

Theme: "Oh Happy Day"

"Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them."

(Luke 2:20) (NKJV)

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK . . .



(Luke 2:20) (NKJV)

Greetings Mount Pleasant Family,

Luke chapter 2, verses 1-7 records the birthplace and birth of Jesus Christ that were prophesized many years ago as recorded in Micah 5:2, *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting"* and Isaiah 7:14, *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."*

The next verses, records the account of the visitation by the angels announcing the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem to the shepherds. After the angels left, the shepherds said to one another *"let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."* (v. 15b) *"Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them."* (v. 20)

Over 2,000 years later, we, believers, are still celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior not only during the Christmas season but throughout the year and are still glorifying and praising God for His gift to us and to the world. Oh Happy Day!

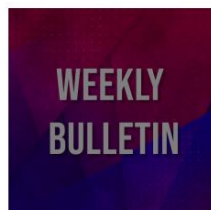
Have a safe and happy winter!

MPBC Connect

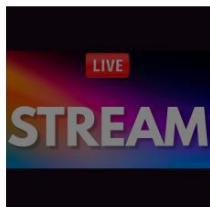
Visit our website at www.mtpleasantbc.org to stay connected.



Give Online



Bulletin



Live Stream



The Hearts Cry Podcast

Inspirations

December Lights

by Sister Nia Dobbs (MPBC)

December lights

Are feeling bright

Although the snow is on its way

We have much to do today

December flows

The weather grows

And it never stops our way

Without letting us know it's time to play

December feelings

With all their dealings

And it's always on the way

To match the kind of pretty day

December day

Is all I may

If you choose it on your way

You may even say hurray



Theme: “Ministry on the Move” (Philippians 3:14)

Dear Ministry Member and Fellow Christian,

Greetings to all!

We pray that all is well. Please know we are here for you. We ask for your continued prayers and thank you for your continued support. We need you! If your address and/or other pertinent information has changed, please send Sister Anita Johnson, MPBC Church Clerk, an email to clerk@mtpleasantbc.org. The following are planned events for 2024. As always, if you have any suggestions, please let us know.

- Movie Night
- Gospel Shows
- Zoom Game Night
- Social Day
- Community Outreach Projects*

We want to extend a welcome to our new ministry members and greetings to ministry members who have celebrated and/or are celebrating a birthday, wedding anniversary, retirement or any other celebratory event in December, January and February.

God bless you, continue to keep safe.

Deacon Karl Henderson, Deaconess Karin Henderson and Deacon James Cook
Ministerial Team: Minister Myra Cook. Minister Angela Sheppard and Minister Kimberly Veney
(Prince William/Stafford/Spotsylvania/Caroline Counties and Lorton (PWSSC&L) CCM)

—Thought for the winter—

“One kind word can warm three winter months.”

*Thank you for supporting our two community outreach projects for 2023: Operations: Diapers (over 800 diapers were donated) and Giving Vision (over 100 pair of eyeglasses were collected and donated).





WINTER WORDS Word Search Puzzle



r h p x b k g m s n o w f l a k e s f f s d
 v h f b w y r e i j u m t o n c w t z d h d
 s k a t i n g k l t d c f e t h z e t s d c
 z i i v k l a g f a t r v b f i f l b f r b
 e h j c s j s l i p p e r y b l l k z k w o
 t r a s o w a n s a a a n x s l u c e d i o
 c v t w h v t v g d y i t s i y r g l n n t
 r y h x x k f e b r u a r y m q r w r r t s
 n t o b o g g a n o f s o u c c i t b s e s
 z a l f n h r m m f h e r w s d e c a h r h
 m p i f g l o v e s m j w p s n s o q o v o
 i j d w w i w v f r e e z i n g k l l t s v
 e l a d d r g k j a n u a r y a v d y c b e
 x m y h b s r d w f t o h u f r o s t h e l
 r u s x c d e c e m b e r s b t h s n o w a
 c e s l e d d i n g c a h w a p p w f c n v
 s c a r f r s n o w m a n a i a v x c o o u
 r z r a m j x v k b j y k y t r j m e l o i
 o a r i l y f i r e p l a c e k f x i a a c
 y u r p n l q d s l u s h p m a a l f t z e
 e i c i c l e t v f b t m w e h z v n e z f
 i d h i b l i z z a r d w t z b a w x m k e



Find these words.

fireplace
 snowflake
 blizzard
 icicle
 boots
 parka
 sledding
 gloves

hat
 ice
 cold
 slippery
 chilly
 snowman
 December
 toboggan

hot chocolate
 slush
 January
 freezing
 skating
 scarf
 holidays
 frost



mittens
 shovel
 snow
 flurries
 February
 winter



(The words may be hidden vertically, horizontally or diagonally.)

MPBC FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Notes & News

Winter 2023-2024 Edition



May the God of hope fill you with
all joy and peace as you trust in
Him, so that you may overflow
with hope by the power of the
Holy Spirit.
Romans 15:13 (NIV)

LOANS AVAILABLE

Do high-interest-rate credit card bills
have you singing the blues?

Contact your MPBC Federal Credit Union
to see how our Signature loan special
rates can help change your tune.

Don't delay - apply today for a
Signature loan up to \$7,500.



Did you know that each year your MPBC
Federal Credit Union pays dividends on
your Regular Share and Christmas Club
accounts? Dividends are the way we
pay YOU from earned profits.

We are proud to provide this benefit to
members and thank you for your
business.

We are YOUR Credit Union.

Season's Greetings

On behalf of the MPBC Federal Credit
Union's Board of Directors and
volunteers, we wish everyone a very
merry Christmas and happy new year!



FINANCIAL CHECK-UP

As the new year approaches, it's important to
review and adjust your financial situation.

Here are a few things to consider:

- Create a budget to track your income, expenses, and spending habits.
- Plan out your savings goals and automate the funds directly to a savings account - contact us to find out how.
- Pay off high-interest debt with a low-interest personal loan - how about a Signature loan from MPBC FCU?
- Contribute to an employer-sponsored or individual retirement plan that aligns with your future goals.

OPERATION STATUS

The Credit Union is open for business
on Sunday mornings! Operating
hours are from 8:45 AM - 10:00 AM.

Stop by before worship service to say
hello and make a savings deposit or a
loan payment to your account!

CONTACT US:



MPBC Federal Credit Union

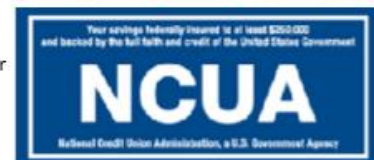
P.O. Box 11146

Alexandria, VA 22312

mpbcfcu@mtpleasantbc.org

(703) 256-4802

www.mtpleasantbc.org/credit-union



Thanks for your business.

Beating the Winter Blues

[Reprint from a previous edition.]

In the Winter 2010/2011 MPBC Messenger, the LEAD (Life Encouragement And Discipleship) Ministry, a former MPBC ministry, published an article titled, “Beating the Winter Blues”. The article stated that according to the National Centers for Disease Control (CDC), approximately 20% of American adults ages 18 and over experience Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). SAD is a mood disorder associated with the change in seasons. This is a temporary depressive state in which persons are affected by weather and/or environment, with no other influences, such as loss of job or loved one. For instance, persons located in regions near the equator, such as Florida and Texas, are less likely to experience SAD than those who live in regions further north, such as New York or Washington. And since SAD is associated with the changes in seasons, it comes in two forms: winter onset and summer onset. Because we are in the winter season, I will share with you what the article stated about winter onset SAD.

Winter onset SAD, which we know today as the “winter blues”, generally begins in late fall and ends in early spring. Symptoms include (but are not limited to) craving sweet and/or starchy foods, fatigue, oversleeping, difficulty concentrating, weight gain (not caused by holiday eating) and social withdrawal.

Below are tips for beating the winter blues:

1. **Go Outside.** For those who dislike the heat in the summer or the cold in the winter, take a giant leap to the outdoors. Appreciating God’s Creation can always be uplifting.
2. **Exercise.** Try to get in at least 30 minutes of exercise a day. This is for good all-around health.
3. **Eat Right.** Eat more fruits and vegetables.
4. **Meditate.** God’s Word has a way of settling in your spirit and bringing peace.
5. **Socialize.** Fellowship with others. Sometimes, being around other people can lift your spirits even if you don’t want to be around them!

The article reminded us that if you or your loved ones are experiencing any form of depression, whether it is SAD or not, please do not hesitate to seek help. Information and support groups online are available for you. Of course, Pastor Johnson and other MPBC ministries are ready to assist you through any rough spots in your life. The article is a reminder that this season isn’t a joyous season for some folks. I believe there can be hope for a joyous season if only one can grasp the reason for this season which is Jesus Christ who can give you His unspeakable joy that the world cannot take away. Don’t give up! “Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you;” (Psalm 55:22a)

Below are some resources:

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration: www.samhsa.gov
- Family Doctor.org: <https://familydoctor.org/condition/depression/>
- Mayo Clinic Online: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/seasonal-affective-disorder/DS00195>
- Seasonal Affective Disorder Health Group: <http://www.dailystrength.org/c/Seasonal-Affective-Disorder/support-group>
- Winter Blues and Holiday Grief: First Lady Robin Johnson (MPBC)

Winter Blues and Holiday Grief

By First Lady Robin Johnson (MPBC)

[Reprint from a previous edition.]

There are signs of the holiday season all around us. Decorations are in every store, holiday displays are in area malls, Christmas music is playing everywhere you go, gifts are being purchased, and party plans are well under way. As Christians, we are preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. You may have noticed that the choir is preparing songs for the occasion, the Christmas play is being rehearsed, and the sanctuary has been adorned with poinsettias and wreaths. The theme for the season is gratitude, light and hope, so this should be a joyous time of the year. However, for some people this time of the year causes great stress, sad mood, and feelings of loss.

This is one of the most stressful times of the year. The major causes of stress are gift giving obligations, expenses, a lack of time, and unrealistic expectations about creating a perfect holiday. Christians seem to have the exact same issues as non-Christians. Although the world continues to get more commercialized, God will honor all our efforts to keep the focus where it should be, and we need to set the right example for our family and friends.

Some people experience a serious mood change when the seasons change. You could find yourself sensitive to the lack of natural daylight due to the shorter days and the cold temperatures associated with the late fall and winter months. It is common for people to find that they eat and sleep slightly more during the wintertime, tend to be less active, and dislike the dark mornings. But for some, other symptoms become severe enough to disrupt their lives and cause significant distress. Support from their church, family, and friends are especially important for these individuals, but it is also important to discuss these symptoms with their doctor. There are a number of treatment options available.

Even though the world is consumed with making merry, the holidays make those who have experienced a loss even more aware of the hole in their hearts. Grief is our reaction, experience and feeling due to a loss. It is normal and healthy to mourn the death of a loved one. And, as believers we have a hope and promise when it comes to eternity and in Jesus Christ. We know that our loved ones are in God's arms. The holiday time is an opportunity to honor and include the memories of a missed love one in social gatherings, conversations, and in your holiday activities.

The Bible says in John 14:1: "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me." Remember to take care of yourself, share your thoughts and feelings with friends and family, stay active, and adjust your expectations. Remember, Christmas and winter will soon pass, but discovering a new sense of faith in Christ will carry you the whole year through.



Do You Believe?

“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” 13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” 15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” 16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.” (Luke 2: 8 – 20 NIV)

What do you do with information that is given to you? How do you decipher it?

Do you forget it right away and go about your day? Do you Google it to confirm its accuracy? Do you ask a few trusted people for their opinions? Do you go so far as to do personal investigation yourself? Or is it a combination of all the above?

Whatever your activity, whenever you receive information, you always do some information gathering, analysis of the hypothesis, and ultimately develop your own conclusion to the information. It’s a subconscious activity our brain conducts to hold to that which is valuable. Thereby, in the shortest story possible, what you believe is a direct result of what you value from the information you have chosen to receive.

Here, in Luke 2, a very familiar story tells us that after Jesus was born, shepherds were working. They received information from an unlikely source. And instead of ignoring or talking it out with others, they made a choice to investigate for themselves. They found the information to be true and began to act accordingly.

Likewise, we have been provided with the same information as the shepherds, yet we do not investigate for ourselves. We ask others for confirmation. We watch what’s on social media. We do everything but investigate for ourselves God’s truth. But do we even value it?

As year 2023 closes out and the world seems even more tumultuous than ever, whose report are you going to believe? The Good News of Jesus has survived several millennia. I trust that it is true. I know that it is true. I believe it. Do you?

MPBC Events

BRING IN THE NEW YEAR WITH WORSHIP, PRAYER & PRAISE!

DR. EUGENE JOHN 10AM
GUEST PREACHER

DR. CARL JOHNSON 6PM
PASTOR

NEW YEAR'S EVE Service
DECEMBER 31, 2023

Join Us Live! @ 10AM & 6PM

Virtual 10PM
BROADCAST OF 6PM SERVICE
Meeting ID: 852 0482 3438
Passcode: 679980

WWW.MTPLEASANTBC.ORG

MOUNT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH
6477 LINCOLNIA ROAD
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312
(703) 256-1268

ONLINE SAFETY
Not only for Seniors!

Presented by
Uwe Dotzauer
Network Engineer & Computer Consultant

THURSDAY JANUARY 11, 2024
12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
Meeting ID: 895 0265 4770
Passcode: 523102
Dial-In: 1 301 745 8592

SAVE THE DATE! LEARN...

- How to conquer the Big Con
- How to make Online Identity more secure

If you want to know about:

- Check Washing
- Money Mules
- Phishing
- Ransomware
- Spoofing

Tune into the Zoom Meeting!

The internet has vastly expanded our ability to explore the world, shop, file taxes and many other things from the safety of our computer, tablet, or phone.

MOUNT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH
6477 LINCOLNIA ROAD, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312 | Rev. Dr. Carl M. Johnson, Pastor

LET US COME TOGETHER FOR OUR 1ST

Virtual PRAYER SERVICE

With

PASTOR CARL M. JOHNSON

DATE
THURSDAY 4TH JANUARY 2024
7:00PM - 8:00PM

MOUNT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH
6477 LINCOLNIA ROAD
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312
703.256.1268

Meeting ID & Passcode to be provided

MOUNT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH
6477 LINCOLNIA ROAD, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312
REV. DR. CARL M. JOHNSON, PASTOR

14TH JAN 10AM

MLK DAY
Church Celebration

GUEST PREACHER
REV. ROCHELLE DAVIS

MOUNT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH
6477 LINCOLNIA ROAD, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312
703.256.1268
www.mtplasantbc.org

Sponsored by the Women's Ministry

Guest Speaker:
DR. ASHKAN KARIMI
MD, MPH, FACC

CARDIOLOGY
MONDAY JAN 8, 2024 7PM

Topic: Cardiovascular Health Overview of Vascular Health

First Lady Robin Johnson
Pastor Carl M. Johnson

Meeting ID: 862 5336 6883
Passcode: 192200
Dial-In: 1 301 715 8592

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY

BIBLE Church-Wide INSTITUTE

Join us for a transformative study journey!
In-Person and Virtual

JANUARY 17-19, 2024 | 7pm-8pm *Save The Dates!*

MPBC SANCTUARY
6477 LINCOLNIA STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22312

THEME:
Working Together to Accomplish Goals

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
WWW.MTPLEASANTBC.ORG

Classes Offered:

- Communication / Accountability - Facilitators: Trustee Walter Batts / Trustee Walt Hogan
- Five Love Language Book Club Discussion - Facilitator: Jackie Black
- Conflict Management - Facilitator: Leticia Hines
- Spiritual Gifts (Part 2) - Facilitator: Anita Johnson / Minister Stephanie Gillis

Tuesday DEVOTIONAL Messages

Presented by the MPBC Deacon & Deaconess Ministries

Scan QR Code to view on the Mobile App:

View Devotional recordings on the MPBC website:
WWW.MTPLEASANTBC.ORG

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703.256.1268

MOUNT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH
6477 LINCOLNIA ROAD, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22312 | PHONE: 703.256.1268 | Rev. Dr. Carl M. Johnson, Pastor

SUNDAY SCHOOL Update

Time 9AM

IN-PERSON CLASSES FOR ADULTS & GRADES 1-12

ANNOUNCING TWO NEW CLASSES...

- "Rising Disciples" Ages 18-25
- "Growing in Grace" Ages 26-39

Beginning January 14th

VIRTUAL CLASSES VIA ZOOM...

Deaf and Hearing Impaired

Visit www.mtplasantbc.org for meeting ID & passcodes.

Public Safety Alert

For more information on Fentanyl, go to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) website.

The screenshot shows the DEA website with a prominent banner reading "ONE PILL CAN KILL". Below the banner, statistics for 2023 fentanyl seizures are displayed: 75,600,000+ millions of fentanyl pills seized and 11,503+ lbs. of fentanyl powder seized. A public safety alert section features a red warning triangle icon and text stating that 7 out of every 10 pills seized by the DEA contain a lethal dose of fentanyl. A graphic shows 10 pills, with 7 marked as deadly.

ONE PILL CAN KILL

DEA Fentanyl Seizures in 2023

75,600,000+
Millions of Fentanyl Pills Seized

11,503+ lbs.
Pounds of Fentanyl Powder Seized

Public Safety Alert

Laboratory testing indicates 7 out of every 10 pills seized by DEA contain a lethal dose of fentanyl.

DEA has seized a record 74.5 million fentanyl pills to date in 2023, which already exceeds last year's totals of 58 million pills.

7 out of 10 DEA tested pills with fentanyl are potentially **DEADLY**



Brightly-Colored Fentanyl Used to Target Young Americans.

Ministry Opportunities

*“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,
which God prepared beforehand ...”*

Ephesians 2:10

Audio/Visual — Assistants — contact Church Office

Church School — Teachers — contact Sister Yvonne Bush

Grief Share Ministry — Members — contact Sister Denise Mackie-Smith

Health and Wellness Ministry — Nurses — contact Sister Phyllis Jordan

Nursery Ministry — Helpers — contact Sister Allie Hollister

Youth Ministry — Teachers — Youth Bible Study — contact Reverend E. Chris White, III

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTRY (CCM) by DEACON, DEACONESS, MINISTERIAL STAFF and ZIP CODE

Pastor Johnson	John White (MD) Jessie LeCount-White Jerry and Rosie Brown Marcia Gilbert-Gregory Annette Colclough Min. Derrick Allen Rev. Vonda Batts Rev. Dwight Cokely	Karl and Karin Henderson James Cook Min. Myra Cook Min. Angela Sheppard Min. Kimberly Veney	Jerald and Faye Stark Maurice Evans Gloria Giron Min. Myron Euille Min. Leticia Watson Min. Stephanie Gillus Min. Eldred Williams	Carlton Brown Amanda Brown Dalton Martin Min. Linda Hayes Min. Percell Spinner	David Evans Spencer and Mattie Charles Michael and Sylvia Hardy Min. Henrietta Nelson Min. Penni Ford	Barry Newsome Glenn Blackwell La'Tonia White Rev. Chris White Rev. Margaret Barr	John and Barbara White Edward Robinson Rev. Cornella Carter-Taylor	Kenneth and Rita Jackson Averil Tomlinson Robert Brooks Sherri Morgan Rev. Brian Morgan Min. Mark Miller Min. Jackie Wrice	James and Jean Watson Michael Wilson Susie Taylor Rev. Jessie Reynolds
Deacons, Deaconesses, and Family Out of Town Members Ronald Hampton Marilyn McPherson Karen White Josephine Byrd Min. Carl Hollister Min. Aleia Taylor-Ellington Falls Church and Baileys X-roads 22041 22042 22043 22044 22046	DC and Maryland All Zip Codes	Prince William County (excluding Manassas and its independent cities) Lorton 22079 22199 Stafford, Spotsylvania, and Caroline Counties	Centreville Chantilly Manassas Sterling Nokesville Herndon Reston Fauquier, Warren, and Loudoun Counties Fairfax 22030 22031 22032 22033 22037 Vienna 22180	Alexandria 22312	Ft. Belvoir 22060 Alexandria 22301 22302 22303 22305 22306 22307 22308 22309 22310 22313 22314 22315	Alexandria 22304 22311	Arlington All Zip Codes 22201 22202 22203 22204 22205 22206 22207 22209 22211 22212	Burke 22015 Fairfax 22039 Springfield 22150 22151 22152 22153	Annandale 22003 McLean Merrifield
Updated July 2023									

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Anita Johnson	Editor
Debbie Coles	Church News Reporter
Linda Hayes	Staff Writer/Contributor



VIRTUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE — JANUARY 27, 2024 @ 5:00 PM

Vision Statement

A Church “Growing by Grace.” (2 Peter 3:18)

Mission Statement

“To grow a congregation of believers committed to the ministry of Worship, Evangelism, Missions, Discipleship, Service, and Fellowship with a heart for Prayer, Bible Study, and the Great Commission.” (Matthew 28:19–20)

Theme

@ the Mount, “Expanding For A Greater Work” (Isaiah 54:2)

Submission of articles to the **Messenger** — Please send articles via email attachment to:
mpbcnewsletter@mtpleasantbc.org.