



First Presbyterian Church  
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*Daily Devotional for Jan. 3-9, 2021*

### *Visiting Royalty*

from Matthew 2:1-12 (*The Message*)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem village, Judah territory—this was during Herod’s kingship—a band of scholars arrived in Jerusalem from the East. They asked around, “Where can we find and pay homage to the newborn King of the Jews? We observed a star in the eastern sky that signaled his birth. We’re on pilgrimage to worship him.” When word of their inquiry got to Herod, he was terrified—and not Herod alone, but most of Jerusalem as well.

Herod lost no time. He gathered all the high priests and religion scholars in the city together and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

They told him, “Bethlehem, Judah territory. The prophet Micah wrote it plainly: It’s you, Bethlehem, in Judah’s land, no longer bringing up the rear. From you will come the leader who will shepherd-rule my people, my Israel.”

Herod then arranged a secret meeting with the scholars from the East. Pretending to be as devout as they were, he got them to tell him exactly when the birth-announcement star appeared.

Then he told them the prophecy about Bethlehem, and said, “Go find this child. Leave no stone unturned. As soon as you find him, send word and I’ll join you at once in your worship.”

Instructed by the king, they set off. Then the star appeared again, the same star they had seen in the eastern skies. It led them on until it hovered over the place of the child. They could hardly contain themselves: They were in the right place! They had arrived at the right time!

They entered the house and saw the child in the arms of Mary, his mother. Overcome, they kneeled and worshiped him.

Then they opened their luggage and presented gifts: gold, frankincense, myrrh.

In a dream, they were warned not to report back to Herod. So they worked out another route, left the territory without being seen, and returned to their own country.

Sunday, Jan. 3

What questions do you have from the sermon?

*Can I get a witness?*

With whom did you share some good news this week? Spend some time praying for that person or persons.

Did you receive any insights?

With whom would you like to share some good news next week? Spend some time praying for an opportunity and open hearts.

Everlasting God, by star You led magi to the worship of Your Son. Guide the nations of the earth by Your light, that the whole world may see Your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (*Book of Common Worship*, p. 192)

*Journal Musings*

Monday, Jan. 4

Read Matt. 2:1-12 out loud. What words or phrases catch your attention?

Did you notice anything different from yesterday?



Tuesday, Jan. 5

Read Isaiah 60:1-6. It has been often read during the celebration of Epiphany. Verse 6 describes the gifts 'the nations' will bring to honor the Lord, including gold and frankincense. What thoughts or questions come to mind in reading this passage?

*God in Plain Sight(ings)*

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Lord God of the nations, we have seen the star of Your glory rising in splendor. The radiance of Your incarnate Word pierces the night that covers the earth and signals the dawn of justice and peace. May His brightness illumine our lives and beckon all nations to walk as one in Your light. We ask this through Jesus Christ Your Word made flesh, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, in the splendor of eternal light, God forever and ever. Amen. (*BoCW*, p. 191-2)

Saturday, Jan. 9

What 'epiphany' did you receive from spending the week in this text?

What truth of the message has been most impactful?

Everlasting God, the radiance of faithful souls, who brought the nations to Your light and kings to the brightness of Your rising: Fill the world with Your glory, and show Yourself to all the nations; through Him who is the true light and the bright morning star, Jesus Christ Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (*BoCW*, p. 192)

Wednesday, Jan. 6

Spend time reading/praying the *Litany for Epiphany*.

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God, Alleluia!

Shout to the Lord, all the earth, Alleluia!

With joy we pray to our Savior, the Son of God who became one of us.

O Christ, let Your gospel shine in every place where the Word of life is not yet received.

Draw the whole creation to Yourself that Your salvation may be known through all the earth.

O Christ, Savior and Lord, extend Your church to every place. Make it a place of welcome for people of every race and tongue.

O Christ, Ruler of rulers, direct the work and thoughts of the leaders of nations that they may seek justice, and further peace and freedom for all.

O Christ, Master of all, support of the weak and comfort of the afflicted, strengthen the tempted and raise the fallen. Watch over the lonely and those in danger. Give hope to the despairing and sustain the faith of the persecuted.

O Christ, light made manifest as the true light of God, gladden our hearts on the joyful morning of Your glory; call us by our name on the Great Day of Your Coming; and give us grace to offer, with all the hosts of heaven, unending praise to God in whom all things find their ending, now and forever. Amen.

(*Litany for Epiphany*, *BoCW*, p. 192-3)

What came to mind as you read/prayed/meditated?

Thursday, Jan. 7

Read the Matthew text. What might be the significance of the gifts that were given to Jesus?

What gift might you have brought Jesus, if you were one of the visitors? Why?



Friday, Jan. 8

Have you ever journeyed to find something or someone of great value?

Describe the experience and your response.

