

Message Notes – January 5, 2025

*Star Light, Star Bright . . . **

Thursday, January 9

Monday was Epiphany. Read Matthew 2:1-12 again. Look carefully for “appearances.” Epiphany means “appearance.” This story is all about appearances from the star in the east to the wise men’s appearance before Herod to their presence before Mary, Joseph and the Christ Child. Epiphany is ultimately about the manifestation of the divine in our midst. Each of the appearances described are about God being in the midst of those moments. Even God’s guidance is found through Herod’s prophets!

How has God appeared to you? How do those special moments of God’s presence in your life shape your faith and life? May we praise our God who shows up!

Friday, January 10

It’s early in the New Year – just ten days into another 365 day year. What plans do you have for 2025? Where would you like to be at the end of this year? Where do you see the church at the end of this year? How might God’s great plan fit into this New Year? Write your thoughts here and pray for God’s constant guidance throughout the year to come. May we be blessed to be a blessing to others!

- I. Our earth and we are made from the same stuff as _____.
 - A. What today’s Epiphany text is saying to us is “Keep the stars in your _____.”
 - B. The wise men knew to follow a star in order to find the newborn child who would become a great _____.
 1. The author of _____ calls Jesus the “Morning Star.”
 2. As we seek to follow that “morning star,” I want us to realize that we too, are _____.
 - C. As we seek to follow Jesus, that morning star, we must realize that as stars ourselves, we enter into the constellation called the _____.

- II. The journey of following Jesus, like the journey of those wise men 2000 years ago, is not an _____ journey.
 - A. Sometimes, you _____ of the star.
 - B. Sometimes we are _____ from seeking the star.
 1. Certainly that is the case with _____ and the wise men.
 2. The message of Matthew must be heard and heard clearly – Good News has its _____.
 3. Matthew quotes the Old Testament prophets that point to the _____ that God has had all along – a _____ to save the people.
 - C. That plan is mentioned in our Ephesians text. Paul calls God’s plan of redemption “a plan for the fullness of _____.” (Verse 10)

* Matthew 2:1-12 and Ephesians 1:3-14

1. It is a plan of God's _____ of us as his children.
 2. And as God's children, we have an inheritance with God – life abundant and _____.
- III. It is always the task of the church to follow _____ while leading others to _____ as well. To let our lights shine forth in a world that lives in darkness.
- A. In 2025, I want for us to focus on the star and seek God' _____.
 - B. Will you be a _____? Will you be a _____ in the constellation of the _____?
 - C. God has put within you the _____ to do so, for God formed you out of dust – stardust.

Daily Meditations and Study Guide

The following is a daily meditation and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, January 6

The message began with a discussion of where we come from as a part of God's creation that has continuity from our earth to the farthest star in our sky. Read the first chapters of Genesis.

The first chapter in Genesis tells creation on a day to day basis – very deliberate and organized. The second chapter shares that we are created from the dust of the earth. We share in the material from which all of known creation is made!

Genesis 1 and 2 is more than the story of creation; they tell of a God who has a plan for creation – all creation. Meditate on the plan our creator has for creation – including us. Pray for insight that will reveal that plan for your life.

Tuesday, January 7

Read Matthew 2:1-12. It is the story of the wise men seeking the Christ child – the one who would become the ruler of the world. It is also a story of how God guides us. The wise men were guided by a star, by prophets and a dream! Of course, they found their way to the Holy Family and paid homage to the Christ Child. In the end they found the source of salvation!

How about you? How is God guiding you? How is your life being shaped for your participation in God's plan for creation? Pray that God's guidance for you will have the clarity of a star, a prophet and a dream!

Wednesday, January 8

Read Ephesians 1:3-14. Paul calls God's plan of redemption a plan for the fullness of time." (Verse 10) It is a plan of God's adoption of us as his children, and as God's children, we have an inheritance with God – life abundant and eternal. We are blessed by God through the birth, life and teachings of Jesus. Verses 11 and 12 tell us that "In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory."

God's plan for us gives to us a purpose within that plan and ultimately, we are to utilize our gifts for the praise of God through Christ our Lord. How are your gifts being used for the glory of God?