But for some reason I have never thought scientifically. If Jesus had only Mary's DNA, he would have been a perfect clone of her. Obviously, he was not. Where did the other half of the DNA come from?

Those who are proponents of liberal theology have an answer: Mary wasn't really a virgin. Joseph, or some other man, was Jesus' biological father. Liberal theologians believe that the story of the virgin conception is simply a myth. Although this gives a logical answer to our question, it is not consistent with our biblical record. Luke and Matthew are both very clear. Jesus had no human father.

So where did the other half of Jesus' DNA come from?

Although I cannot specifically answer that question for you, I can tell you this: God was the creator of biology and he created DNA. If human beings can artificially inseminate and clone animals and stem cells, then God certainly could have created a way to translate his essence into DNA and combine it with Mary's. However God figured out how to do this, there is something that is more important than how he did it. It is what he did.

Jesus was just like us, yet he was not like us. We are children of God. Jesus was THE Son of God. We are human. Jesus was human and God at the same time. In order to help people understand who he is and the relationship he wants with us, God became human. At Christmas, God became human, for us.

I invite you to read and pray over the story as if for the first time. I pray that it impacts you in a new and beautiful way.

Blessed Christmas!

*Steve
Pastor
Sunda*

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14 NIV



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MISSION COMMITTEE

MISSION: Philippine Typhoon Disaster Relief
 UMCOR is mobilizing emergency disaster response in the Philippines. Donations marked "Philippines" will be used to help with the relief and recovery.
 All of your gift, 100%, will go to help those in need. Thank you



Giving Tree for Adopted Families

Watch in the lobby for the giving tree. Take a tag or two and help our adopted families during the holidays.

Thank you for serving God by serving people.

Adopted Families

Thank you for your generous donations to the adopted families' Thanksgiving food baskets. The baskets were delivered the Tuesday before Thanksgiving.

This year we are serving an even greater number of area families who are having financial difficulty due to job loss, illness, etc. We will continue to collect food and offer Christmas gift ideas for these families until December 19. Please watch for the gift tags on the Christmas tree in the narthex. Thank you for reaching out to care for the community around us.

Coats for Kids was a huge success again this year. Thank you to everyone who donated coats for children who would otherwise not have a winter coat. A huge thank you to The Platteville Cleaners, who cleaned all the coats for free. As always, thank you for supporting our families in need.

Alone for Christmas? The annual Home Alone for Christmas dinner will be at St. Mary's Catholic Church on Christmas day. Sign-up sheets for volunteers and donations will be available soon in the lobby.

Barely Seniors

Barely Seniors will meet on Thursday, December 12 at 12:00 pm in the fellowship hall with a potluck lunch and program. Table service and beverages are provided. Seniors are asked to bring a dish to pass. The program will be, Jim Holler---Jim will share with us his musical journey with his guitar and vocals. He does old-time country music, most songs written prior to 1960...among his many favorites will be "Will the Circle be Unbroken"

Gift Exchange:

A gift exchange will be held after the program. Please bring a wrapped gift(\$5 or less) with a W marked for woman or a M for man. Bring a friend!

Thank you to everyone who helped with the garden this year. A special thanks to Max Anderson who just did what had to be done and coordinated the clean up with the help of Dick Bonin.

Those who were recipients of the produce enjoyed it. This year as in the past many bags were taken to the food pantry.

Consider helping next year. You will enjoy working and learning with the other workers. If you would like to have a garden for your family talk to us. We are looking at some other ways to use the space.

Susan Schlager



Poinsettias

Would you like to order a poinsettia to share with the church this Christmas? Plants can be given in honor or in memory of someone important in your life. The plants can be ordered in red or white, and will come with foil wrap and with a bow. The cost for each plant is \$13.50. You may pick up your poinsettia following the 10:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship.

Please fill out and return this form to the church office **by December 9th.**

Name _____

Plants given in honor / in memory of _____

Total number of poinsettias: _____ Color of poinsettias: _____ red _____ white

Total Cost (\$13.50 per plant) _____ (checks made out to PUMC)



The semester is winding down and I think everyone on campus is getting anxious about winter break! I am to! The final

details on the Passion conference and mission trip to Nashville are coming together. I am excited to be able to spend an entire week with our students. I love these weeks because not only do I get to spend more time with the students but we also spend the majority of it focusing on God and allowing him to transform us. Every conference and trip God uses to teach us different things and I am excited to see what he has in store for this one! Thank you to all of you who made this trip possible! We will leave January 14th and return on the 20th.

Besides planning the trip, I have been meeting in weekly discipleship meetings with students, taking students out to coffee, and we attended the spaghetti supper music fraternity fund raiser! All of these have been really fun and helpful to get to know the students more.



Recently I learned something I have never thought of before. It is that God chooses to use small groups to spread his gospel because he himself is a community. Think about this, God wants us to be in a community and to invite others into that community because he himself is in community in the Trinity. He invites us into that with him. In fact he did not only invite us into that, but he also made the way for us to become members! The reason I am so passionate about small groups is because it is not my idea but God's!

Join a small group soon to discover what God intended in this wonderful plan of his! We have some new ones starting in January! We have one that focuses on your health, strengthening your marriage, finances, and the most important conversation your not having. Look at the brochure in the lobby, watch the website, and next newsletter for more details!



Boy I sure do love spending time with these teens and preteens!

They are so smart and fun! Check out our pictures from the Halloween Party! We had fun games including trying to find gummy worms in pudding with only your mouth, musical chairs, costumes, a creepy fellowship hall, pizza, and caramel apples! The following week we painted wooden houses that for a "donation" you can buy to help support our Sunday School mission project, Habitat for Humanity! On November 13th, we had an Early Release Movie Event. We watched Lord of the Rings, painted toys for the ToyMake Mission Project, played games and had some yummy snacks.

On the early release day of Dec 11 we will be having our Christmas party from 12:30 to 6. We will be playing some Christmas games, having a white elephant gift exchange, making Christmas cookies, and making supper! Watch for more details!

Also look in the next newsletter to read about our ReFuel conference update!!

Mindy Freiburger

608-778-4607 or freiburgerm@gmail.com



Costumes



Enjoying Pizza!



Pudding faces!!



*Finding the centipedes in
chocolate pudding*


Halloween Party



- 1 Jack Kirby
- 1 Darrell Henry
- 2 Betty Smith
- 3 Sarah Hasker
- 4 Bret Feist
- 9 Frances Allbaugh
- 12 Lisa Mumm
- 12 Logan Uppena
- 14 James Bailie
- 15 Jason Weigel
- 15 Anna Hilfer
- 16 Gene Digman
- 16 Kaylie Feist
- 16 Brooke Kuhls
- 17 Dan Griffiths
- 17 Christina Berning
- 18 Margaret Ambrosius
- 19 James Harle
- 20 Dawn Drake
- 21 Janice Steinback
- 21 Carrie Hardy
- 26 Ryan Wieters
- 26 Jordon Schulte
- 26 Shane Freiburger
- 26 Trenton Mumm
- 26 Nathan Mumm
- 29 Pastor Brenda
- 30 Joan Kuehl
- 30 Peg Burkard
- 31 Steve Lozeau
- 31 Adam Goninen

Anniversaries

- 2 Robert & Marlene Winkers
- 5 Richard & Eunice Dagnon
- 6 Keith & Arica Wanezek
- 6 Travis & Michelle Hromadka
- 17 Gary & Pam Craugh
- 22 Tom & LeeAnn Lindahl
- 23 Jim & Carol Kirkpatrick
- 27 Lenny & Sharon Glass
- 27 Merle & Beth Duggan
- 29 John & Deb Putnam



just thought
YOU should
KNOW

Thank you to all of the families who provided meals, sent cards, came for a visit, harvested my garden and took care of the flower garden at the church. Thanks too for all the prayers. It is very difficult for me to sit in a recliner and do nothing. Please continue praying while my eye is healing. The pressure is still only 5. Thank you again. ~ Elizabeth Duewer

ZUMBA[®]THON



Sunday, December 15

1:00 pm-3:00 pm

Neal Wilkins School

\$10.00/person

Proceeds will benefit our Spark Campus Ministry mission trip and Passion Conference in Atlanta Georgia.

Weekend Sidewalk Snow Shoveling, Sara and Calvin Koeller will once again be coordinating the winter weekend church sidewalk snow shoveling. If you could help with this project please list your name and contact information on the sign-up sheet in the narthex or email them at sara.koeller@yahoo.com.

December Schedule

December 4th-UMW General Meeting in the Wesley Room at 1:30 PM
 Program-Celebrating Christmas-Katie Cottingham
 Hostess: All members bring Christmas cookies (about 6 or so)
 Christmas Stocking Offering will be taken for UM Chaplaincy Ministry

NO Rebekah Circle in December

Christmas Fair

Mark your calendars for the annual Christmas Bazaar on Saturday, December 7th. Early coffee and rolls begin at 8AM, with the crafts and "goodies" area opening at 9AM.



Lunch -- turkey dressing sandwiches, BBQs, salads, desserts and beverages - will be served from 11AM-1PM.

Sunday School News

Our Sunday School classrooms have been buzzing on Sunday mornings, with lots of kids and lots of activities. During the month of December, we will be focusing on the Christmas story. As we talk about Mary and Joseph searching for shelter for their family in the town of Bethlehem, the children will realize that they, like that friendly innkeeper of long ago, are helping to provide shelter for a family here in Platteville.

Our Sunday School students have raised over \$1000.00 so far this year for Grant County Habitat for Humanity! Drive by and check out the house on the corner of Jefferson and Sowden. It is now closed in, so work can be done inside during inclement weather.

During the month of December, the children will ask our congregation for their continued support for this project. The 4th-5th grade Sunday School class will hold a bake sale on Dec. 1 between the two church services.

Also, during this month, the children will be "selling" wooden houses they have made. For a donation, you can "buy" a truly unique Christmas gift for a loved one..... a hand-crafted house with a label that says "A donation has been made in your honor to Grant County Habitat For Humanity". There is no set price for the houses, you may donate any amount you wish. These will make great stocking stuffers, or gifts for that hard-to-shop-for person on your list! What a great way to share Christmas!



Be Part of a Miracle

Many members of our congregation and others who use the church could use an elevator when going between the Sanctuary and fellowship hall. Visitors to the church for funerals, Vacation Bible School, Christmas Bazaar, Harvest Dinner, etc. have mentioned that having the use of an elevator would be very helpful. It would be helpful for our older members as well as young families with strollers. It would also be useful for moving heavy things like tables and chairs between floors for special events. Adding an elevator to the church is a major resource investment. Some might say that getting an elevator would be a miracle. Informational meetings to explain the details of an elevator for the church will be held after each service on December 8th and on January 12th. Hopefully any questions you may have will be answered at these informational meetings. We are designating January 26th as Miracle Sunday when contributions will be totaled and hopefully there will be enough money to fund an elevator. You could be a part of making the miracle happen.

Max Anderson for the Elevator Task Force

IRA Charitable Rollover for 2013

Congress has reauthorized the IRA Charitable Rollover for 2013! This means that members of your congregation aged 70 1/2 or older, who have a Traditional or Roth IRA, can make a charitable gift from their IRA directly to your church or any other United Methodist Ministry **before December 31, 2013**. Their gift may qualify for their required minimum distribution and they will not have to pay federal income tax on the amount given from their IRA to charity.

Please contact the church office if you are interested in using this IRA rollover to fund your church's operating budget, contribute to a special church fund, like the elevator fund, or establish a permanent endowment fund to benefit your church in perpetuity.

Financial Update:

As has been shared periodically throughout the year, we made some staff and program additions to our budget in 2012 that we did not want to cut in 2013. In order to continue our forward momentum in mission and ministry, through a combined effort of the Church Council, Finance Committee and Trustees, we passed the 2013 budget with a \$23,000 deficit. As of October 31, our actual budget deficit is \$10,770. The good news is the deficit is 43% less than anticipated. Thank you for your continued generosity toward the mission and ministry that we do together. We have a challenge before us to try to end the year with as little deficit as possible. And looking ahead: we agreed that our 2014 budget would be balanced. It is too early to tell if Pastor Brenda's giving challenge will balance our 2014 budget. We need to see how we end 2013 and we need to receive the remaining pledges before we begin planning 2014.

We had a wonderful response for our Commitment Sunday! Strong rain and winds during travel times reduced our attendance, but those who braved the weather had wonderful worship with a challenging sermon and a fantastic breakfast! On Commitment Sunday we received 70 commitment cards for a total pledge of \$181,102 for 2014! 25 families have taken Pastor Brenda's challenge for a total of \$12,200 so far. Remember, the challenge is \$20,000 so we have \$7,800 to go! If you have not turned in your commitment card for 2014, please do so!

New Confirmation Class!

The 2013-2015 Confirmation Class is underway! Ten smiling faces have begun attending classes as they work towards being confirmed as members of the United Methodist Church. Over the course of the next two years, they will participate in worship leadership, attend services both here and in the community, complete service hours, and learn about their



faith. We ask that you keep the confirmands in your prayers throughout the next two years, as they grow and shape their faith. 2013-2015's class includes: Rachel Bailie, Allison Brehm, Britney Baker, Lauren Becker, Adam Goninen, Jacob Krueger, Maddy Loeffelholz, Savannah McCall, Spencer Olds, and MacKenzie Timlin.

We are still looking for a few mentors for our confirmands! Mentoring is a once-a-month commitment to meet with your mentee and a willingness to share insights about your faith to help your mentee grow in their own faith. The bonus is that you will grow in your faith too! If you are interested, please contact Sara Koeller at either 608-330-3100 or sara.koeller@yahoo.com for more information!

Office Hours

9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.; Monday-Friday

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Ellen Carnahan

ellen.carnahan@yahoo.com

Usher Schedule

8:30 a.m.	<i>OPEN</i>
11:00 a.m.	Dan & Deb Dunbar

Readers Schedule

December 1	8:30 a.m.	Carol Lange
	11:00 a.m.	Nancy Mair
December 8	8:30 a.m.	Calvin Koeller
	11:00 a.m.	Tom Lindahl
December 15	8:30 a.m.	Dave Carnahan
	11:00 a.m.	Lori Adrian
December 22	8:30 a.m.	Elizabeth Whitford
	11:00 a.m.	Debby Schroedl
December 29	8:30 a.m.	Don Shaw
	11:00 a.m.	Mindy Freiburger

Greeters Schedule

December 1	8:30 a.m.	Milt Rewey & Delores Hutcheson
	11:00 a.m.	Coe Family
December 8	8:30 a.m.	Roger & Judy Stephens
	11:00 a.m.	Hospitality Team
December 15	8:30 a.m.	Jim & Carol Kirkpatrick
	11:00 a.m.	Warner & Pam Smidt
December 22	8:30 a.m.	Lynn & Susan Schlager
	11:00 a.m.	Joe & Alice Clifton
December 29	8:30 a.m.	John & Katie Cottingham
	11:00 a.m.	Jason & Jennifer Fiedler

Advent Candle Lighting Schedule

December 1	8:30 a.m.	OPEN
	11:00 a.m.	Pohle Family
December 8	8:30 a.m.	OPEN
	11:00 a.m.	Meyer/Freiburger Families
December 15	8:30 a.m.	Hollingsworth Family
	11:00 a.m.	Scanlan Family
December 22	8:30 a.m.	Fairchild/Koeller Families
	11:00 a.m.	OPEN
December 24	5:00 p.m.	Shaw Family
	10:00 p.m.	OPEN

December Worship**December 1st**

The Journey: Joseph of Bethlehem
Matthew 1:18-24
Communion Both Services
8:30 Students from UW-P
11:00 Blind Faith

December 8th

The Journey: Mary's Visit to Elizabeth
Luke 1:39-45
8:30 Students from UW-P
11:00 Blind Faith

December 15th

Music Sunday!

December 22nd

The Journey:
From Nazareth to Bethlehem
Luke 2:1-7
8:30 Special Music TBD
11:00 Blind Faith

Because we know the story of Jesus' birth so well, we often miss the richness in it. Join us each Sunday as we travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. We'll explore the people and the places and come away with a new and deeper understanding of how the Son of God became a man.

The children's Christmas program is being planned, but we are not ready to release details yet. Watch for more information!

DECEMBER 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Worship 8:30am Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00am Mallow Ringers 6:00pm	2 Breakfast Prayer Group 6:45 am @ Country Kit. Yoga w/Val 5:15 pm	3 CAP Club 10:00 am UMW 1:30 pm Dance Elite 4:00 pm Yoga w/Val 4:15 pm	4 Yoga w/Val 5:15 pm Merge 45 4:00 pm Merge 6:30 pm Holy Rollers & Redeemer 6:30pm	5 Small Group 1:30 pm School Bus Café 3:45 pm Yoga w/Val 4:15 pm <i>Board of Trustees 7:00 pm</i>	6	7 <i>UMW Holiday Fair</i>
8 Worship 8:30am Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00am Mallow Ringers 6:00pm	9 Breakfast Prayer Group 6:45 am @ Country Kit. Yoga w/Val 5:15 pm	10 Dance Elite 4:00 pm Yoga w/Val 4:15 pm <i>Mission Committee 5:00 pm Church Council 6:00 pm</i>	11 Merge Christmas Party 12:30-6pm Yoga w/Val 5:15 pm Holy Rollers & Redeemer 6:30pm Confirmation 6:30pm	12 Barely Seniors 12:00 pm Small Group 1:30 pm School Bus Café 3:45 pm Yoga w/Val 4:15 pm <i>Finance Committee 7:00 pm</i>	13 Newsletter Deadline	14
15 Worship 8:30am Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00am Zumba-thon @ Neal Wilkins School 1:00 pm	16 Breakfast Prayer Group 6:45 am @ Country Kit. Yoga w/Val 5:15 pm	17 Dance Elite 4:00 pm Yoga w/Val 4:15 pm	18 Merge 45 4:00 pm Merge 6:30 pm Yoga w/Val 5:15 pm Holy Rollers & Redeemer 6:30pm <i>SPRC 7:00 pm</i>	19 Newsletter Assembled 12:00 pm Small Group 1:30 pm School Bus Café 3:45 pm Yoga w/Val 4:15 pm	20	21
22 Worship 8:30am Blood Pressure Checks Sunday School 9:45 am Worship 11:00am	23 Breakfast Prayer Group 6:45 am @ Country Kit. Yoga w/Val 5:15 pm	24 Christmas Eve Family Service 5:00 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight Service 10:00 pm	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve				



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METHODIST CHURCH

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Sunday, December 15

Music Sunday (both services)

Christmas Eve

Tuesday, December 24

5:00 pm Family Worship

10:00 pm Traditional Worship