

CONNECTING MEOTA December 27th, 2023

This newsletter is meant to inspire, engage, and encourage everyone in the Meota Parish to seek God and reach out to one another throughout the week.

Our next church service will be

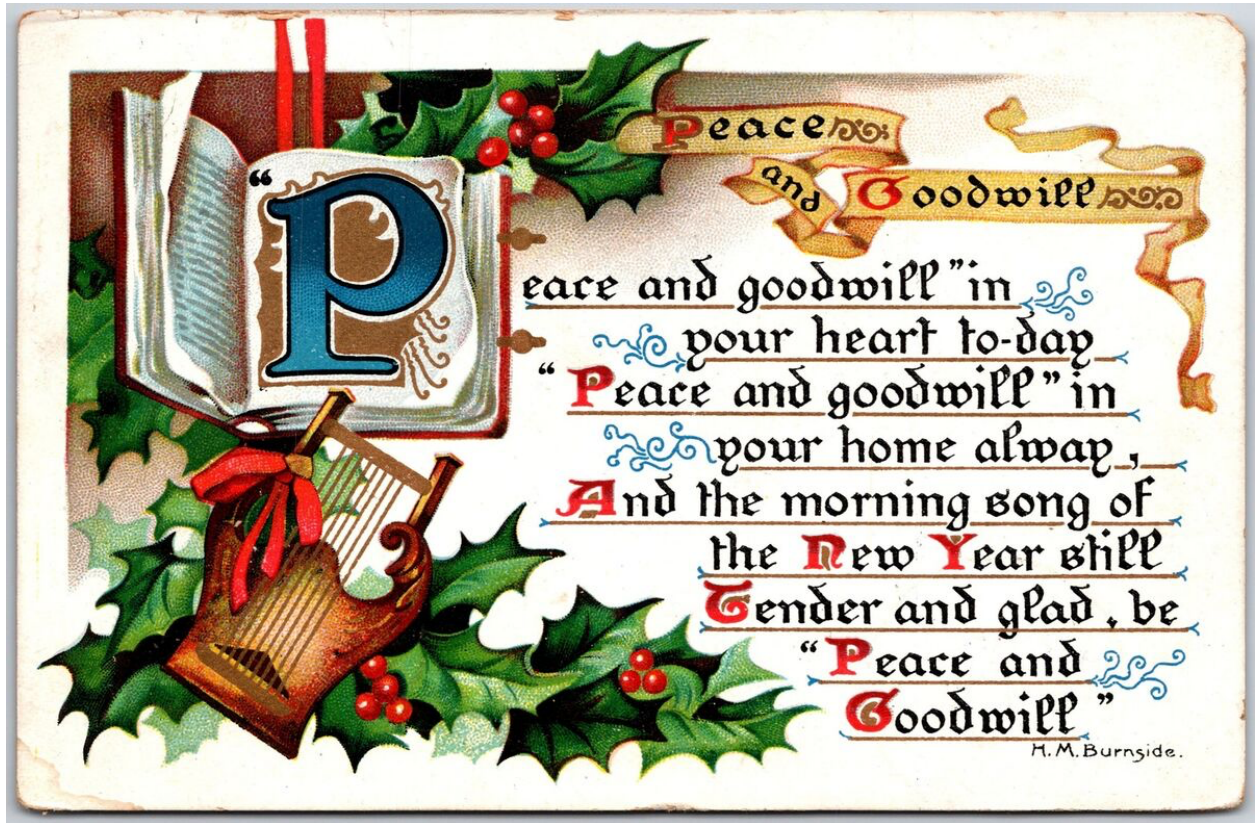
SUNDAY DECEMBER 31ST

NEW YEAR'S EVE

ONE SERVICE 10:30 AM CHRIST CHURCH

Even though it's a fifth Sunday, there will not be a pot luck after the service, but please join us for coffee and goodies, nice people and great conversation!!





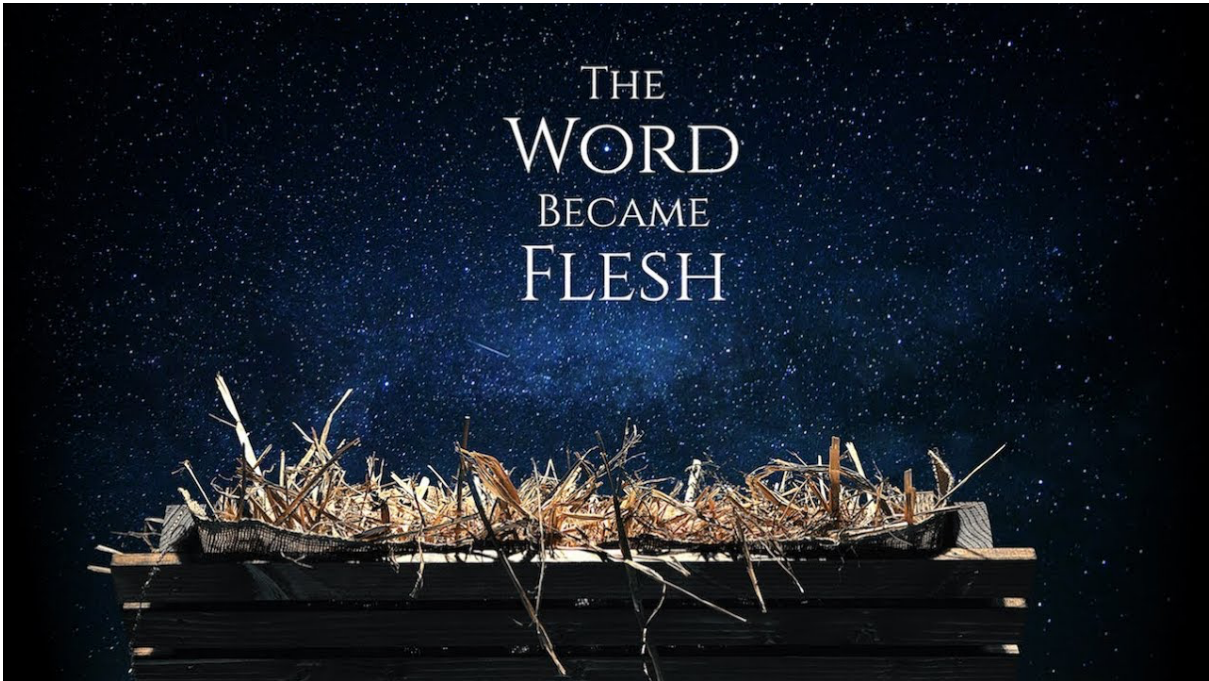
January services 2024



We are still in the season of Christmas.
Let us enjoy the mystery of God with us.



Prophecy	Prediction	Fulfillment
Gen. 22:18	Child of Abraham	Matt. 1:2
Gen. 49:10	tribe of Judah	Matt. 1:3
Jer. 23:5	Son of David	Matt. 1:6
Mic. 5:2	in Bethlehem	Matt. 2:1
Isa. 7:14	virgin born	Matt. 1:23
Psa. 72:10	given gifts	Matt. 2:11
Hos. 11:1	fled to Egypt	Matt. 2:14
Jer. 31:15	baby massacre	Matt. 2:16





A Short Christmas Blessing:

*May the blessing of joy
abide within you;*

*May the blessing of peace
rest upon you;*

*May the blessing of love
flow out through you;*

*May all the blessings of the Lord
be yours at Christmas
and in the new year.*

~ Author Unknown

Homemade
GIFTS MADE EASY



The Epiphany of the Lord

Sunday, December 31st, 2023

Readings

ISAIAH 60:1-6; PSALM 72:1-7, 10-14; EPHESIANS 3:1-12; MATTHEW 2:1-12

Collect

Eternal God,
who by a star
led wise men to the worship of your Son.
Guide by your light the nations of the earth,
that the whole world may know your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen

First Reading. The wise men foretold in Isaiah!!

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. Lift up your eyes and look around; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from far away, and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. **A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.**

ISAIAH 60:1-6



Gospel

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. **Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.** And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

MATTHEW 2:1-12



Epiphany celebrates the Magi's journey to worship Jesus.

It represents the coming of Jesus to all – to Gentiles and Jews alike. The Magi saw the star from afar and traveled to worship the Christ Child. They brought him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh – each of which tells us something about Jesus' identity.

from the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Washington DC USA

Gold – the Kingship of Jesus

The magi's gifts were not simply a demonstration of wealth – they conveyed deeper meaning. The gold represents Jesus' kingship. As Daniel 7:13-14 says:

*As the visions during the night continued,
I saw coming with the clouds of heaven
One like a son of man.
When he reached the Ancient of Days
and was presented before him,
He received dominion, splendor, and kingship;
all nations, peoples and tongues will serve him.
His dominion is an everlasting dominion
that shall not pass away,
his kingship, one that shall not be destroyed.*



Jesus' kingship transcends all earthly rulers – the Magi recognized that, and they came to worship him.

Frankincense – the Deity of Jesus

The frankincense represents Jesus' deity. In the Old Testament, frankincense was traditionally burned in the temple as an offering to God (Leviticus 2:2). By bringing this gift, the Magi affirmed Jesus was no ordinary man; he is both fully man and fully God.

As Colossians 2:9-10 says:

For in him dwells the whole fullness of the deity bodily, and you share in this fullness in him, who is the head of every principality and power.

Myrrh – the Death of Jesus

Commonly used to embalm bodies, the gift of myrrh foreshadows Jesus' death. We see in John 19:38-40 that Nicodemus brought myrrh at the time of Jesus' burial:

After this, Joseph of Arimathea, secretly a disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus. And Pilate permitted it. So he came and took his body. Nicodemus, the one who had first come to him at night, also came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes weighing about one hundred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom.

In this way, the full story of Jesus' coming is revealed. Jesus was born so that we might have salvation. Through Jesus' death, we have eternal life.

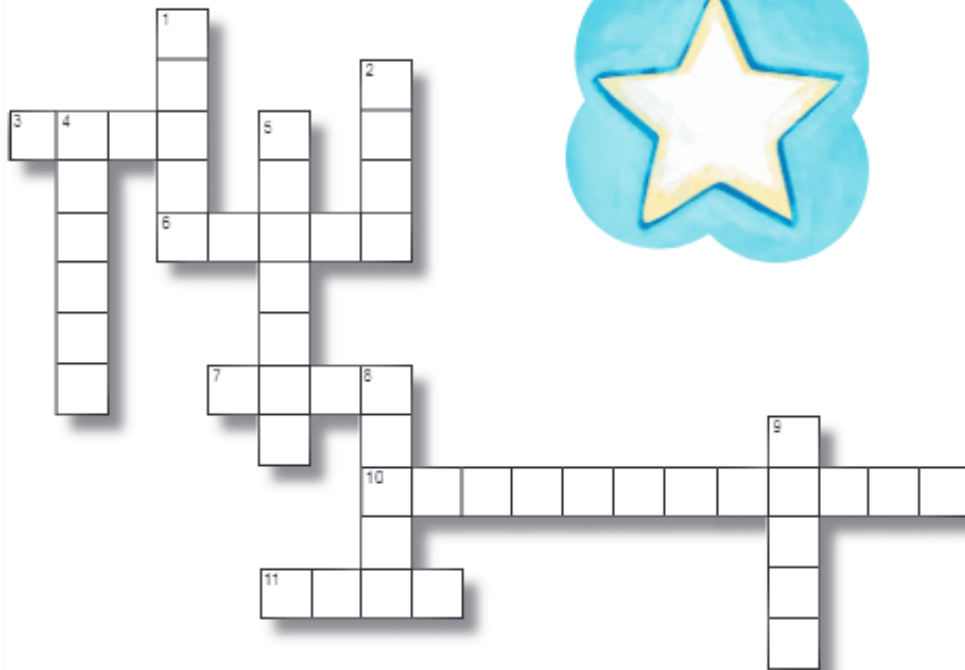
The Magi's Gifts: Pointing to the Ultimate Gift

The gifts of the Magi illuminate the different aspects of Christ's identity. He is king, he is God, and, in his marvelous grace, he died, so that we might live. As the Magi actively pursued Jesus, so too should we follow Christ without hesitation, letting him be our guiding star. As [Pope Francis stated](#):

It is not enough to know where Jesus was born, as the scribes did, if we do not go there. It is not enough to know that Jesus was born, like Herod, if we do not encounter him. When his place becomes our place, when his time becomes our time, when his person becomes our life, then the prophecies come to fulfillment in us. Then Jesus is born within us. He becomes the living God for me. Today we are asked to imitate the Magi. They do not debate; they set out. They do not stop to look, but enter the house of Jesus. They do not put themselves at the center, but bow down before the One who is the center.

Oh, come let us worship him!

Wise Men Crossword Puzzle



Across

3. It guided the wise Men.
6. The ruler of Judea when Jesus was born
7. A monarch or ruler
10. One of the wise men's gifts
11. Full of knowledge or experience

Down

1. The wise men gave Jesus this.
2. Another gift to Jesus
4. Journey to a different place
5. Praise or adore
8. The wise men gave three _____ to Jesus.
9. The wise men went to Bethlehem to see the Baby _____.

FUNNY BONES



"They say they are three kings."

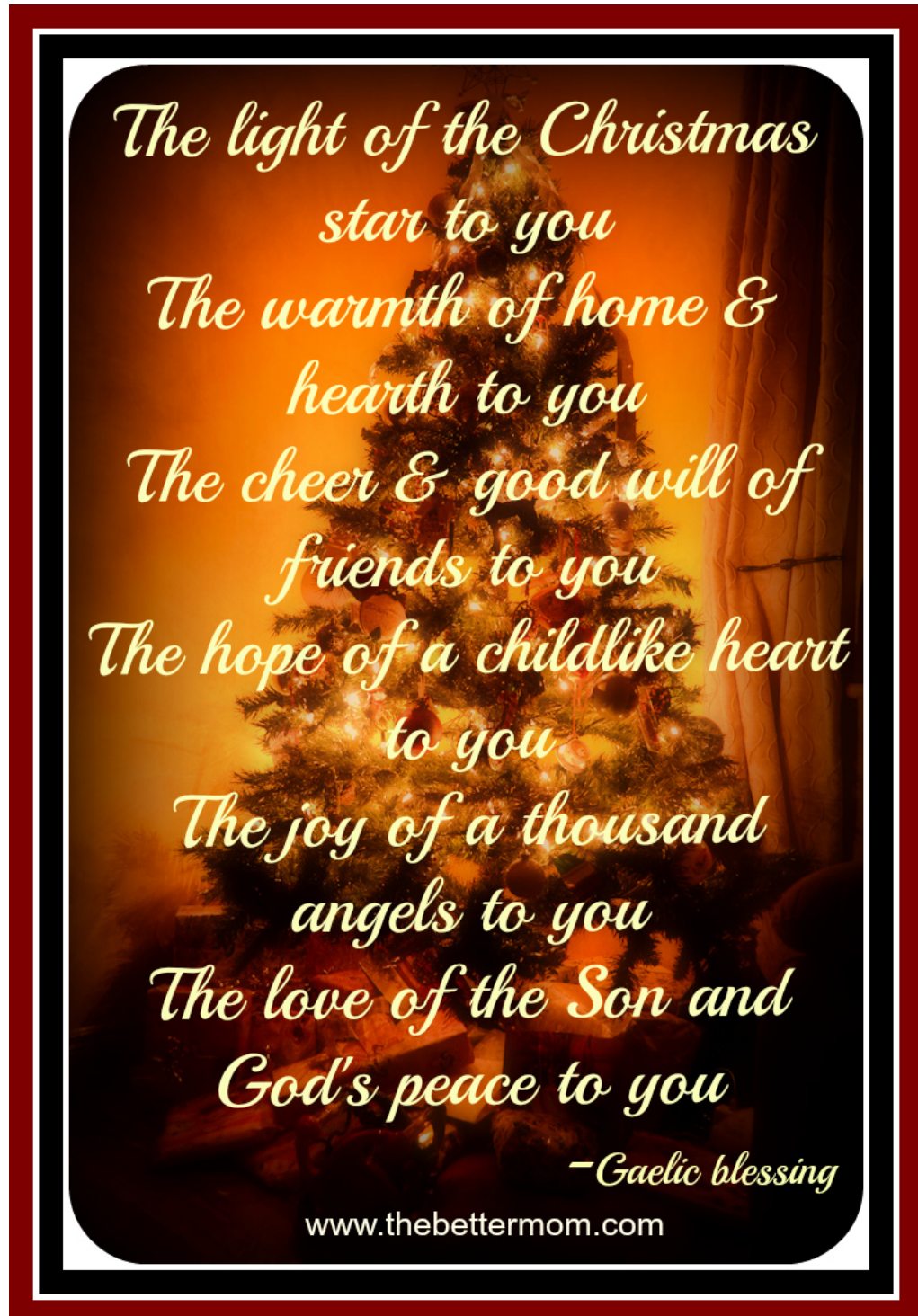


AND REMEMBER- SUNDAY IS NEW YEAR'S EVE DEC 31, 2023
12-31-23



**The last day of 2023
is Waltz Day
123123**

MAY THE BLESSINGS OF CHRISTMAS FILL YOUR HEART TODAY
AND FOR THE REST OF THE NEW YEAR.



ALLELUIA!