

The Means of Grace

January 9, 2022



This week, on January 6th, we observed Epiphany. The celebration of Epiphany reminds us of how God revealed the promise of the Savior to the Magi and led them to come and worship Jesus. It was an “epiphany” because something wondrous had been made known to these Magi... something so wondrous it changed their life. The word “epiphany” comes from the Greek word *επεφαινω* (epiphaino) which means “to show”, “to bring to light”, “to appear”, “to become visible” — and when referring to a person it means, “to become clearly known”. You might say that an epiphany is an “A-ha!” moment... and there is no greater epiphany then when the Holy Spirit makes Jesus clearly known to someone. Faith. Epiphanies change everything



While we celebrate the coming of the Magi as Epiphany... that was not the only epiphany recorded for us on the pages of scripture. The same can be said of the apostle Paul. It wasn't as if Jesus became the Son of God and the Savior of the world the day Paul first realized it. That had always been true of Jesus, even when Paul failed to see it and stubbornly worked to snuff out the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus was Paul's Savior, whether he believed it or



not. Paul openly acknowledged his former life in darkness under Judaism, how he “was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man” (1 Timothy 1:13) and how he had put many Christians in jail and voted for their execution (Acts 26:10).

And then, one day, Jesus became “clearly known” to Paul. When Jesus himself met Saul (Paul) on the road to Damascus it was an “A-ha” moment! In fact, it blinded him... and not until he was ready to serve God would his sight be restored. Of course, God sent Ananias to heal Saul (Paul) and after he placed his hands on him ***“something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength. Saul spent several days with the disciples in Damascus. At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. Acts 9:18-20.***

One would think that Saul would be the last person on earth Jesus would be interested in saving. If anyone deserved to suffer forever for his resistance to the saving gospel, it was Saul. Who could possibly be a more unlikely candidate for conversion than someone who was openly attacking Christians, even seeking their extermination?

But Jesus does the unexpected, and Paul marveled at the irony. The apostle also understood the Savior's purpose. ***“I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life”*** (1 Timothy 1:16). Paul's conversion proves many things, but it demonstrates one thing above all: Jesus' love and forgiveness extends to every sinner, whether they know it or not, whether they believe it or not. No situation is too hopeless. Epiphanies happen. Epiphanies change everything. For the Magi. For Paul. For us.

THIS WEEK AT GRACE CHURCH AND SCHOOL

Sunday January 9, 2022

Communion Prep-Sue Lewallen

8:30 AM Bible Study and Sunday School

9:30 AM Worship Service

and livestream grace-wels.net/worship or facebook.com/GraceWELS

11:00 AM - Confirmation Class

OFFERINGS CAN BE MAILED TO THE CHURCH - 7610 NE FREMONT

Monday January 10, 2022

Pastor in office

Tuesday January 11, 2022

Pastor in office

9:00 AM Confirmation Class

10:00 AM Mary & Martha

Wednesday January 12, 2022

Pastor in office

9:00 AM Confirmation Class

6:00 PM Google Meet Bible Class

Thursday January 13, 2022

Pastor in office

8:00 AM Confirmation Class

Friday January 14, 2022

Pastor in office

8:00 AM Confirmation Class

Home bound / Nursing Home Visits

Saturday January 15, 2022

Pastor in office

Sermon Preparation

Sunday January 16, 2022

8:30 AM Bible Study and Sunday School

9:30 AM Worship Service

and livestream facebook.com/GraceWELS

11:00 AM Confirmation Class

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PRAYERS:

Steve Vonfeldt - we lift up the Godish family in our prayers as Tammy's father, Steve, was called to heaven's glory on Saturday morning.

Elke Werner - who is preparing for knee surgery... hopefully with in the month.

The Hafners & Shirley Baker who have recovered from recent bouts with COVID and for members who are dealing with its effects.

Aaron Baker who God blessed with successful nasal / tonsil surgery this past week



CAN YOU HELP?

An opportunity to use your gifts to help our ministry!

Are you good with numbers?

Do you know someone who is good with numbers?

We could use your help!

Refinancing

Our financial oversight team and church council is currently in the process of refinancing our ministry loan with Thrivent Financial. The amount of time needed to accomplish this is short and the amount of work is much more than a couple people can do. We are looking for people who have skills in accounting or have CPA experience or know someone else who does, to assist our leadership. Can you help?

As part of the refinance process we need to submit a balance sheet of ministry finances for the past three years. If you are a member or friend of Grace we would like to offer this as an opportunity to use your gifts in a paid or volunteered position. Because of the urgency to accomplish this work as soon as possible, if no one within our church family is able to assist us, we will need to hire a CPA.

If you are interested and available to help with this refinance process or you know someone who is, please contact Pastor Bitter (503) 290-6316 or Juan Garcia (281) 650-9245 or Larry Glasheen (503) 347-1937 as soon as possible.

Thank You!





8:30 – 9:15 AM Grace Church

Bible History Lessons

With Applications

From Luther's Catechism

Sunday School has started up again. To start we will have a combined class led by Melissa Baker.

Sunday School will meet in the room at the far end of the fellowship hall from 8:30 – 9:15 AM on Sunday mornings. Adult and older children are welcome to attend bible class with pastor in the fellowship hall. A weekly lesson will also be attached with the announcements each week.

But we could use your help too! If you're interested in teaching, assisting, administrating or participating in our Sunday School program in any way please contact Pastor Bitter.



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Make the Connection





Wednesday Evenings at 6PM

Online via Google Meet
(invite will be sent via email)



Weekly Mowing!

Please consider signing up for spring and summer lawn care. The lawn at church needs to be cut every week... can you sign up for a weekend to cut.



Weekly Cleaning!

Please consider signing up for summer and fall church cleaning. The church building needs to be cleaned each week and we could use your help!

FELLOWSHIP FOOD / DRINKS

Fellowship Hour is back! Please consider signing up to host on a Sunday by providing coffee, drinks and food. A signup sheet is in the entryway at church.



Mary & Martha Meeting this Tuesday at 10:00 AM!

Abram Degner (our Nigerian missionary) wishes to thank The Mary Martha Group for the Amazon gift card.

Beginning on Feb. 12, 2022, Mary and Martha will hold evening get togethers with meetings brief to hopefully include ladies who are unable to attend our day-time meetings. Make a note on your new year's calendar now! The time will be 4PM on Saturday! Plans are in the making to hold these about every 3 months.

OFFERING ENVELOPES ARE COMING!

A delivery error has delayed our reception of our envelopes and our ability to distribute them. Please, continue to give your gifts to the Lord without an envelope by check / cash or by using a plain envelope or by digital giving. Our tellers will properly credit your gift to you. Envelopes should arrive soon.

<i>Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Matt. 6:21</i>	My Offering	
	Name:	_____
	Address:	_____
	Amount:	_____



We would like to start our “Cross-over” Basketball nights again at our gym at Grace School again.

But we need your help!

If you, or a group, would like to help organize, plan and carry out these basketball evenings please contact Pastor Bitter.

This event is for adults – high school age or older.

Bringing your friends.

Get some exercise.

Dunk on someone.

Have fun.

Live your faith.

DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS FOR EPIPHANY 2022

Sunday Isaiah 60:1-3

- ✚ This is a spiritual picture. Who is the Light? What does he reflect upon people? V. 1
- ✚ Define the glory of the Lord. Jeremiah 2:5-8; Psalm 25:10-12
- ✚ Define the “darkness on the earth”. What will this light do to the darkness?
- ✚ Who will see this great light? From where will those seeing the light come?

Monday 1 Kings 10:1-13

- ✚ What is the message of v. 4? How many will see the light which the Wise men saw?
- ✚ Think about and discuss these words in v. 5: radiant, heart throb, swell with joy.
- ✚ What is God promising in the last half of verse 5? Define the “riches”. 1 Tim. 6:3-10
- ✚ Verse 6 is a prophecy regarding people bringing wealth to the Lord? How should this thought impact us? What does God do with the riches we bring to Him? 1 Kgs. 1_1-13

Tuesday Ephesians 1:2-6

- ✚ What is meant by the “administration of God’s Grace”?
- ✚ What is the mystery made in heaven? How did Paul get to know that mystery?
- ✚ Why should we understand that Paul and all the prophets had insight into the Word?
- ✚ What are all people to understand through the mystery of the Gospel? How alone do we ‘understand’ the Gospel?

Wednesday Ephesians 3:7-12

- ✚ Originally whose servant was Saul (Paul)? How did Saul become Paul?
- ✚ Why did Paul consider himself the least of all of the Apostles? Yet, what did God call him to do?
- ✚ With what was Paul entrusted? How does he feel about this? V. 10
- ✚ What was God’s purpose? Vv. 11-12. Then what does Paul give all credit for what he is? Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:17.

Thursday Matthew 2:1-6

- ✚ Who arrived at Jerusalem soon after Jesus was born? Where did they naturally go to find a King? What sort of King did they find?
- ✚ When they asked where the new born the King was, what were they told? What did Herod ask the Wise Men to do when they found the newborn King? What was Herod’s real plan?
- ✚ Look at and discuss the prophecy which foretold where Christ would be born.

Friday Matthew 2:7-12

- ✚ What were Herod’s final instructions to the Magi? What did he plan to do?
- ✚ What appeared to them as they now set out for Bethlehem? How did they receive this?
- ✚ What two things did the Magi do when they found the Baby Jesus?

Saturday All three readings

- ✚ What mistake did Herod make which is commonly made today? Mt, 16:15-17
- ✚ What is the Key message of Epiphany according to Paul’s words to the Ephesians. Also see John 20:21-23. Apply these thoughts to us today.
- ✚ Did the Magi set for us a good example for Christian giving? Explain. 2 Corinthians 8:5. Read all of Chapters 8 and 9 to get a good picture of Christian giving.