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**JANUARY
2015**

*Faith United Methodist Church
"Engage, Equip, and Empower!"*

**Volume 2016.
Issue 1**

The Journey of the Magi

The article below is written by one of my favorite bloggers on the web. He brings to the world of politics and current events the reflections of his faith.

As I think of our congregation we have been on a journey together this year and for some the loss of a loved one, a friend, a father, or a spouse has been very hard and we as a family have shared their grief. For others the battle with age, sudden illness or the end of life issues we will all face one day has made 2015 a difficult journey.

As you look forward to Christmas keep in mind the words of the Apostle Paul: *2 Cor 1:13-14 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.*

The Journey of the Magi by John Schroeder

The Christmas Story is a story of journeys. Mary and Joseph travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem. By today's standards not much of a journey really, but in the day it would have been a chore. Likewise the shepherds, coming into town from the fields was a long, arduous walk. And the "Wise Men?" – now that was a trip.

The Magi were on an over-the-horizon journey. The shepherds had but to look for the lights of town and walk in that direction. The Magi traveled to someplace unknown along routes they had never taken. Mary and Joseph had but to follow a well-worn path with roadside services to a place they had been before. The Magi, according to (Continued on page 5.)

Prayer Requests

Remember our church members & friends who are less mobile and are unable to join us as often as they would like, including:

Colony Court Memory & Care Suites: Ann Swenson

Colony Court: Millie Groh, Ardella Draheim, Nina Youngberg, Leona Quast, Muriel Jenkins

Lakeshore Inn: Florence Gutknecht, Hazel Henkensiefken

Latham Place: Liz Corchran

Morrow Home, Sparta, WI: Marlene Rietfort

Oaklawn Health Care Center: Jim Keller, Bill Brooks

Tower Light, St. Louis Park: Darlene Lynch

Those who also need our prayers: Willie Mahler [Home Hospice]

Prayer Requests from Sunday Worship: Bruce and Deb Hering, Leona Quast, Joann Egeness, Kookie Kukacka, Peter and Verna Fog, Marilyn Possin, Berts Walker, The Westrum Family, Chuck Youngberg, Marlys Garness, Deloris Asmus, Jim Keller, Bill Brooks, Brenda and Kip Westrum, Roger Goetz, the family of Paul Krause, family of Deloris Asmus, and the family of Don Lohse.

Sherry Scholljegerdes is in Limbé, Haiti January 2nd-9th. Please keep her and the medical team in your prayers.



REMINDER

If you haven't already done so, please return your **2016 Estimate of Giving** to the church office as soon as possible. This will help us greatly in preparing our 2016 budget. Thank you!

Bazaar planning

The 2015 bazaar was great and to make the 2016 bazaar the Biggest and Best, we need to start planning and working on it now. At the Stitchers and Crafters we will talk about things to make for the bazaar. We are open to ideas on things to make. We meet on the second Thursday at 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. We not only work on projects, socialize, have a cup of coffee or tea, but also enjoy a special treat.

Please plan to attend January 14th. Bring something to work on for yourself or for the bazaar. We will also have some projects to work on.

Some items that we need are: buttons, any color and any size; quart glass jars, like the mayo or salad dressing jars; and blue jeans.

Roberta Walker

Jesus Seeds

The following is a reprint from an article that appeared in the January, 2013, Faith Messenger newsletter. It is being reprinted because our many new members and visitors may not be aware of the resource mentioned in the article that is available to them.

Fellow Parishioners,

Several years ago I acquired a little stone with the name JESUS inscribed on it. I thought it was neat, so I began carrying it in my pocket with my loose change, pocket knife, and keys. Every morning I dutifully filled my pocket with those things and every night I emptied them. As time went by, I began to rely on that stone to ease the burden of daily problems, and some were very weighty. It seems it's easy to forget that Jesus is with us always, but my little stone is a handy reminder and it sure does work!

As time went on and I became more involved with our church, the message became clearer that our real purpose here is to spread God's word. In other words, be disciples.

I don't know about you, but I'm not a stump preacher. But a funny thing happened. An idea got into my head and it wouldn't leave until I acted upon it. The idea was that I could be a disciple simply by telling people about the powerful Jesus stone that I carried. And not only tell them about it, but offer one to them so they could be reminded that Jesus is with them, too. By giving (or sowing) the stone to others, it actually becomes a Jesus seed. Remember the Parable of the Sower, Mark 4:1-20? God's word is sown in many places, but only becomes fruitful when sown in fertile soil. That fertile soil is people like me and you, and anyone we meet needs reminding that Jesus is with them always.

So, there is now a bowl of Jesus seeds next to the bulletin board at Faith UMC. Take one and see for yourself how the reminder of Jesus' presence helps you through life's problems. Then, become a sower yourself by giving your Jesus seed to someone who needs it. It may be a coworker, a wait staff, a relative, or a friend who is having a hard time in life. Guess what! When you do that, you instantly become a disciple! After that, come back to the seed store (Faith UMC) and pick up another seed to replace the one you gave away. There is no limit to how many people you give one to, but remember, a Jesus seed tucked away in a drawer is not sown on fertile ground!

What happens when the seed store runs out of seeds? Well, we'll just shake the tree and see if more will fall into the bowl.

Yours in Christ,

Roger Walker

UMW Sunday-January 24th

Leslie Hobson, deaconess, will be our speaker. She will be speaking on her faith journey to become a deaconess and her ministry of being an advocate for kids with disabilities at our church camps. A special treat will be solo by Justin True. Please mark your calendar.

**Parish Nurse Notes
TAKE IT TO THE BOX**

January is a great time to clean out your medicine cabinet. Take an hour and do this important task.

Medications that were never finished, outdated prescription drugs, and over the counter drugs as well as herbal supplements and vitamins need to be checked and disposed of. Here in Waseca, we have Waseca County MEDICATION safety program located at the Waseca County Sheriff's Office, 1st floor lobby, 122 3rd Ave NW, Waseca, 835-0685. All prescription drugs should be left in their original container and your name crossed off with a marker. Over the counter drugs can be disposed of as well. No syringes, needles, or sharps are to be put in the Box.

Illegal drugs can be put in the Box. A paper bag can be used for privacy. The box is about 2 inches by 10 inches. It is designed so that once the drugs are dropped in they can only be taken out by a designated police officer. Medicines and drugs will be taken to a licensed site to be incinerated.

Please do not flush medications down the toilet. They pollute our water supply. Taking medications to the Box at the sheriff's office is an easy way to dispose of these products in a safe manner.

Medications that are unopened and/or unneeded can not be donated in Minnesota.

Hope you will take the time to do this project or call someone to help you if you're unable to do it yourself.

Happy New Year!

Blessings,

Sherry Scholljegerdes, RN
Parish Nurse

Faith Crafters and Stitchers

Faith Crafters and Stitchers will meet **Thursday, January 14**, from 1:00-3:00 p.m. in the **Fellowship Hall**. Gather up your personal projects or craft ideas for Bazaar 2016 and join us for fellowship, snacks, and a little work! Please call Sandy Voshell at 835-4122 if you have questions.

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The Journey of the Magi Continued

Biblical narrative, used celestial navigation.

In this day of smartphones and GPS, navigating comes all too easily. But celestial navigation is an entirely different story. I have a friend who was a navigator on some of the last B-29's in military service. He had to stick his head out of the top of an airplane to sight a star to figure out where the airplane was. And yet he represented the pinnacle of celestial navigation technology. His sextant was of the finest quality, his timepieces highly accurate and he had computational assistance. A timepiece that could make longitudinal fixes truly accurate was not really invented until about the time of the American Revolution. When the Magi made their celestially navigated journey they would have been without timepiece and with the crudest of sextants. The journey of the Magi was truly a journey into the unknown, but it also represented one of the highest technological achievements of its time.

An arduous journey to an incarnation – something extraordinary was going on.

The events of Holy Week and Easter may be the pivotal events around which the axis of history rotates, for in them humanity finds its salvation. But it is the events of Christmas that tell us what to do with that salvation. From salvation we take an arduous journey to incarnation.

Through our salvation the Spirit of God is able to dwell in us. Just as Jesus came, dwelt among us and showed us God's glory, so we, also filled with that glory through Christ's ministry, death and resurrection, are now called to show that glory to the world – by dwelling in it. Those two sentences, easy enough to write, are the arduous journey from salvation to incarnation.

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(Continued from page 5.)

The Journey of the Magi Continued

The journey from our salvation to being people that dwell in the world as shining beacons of God's glory is indeed a journey into the unknown that requires our highest achievements and greatest efforts. The journey from salvation to incarnation is a journey in the direction opposite the one we are naturally inclined to take. It is a journey uphill, when it is so easy to go down. It is a journey that demands the diminishing of our glory so that God's glory may be that much brighter. It is a journey that ends up full circle wherein we can say as Jesus did on the night before He was crucified, "Not my will but Thine."

The world needs the shining light of God's glory so desperately right now. The contrast between those who think they spread God's light by the death of others through conquest, and the true light of God that shines out of humility and self-sacrifice is extraordinarily sharp in a Christmas season that began with a slaughter.

Christmas is a picture of what God expects of us – to take a most arduous journey, involving our greatest effort and achievement, to the place where we are filled with His glory while living most humbly. Anything less diminishes the bright light of His glory – a light the world needs now as much as it ever has.

I hope you enjoyed the read and my 2016 journey towards a great knowledge of Jesus and one of joy, hope and encouragement.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR,

Pastor Victor

Lenten Devotional 2016

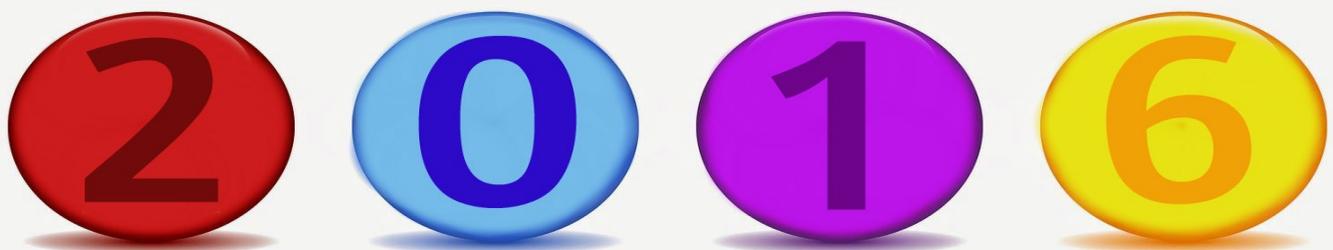
In 2006, some of our church members put together a “Lenten Devotional” to be available upon request by our congregation. I still use mine. So I would like to do a similar devotional for 2016 written by 40 of our members.

So I will need your help. Start thinking about a devotion you could write using the “Upper Room” as a guide for a daily devotion of your creation. I will type them up and have them ready for lent. I will need the writing by FEBRUARY 1ST.

For more information call Shirley Burdick at 833-5182.

Thank You

A huge thank you to all who shared a lovely poinsettia for display in the sanctuary. Your generosity is appreciated by your church family.



HAPPY NEW YEAR



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Change Service Requested

MONTHLY MEET-UPS:

Elizabeth Circle

UMW Elizabeth Circle will meet **Wednesday, January 20**, at **2:00 p.m.** in the **Lakeview Room**. Sandy Voshell will host with Linda Lohse leading devotions. Guests and visitors welcome.

Mary Circle

UMW Mary Circle will meet on **Tuesday, January 19th** at **11:00 p.m.** The location is to be determined.

Ruth Circle

UMW Ruth Circle will meet **Wednesday, January 20th**, from **9:30-10:30 a.m.** The location is to be determined.

Men of Faith

Men of Faith will **not meet** in January.