

Good News from Grace



January 2021

Volume 2 Issue 1

Our Purpose

The purpose of our church is to make a difference by serving others through God's love and our faith.

JANUARY 3, 2021 (SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS)

"But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God." -John 1:12-13

We begin 2021 with the sure and certain knowledge that the Christ has given us power and new birth as children of God. Our world is still filled with uncertainty, suffering, and fear, but none of these things can undo the hope and promise we have in Christ.

IS EPIPHANY (THREE KINGS DAY) A BIBLICAL HOLIDAY?

By Jessica Van Roekel

Crosswalk.com Contributing Writer

Christmas lights twinkle and music floats through the darkened living room. Christmas has always filled me with wonder as I ponder Jesus' appearance on earth. The anticipation of Christmas Day gives way to celebrating what Christ has done in our lives. His gentle ways work in our lives to make us brighter reflections of him. He's saves, guides, and reveals himself to us.

While Jesus appeared in physical form on earth two thousand years ago, he still shows up in lives today. Epiphany means "appearance or manifestation." Throughout the world, Christians celebrate it on January 6. Many countries refer to it as "Three Kings Day." On this day, Western Christianity recognizes Christ's manifestation to the Gentiles. The Gentiles, represented when The Magi visited the child Jesus and showed how God's gift of the Good News is for all people. Eastern Christianity observes

Jesus' baptism on this day. His baptism revealed his identity to mankind. In the East or the West, Epiphany celebrates God revealing himself to the world.

Origin of Epiphany

To gain a clear picture of Epiphany's origin, we need to take a look at the history of the Church Calendar. In the first century, the earliest Christians set aside one day a week as the Lord's Day. We observe this day on Sunday. In the second century, they established Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. Lent was a period of time set aside for penitence and the training of new Christians. Easter observed Christ's death and celebrated his resurrection followed by Pentecost, where the church focused on triumph and victory.

In the third century, the early Church leaders established Epiphany. This holiday celebrates and recognizes Christ's birth, baptism, the adoration of magi, and the first miracle at Cana. It wasn't until the end of the fourth century that early Christians began observing Christmas and Advent. Christmas

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In-person worship has been suspended until further notice!

Click Here for more information regarding our services or by calling

717-737-0439

Please continue to call

**Pastor Cover
(717-525-4617)
or Pastor Evan
(717-497-3742)
directly if you need
pastoral assistance**

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**Please contact us at
717-737-0439 or
gelc@comcast.net each
month and let us know if
you wish to have someone
remain on the prayer list.**

***We hold in prayer especially
this week...***

Frank Blizzard, Tami Swartzell,
Tom & Gloria Boyer, Bob
Rayhart, Michael Smith,
Margaret Knupp, Kathryn
Tuckey, Hannalyn Kiser, Patti
Reed, Hope Stempo, Barry
Fenicle, Ben & Marilyn Clark,
Sally Snyder, Gerald & Darlene
M, Ann Sheaffer, Sue Gasswint,
Rick Saar, Carm Mitchell, Amber
Shearer, Steven Noll, Jennifer
Heverling, Garry Murray, James
Silcox, Tim Butler, Vernon
Frazier, Dean Jury, and Tricia
Snively.

We hold in ongoing prayer...

Gerry & Sara Jane Crawford,
Mary Louise Shetter, Charlie
Buchanan, Dave Buchanan, Joyce
Allan, Sis Hoffman, Mary Lee
Ryder, Jack Alfano, Dorothy
Edquist, Barbara D, Diane
Brokenshire, David Harman III,
Howard Lauver, Priscilla Walter,
Caroline Witmer, Paulette
Lauver, Lesly Richards, Elijah
Conroy, Delores Miller, Frank
Blizzard, Jim Stoll, Susan
Blumberg, Lisa Leen, Eileen
McCann, Mary Heverling, Mike
Lutz, John Eck, Destiny Glenn,
and Reinhard C.

***We also hold our shut-ins in
prayer:***

Louis Lore, John Hench, Shirley
Hughes, John Shuey, Phyllis
Patterson, John Titzel, Jane
Peters, Betty Bennett, Phyllis
Probst, Harlow Fluevog, and Dick
Cromer.

In our military:

Charles Hildebrand, Corey
Latsha, Alex Robison, Larry G.
Lackey and Gabriel Bailey.

We hold in prayer especially those in the medical fields ...

Katie Perella-Carvalhoes, Lauren S., Megan S., Dixie S., Ben S., Katelynn S., Tess
J., Kay L., Art L., Addison McInnes, Corky Graf, Ken Graf, Kristin Quesenberry,
Maureen Minard, Brad Moore, MD, William Schell, MD, Kirsten Hyatt, MS, Star
Peiffer, Patty Rohde, Melanie Augustine, Jenny Castillo, Jill Green, Mary Brown,
Kara, Sheri Hartzell, Tracy Hartzell, Josh Barr, Chrystal, Sante, Cindy Frost,
Eileen Smith, Sharon Eppley, Kayleigh Titzel, Brendan Bergey, Judith Zeiders,
Amy Evans, Laurie Colman, Connie Malmberg, Ashley Morris, Amy Schwab, Beth
Gargiulo, Tami Heath, Julie Draper, Deb Fickes, Amanda McNally, Justin Young,
Jessica Chestnut, Stephanie Sampson, Samantha & Peter Kang, David Bergquist,
MD, Karen Redclift Albidrez, Elizabeth Brickell, and
Maura White

‘THE YEAR OF MY WELLBEING’

“But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.”—Isaiah 40:31a

The Covid-19 pandemic has endured far longer than anyone imagined, and it has
left us feeling stressed, weary, fearful, frustrated, angry, isolated, and dislocated.
Many are simply depleted.

Even in normal times, being a good steward of our personal health takes time,
vigilance, commitment and discipline. The pandemic’s protracted disruption has
made it especially hard to take care of ourselves at the very time we need it most.

Because it will take months for the Coronavirus vaccine to be widely available, and
even longer for “normal” to return, it may be wise for God’s people to designate
2021 “The Year of My Wellbeing” and focus on our health.

Our spiritual, mental, emotional wellbeing are interconnected. Working on any one
of them will improve the rest. Working on all of them will best help you maintain
equilibrium as we live into this new future.

Here are some tips for crafting a wellbeing strategy. Some may seem pretty basic,
but many of us forget even the most obvious ideas.

- ◆ Ask God for help.
- ◆ Don’t go it alone! Work with friends for mutual support.
- ◆ Tend to your spirit through Scripture study, devotionals, worship, and, most
importantly, prayer!
- ◆ Make quality time with loved ones.
- ◆ Do something just for you.
- ◆ Stuck? Talk to a counselor.
- ◆ Exercise regularly.
- ◆ Eat healthfully.
- ◆ Practice stress-reduction techniques.

The pandemic will end, rest assured. When it does, we will all be greatly relieved. In
the meantime, making 2021 “The Year of My Wellbeing” will help you stay strong.

—Rob Blezard

Copyright © 2021, Rev. Robert Blezard. Pastor Blezard serves as pastor of St. Paul
Lutheran Church, Aberdeen, MD, and works as content editor for
www.stewardshipoflife.org. He blogs at www.thestewardshipguy.com.

Special Music

"One Small Child"

David Meece

Karen Jury

DID YOU KNOW?????

On January 6, 1838 Samuel Morse
demonstrated the telegraph for the
first time at the Speedwell Iron
Works in Morristown, New Jersey.

became the time to celebrate Jesus' birth. Advent is the four-week period of time before Christmas. It is used to prepare hearts to receive Jesus.

As we can see, Epiphany originated from the earliest Church leaders and has a spiritual meaning. The Church Year begins at Advent. From then, through Pentecost, Christians concentrate on the life and work of Christ. For the rest of the year—Pentecost to Advent—the church year focuses on the teachings of Christ and the applications to the Christian life. The ultimate purpose of the church calendar ensured that Christians covered the entire breadth and depth of the Gospel in the course of a year. The six-month period from Advent to Pentecost covers all six major events: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost.

History and Traditions of Epiphany

Since epiphany means manifestation, early celebrations honored any of the four manifestations of Christ. His birth, the adoration of the Magi, Jesus' baptism, and the first miracle at Cana where Jesus turned water into wine.

These four manifestations reveal God to mankind. At his birth, the angels bore witness and the shepherds, representing Israel, bowed before Jesus. The visit of the Magi revealed Jesus' to Gentiles. At his baptism, the Holy Spirit descended, and God declared Jesus' identity. And the first miracle at the Wedding in Cana, revealed Jesus' divinity over nature. God disclosed himself to humankind through the person of Jesus. He made himself known so we might know him.

Traditions observing Three Kings Day vary around the world and have changed over time. During the Middle Ages, celebrations focused on the Magi's journey. In 1336 Italy, one would find processions, ceremonies, nativity plays, and carnivals. Some folklore and customs of Epiphany throughout the world include children receiving gifts on this day rather than on Christmas Day. In some Spanish-speaking countries, three kings deliver gifts not Santa

Claus. On Twelfth Night, as it is known in some countries, children would leave a shoe and a bit of straw on their doorstep. They would find their shoe filled with gifts and the straw gone.

Some traditions include eating a "Kings Cake" with a trinket baked inside. Whoever finds the trinket, is King or Queen for the day. Who wouldn't want to be royalty for the day, right? It also points our hearts to our status as royal priesthood as Peter writes in **1 Peter 2**. France calls it the Feast of Kings and in Spanish speaking countries, it is called Three Kings Day.

In other culture's past centuries, Twelfth Day, or January 6, marked the end of the Christmas season with feasts and masquerades. Eastern Orthodox Christians called it "Feast of Lights" to reflect their belief that baptism happens because of spiritual illumination. Today, some people use Epiphany to take down their Christmas decorations and store them away for the next year. The Common Book of Prayer has readings for churches to read to mark the Epiphany season. Many of these readings focus on God revealing himself to his creation.

Do All Christians Celebrate Three Kings Day?

Not all Christians celebrate Three Kings Day, but many do. Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, and Eastern Orthodox Christians observe Three Kings Day. Whether someone celebrates Epiphany depends on their own personal choice or whether or not their church observes it. Either way, it is a great way to close out the Christmas season and turn our hearts towards keeping Jesus at the center of our lives.

Pointing our Hearts Toward Jesus

One of the many reasons I love this time of year is because of the daily, physical reminders of Jesus everywhere. The twinkly lights on my tree remind me of the angels announcing Christ's birth to the shepherds. I'm reminded to shine bright in my everyday life each time I walk by my lit tree. The star

ornaments point my mind to the star that led the wise men on their two-year journey. This is a gentle reminder that, sometimes, following Christ means I don't know where I'll end up, but if I keep following him, I'll get to where he wants me to be. The tree is in the shape of a triangle which reminds me of the Trinity. The nativity display brings the reality of the stable close to my heart. The music that plays everywhere helps corral my thoughts and fixes them on Jesus. Epiphany, the manifestation of God, is a lovely opportunity to rejoice that Christ has appeared for all men regardless of race or status.

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look about you; All assemble and come to you; your sons and daughters are carried on the arm. Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy," **Isaiah 60:1-5**.

A Prayer for Epiphany

Lord Jesus,
Thank you for revealing yourself to us. We shout for joy and worship you with gladness. We come before with joyful songs and join with the angels as they say, "Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men." We receive your peace and comfort. We ask that as we continue into the new year that we would remember your divinity and revel in your identity. You are a miracle working God, and so we ask you to do a mighty work of internal transformation in our life. Change us to be more like you. Let our words and the meditation of our hearts be pleasing to you. Just as the wise men followed the star, so we commit to following you. Lead and guide us. Comfort and heal us. Let our hearts be set on you as you reveal more and more of yourself to us. We adore you and give you glory.
In your name,
Amen

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A Time of Revelation

Epiphany is a time of revelation. Jesus revealed himself to the Israelites and the Gentiles as represented by the Wise Men. God doesn't play favorites but receives all whose hearts long for him. May we open our hearts to receive revelation from God this year. May we rejoice with those who rejoice and mourn with those who mourn. May we reveal the reason for which we have hope and celebrate the epiphany of the Lord in our lives.

Jessica Van Roekel is a worship leader, speaker, and writer who writes at www.welcomegrace.com sharing hope-filled inspiration addressing internal hurts in the light of God's transforming grace. She believes that through Christ our personal histories don't have to define our present or determine our future.



Dear Friends,

It certainly has been a different kind of year! We have all been touched in one way or another by this mysterious newcomer we refer to as COVID-19. It has changed our lives in so many ways. We miss visiting with our family and friends. We worry about becoming ill and infecting others. We fear the unknown future. We long for normalcy in our lives.

As a result of COVID, many in our community are experiencing harder times than normal. Some are facing these challenges for the first time. Questions abound: How will I keep my family safe? How will I provide for them? What will I do for a job? Where will I get money for food or rent?

Despite all of the challenges we have had to accept, one thing has NOT changed and that is the willingness to help others in need. The outpouring of love and the desire to reach out and make a difference by making a donation, providing gift cards or gifts, helping with rent, and volunteering to prepare or help deliver food is amazing!

You have all made an impact on so many lives. You have helped to lift the burden that many in our community are experiencing during this difficult time.

On behalf of all of our families at Washington Heights, we would like to express our most sincere appreciation and thanks for all that you have done to help our families in need. Your generosity is overwhelming. We wish for you and your family a Very Merry Christmas. May you all be blessed with good health in the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Laurie Zimmerman

Jimmy Connell

Washington Heights Care



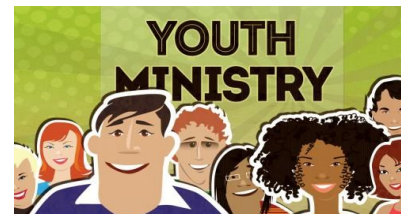
On **Saturday, January 9th from 10am to 1pm** New Hope Ministries will be having a Clothes Closet at West Shore Baptist Church (2025 Market Street, Camp Hill).

ALL ARE WELCOME to stop in and pick up FREE gently used clothing. For more information contact West Shore Baptist Church at 717-761-0942 or mail@wsbc.org



Is in need of children's clothing from baby to age ten for boys & girls as well as men's clothing. Winter boots, shoes and sneakers in any size would be great, too. Men's winter coats would be appreciated, but we do not need kids' and women's coats. Contact Jen Graf (717-805-2740) or Garri Ann Hearn (717-856-2760) to arrange a time to drop off items.

If you wish to pick up items from Grace your Closet you can do so on Wednesdays 3-5pm during The Giving Pantry at Grace.



GYG SCHEDULE

January

- 10 GYG@Heidingsfelder's
1:15 - 3:15pm
- 17 GYG Zoom
7:00 - 8:15pm
- 31 GYG at Kentland
11:00am - 1:00pm

February

- 14 GYG Valentine's Zoom
7:00 - 8:15pm
- 21 GYG @ Hearn's
11:00am - 1:00pm

March

- 7 GYG @ Kentland
11:00am - 1:00pm
- 21 GYG Zoom
7:00 - 8:15pm
- 28 GYG @ TBD

Any Questions?

Contact Jesse Woodrow at gracehyg@gmail.com

YOUTH FOOD CARDS

Contact Wendy in the church office at 717-737-0439 x 13 or wjosmith.gelc@gmail.com to schedule a time to stop at the church office service window to pick up a card from Karns, Weis or Giant in amounts of \$25, \$50 or \$100. This way she will have the card ready when you stop by during normal office hours which are Monday - Thursday from 8am -12 noon.

Checks should be made out to GELC with Youth Food Card on memo line.

THIS WEEK AT GRACE

The Altar Flowers for **Sunday, January 3** are given to the Glory of God.

The Bulletin & Mailing Sponsorship for **Sunday, January 3** is given to the Glory of God.

The Sanctuary Lamp Sponsorship for **January** is given by Eileen Moore Hartzell to the Glory of God, in memory of loved ones and in honor of her children and grandchildren.

SPONSORSHIPS AVAILABLE

To see what dates are available for Lamp Sponsorship, Altar Flower Sponsorship, and Bulletin & Mailing Sponsorship for 2021 go to <https://www.gracecamphill.org/sponsorships>. Contact Diane at 717-737-0439 x 15 or deppengelc@gmail.com to reserve a date.

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY

January 5 at 1:00pm & 7:00pm via Zoom

Please join us as Tuesday Bible Study resumes. If you wish to participate please contact Pastor Evan at (717)497-3742 or pastorevan47@gmail.com for the login information.

CAREGIVER & GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 11 at 11:00am via Zoom.**

Contact Pastor Cover at (717)525-4617 or pastorcover.gelc@gmail.com for login information.

BOOK CLUB

Join us on **Tuesday, January 19, 2021** via zoom to discuss "Learning to Walk in the Dark" by Barbara Brown Taylor.

"Learning to Walk in the Dark" follows Barbara Brown Taylor on her journey to understand darkness, which takes her spelunking in unlit caves, learning to eat and cross the street as a blind person, discovering how "dark emotions" are prevented from seeing light from a psychiatrist, and rereading scripture to see all the times God shows up at night. With her characteristic charm and wisdom, Taylor is our guide through a spirituality of the nighttime, teaching us how to find God even in darkness, and giving us a way to let darkness teach us what we need to

know.

"Few souls are as synched to the world's mysteries as Barbara Brown Taylor's.... Taylor writes spiritual nonfiction that rivals the poetic power of C.S. Lewis and Frederick Buechner." (*TIME*)

"Barbara Brown Taylor shows readers that dark times can be great times of learning. The former Episcopalian priest shares her experiences of walking through the dark in her own life. ... She takes the reader on a journey to explore and understand the 'dark' better." (*CBA Retailers* magazine)

Contact Pastor Cover pastorcover.gelc@gmail.com for log in information.

MEN'S GROUP AT GRACE

On February 24, 2021, at 6:30pm there will be an organizational meeting for a men's group at church called Men of Grace. The group would meet once a month, either on zoom or in person, if restraints on public meetings are eased, to discuss pertinent questions facing men and our nation.

Questions? Contact Matt Hearn (717-695-6429) or Rick Keen (717-657-5563).

Good News from Grace articles are due by **12:00pm on Tuesdays.** Email to gelc@comcast.net

Join us for Worship!

Sundays at 9:30 AM
via Live Stream

Sunday School

Sundays September to May
CLICK HERE for Sunday School at Home videos.



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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