

The Epiphany of Our Lord

Matthew 2:1-12

... he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah (Matthew 2:4-6)

A bright and shining star, put in the heavens by the Lord alerts some sky-watchers from far away that a King has been born! Those men, trained astronomers of the Ancient Near East (Babylon or Persia perhaps) recognize this star as telling them that a King has been born. But, how will they find Him? Even through the miracle of the Epiphany Star, it's still all about God's Word. The star leads the Wise Men first to Jerusalem to hear God's Word in the Scriptures: "Bethlehem!" The Word of God tells them where to go and the star points out the house where they find the infant Jesus.

It's the same today. We don't find Jesus by looking for some miracle. We learn where He is from the Word. Without the Word we shall never find Jesus. Without the Word, we will never have our true King! The Word tells us that the Son of God came in the flesh at Bethlehem. The Word tells us that He was baptized at the Jordan River. The Word teaches us that He was crucified on Calvary and laid in a tomb from which He rose on the third day.

But how will YOU find Him? Where will YOU go to see Jesus? The Word tells you that, too. The Word says to find Him at the font, where His water and Spirit wash you clean. The Word says to find Him in His church where repentance and forgiveness are preached in His name. His Word says to find Him upon the altar, in His very flesh and blood which was born, died and rose for you.

And having found where He is, we, like the Wise Men, offer the best of our gifts of praise and thanksgiving. The greatest gift is not the one we bring, but the Baby Himself, who is the gift of our salvation. It is to Jesus that the bright shining star of His Word always points. In the Name of Jesus. Amen.

O God, who by the leading of a star made manifest Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles, mercifully grant that we, who know You now by faith, may after this life joyfully behold Your glorious Godhead; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. (Collect for the Epiphany of Our Lord).

LECTIONARY FOR JANUARY

January 1

Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

January 8

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

January 15

I Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-6,13-18
I Corinthians 8:12-20; John 1:43-51

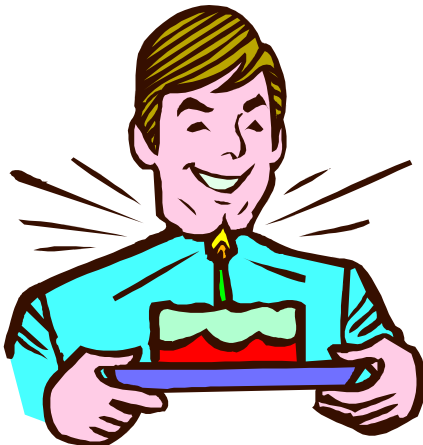
January 22

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12
I Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

January 29

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111
I Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

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HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAY TO:

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|----------------------------|----|
| <i>George M. Barnes</i> | 3 |
| <i>MaryJean Barnes</i> | 4 |
| <i>Brian Martinson</i> | 5 |
| <i>Tara Stamer</i> | 7 |
| <i>Ryan Woods</i> | 8 |
| <i>Nereida Woodfield</i> | 14 |
| <i>Julie Smith (Henel)</i> | 15 |
| <i>Claudette Harty</i> | 19 |
| <i>Donna Mugavere</i> | 26 |
| <i>Michael Curtin</i> | 30 |

.....and many, many more!!!

ANOTHER CHURCH FAIR IS OVER!

we are happy to report the following financial report of the annual church holiday fair on Saturday, November 19th:

rental of 6 tables	150.00
new items table	157.70
bake table	308.75
kitchen	855.20
white elephant	152.90
Christmas table	<u>64.25</u>
total profit	1,688.80

a SPECIAL "THANK YOU" TO Louise Beyer and Lorraine Carhart, who chaired the fair this year. We also appreciate all the wonderful cooperation of our members and friends. We had a great number of volunteers woking the tables, helping in the kitchen and making food, waiting on tables and serving as cashiers and we thank them all. We welcomed all our guests and were happy to see our friends from other churches in Linden. It is important that we support each other when we each have special projects.

it was a wonderful day, one we work on for weeks, and one we look forward to each year. we couldn't do it without your support and we know we can always count on you!!! thanks again!!

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**When you get to your wit's end,
you'll find God lives there.**

BITS AND PIECES

At the recent celebration of our 145th church anniversary on September 25th, we were pleased to have some members of our Methodist Youth Fellowship from 40 years ago, present with us. We recently received the picture below of three of those members who attended.



Kathie Horsch, Tom Henel, Doug Lee

And she is off again!! MaryJane Koslosky returned from a car trip to Colorado with stops along the way to visit places she had only read about. It was such a successful trip that she left for an 18 day stay with her friend in Maryland to plan another trip for next Spring. This will be a shorter one because their time is limited, but they hope to visit a number of the southern states and enjoy that "southern hospitality".

We hope you enjoyed the page in this Messenger with all the pictures. In cleaning out a drawer, a number of interesting pictures were found and we thought you might enjoy them and it might bring back many memories for you. It did for me!! We are thankful for all

those who are still with us, and remember those who are not with love and affection and wonderful memories. They will never be forgotten!

Tom and Caroline Long are back from Florida to spend the holidays with their family. After they celebrate Christmas (a little earlier than December 25th) they will head back to Florida for the winter. How nice to spend those cold months in the warm weather instead of the winter weather we expect to have. Let's hope it is not a repeat of last year!

PRAYER LIST

The following have been on the prayer list over the last month. Please continue to pray for them:

Mary Barnes	George Barnes
Leona Parker	Sophia Meolia
Janet Pavlinic	Hanns Family
Vivienne Merrill	Paul Diljak
Marge Varga	Sharon Lutz
Dottie & Larry Diaz	Maria Yupa Family

If you would like to list someone on the prayer list, please contact Doris Henel, and she will see that it is listed in our Sunday bulletin and the Messenger (908-486-5571).

INTERFAITH COUNCIL THANKSGIVING SERVICE

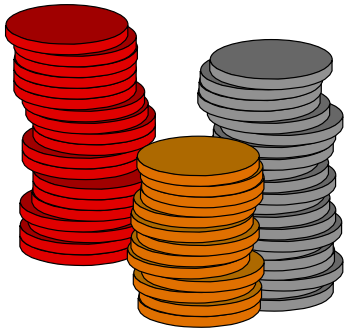
The Sunday before Thanksgiving at 3:00 p.m., a common worship service was held at St. Elizabeth Church on East Blancke Street, Linden. About 60 people from many churches of Linden attended and some of the choirs joined the St. Elizabeth choir for beautiful music. The bell choir from Calvin Presbyterian church performed and Rev. Weaver from the Linden Presbyterian Church and Rev. Landino from Calvin Pres. along with the priest from St. Elizabeth took part in the service.

It was a beautiful service and everyone enjoyed the refreshments that were served. We were pleased to have some members of our church attend the service. It is always a pleasure to worship with members of our sister churches in Linden.

**CHECK YOUR BOXED OFFERING ENVELOPE
NUMBERS**

The boxes of offering envelopes for 2012 have been given out at church or mailed to those who are not in church on a regular basis. Please check the number on your envelopes because it became necessary to change some of them and it is not a mistake. The number shown is the correct number for 2012.

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STEWARDSHIP – 2012

In October, we sent out a mailing to all members of the U. M. C. of Linden about our needs for 2012. A pledge card was enclosed and we requested it be returned. There were 98 mailings to our church families and 26 were returned with pledge cards filled out. The results have been tabulated and are listed below:

1, Number of mailings	98
2, Number of returns	26
3. Current Expenses pledges	\$27,960.
4. Repair Fund pledges	\$1,284.
5. Bldg. Improvement pledges	\$1,452.
6. The 2012 budget	\$108,711.

We are very fortunate that rentals, holidays, fair, special donations, plate & pew envelopes, etc. will bring in about \$72,000. If we add together the approx. \$28,000. current expense pledges and the anticipated income of \$72,000. this totals \$100,000. It still leaves us short \$8,711. for our 2012 budget.

We thank all those who returned their pledge cards and made a commitment to support the church. This is a pledge each one of us made

when we joined the church – to support it with our time, talents and treasurers.

We are asking those who did not return their pledge card to reconsider; fill it out and return it to the church. We need everyone to share in the support of the church as members have done over the past 145 years.

A second letter, in the near future, will be sent to those who pledged last year, but did not do so this year.

We know these are difficult economic times, but the church feels it also. We need your help!

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FUN FOR EVERYONE!

ANNUAL SWING DANCE

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 2012 1 P.M TO 3 P.M.

VOLUNTARY DONATION \$10. FREE TO SENIOR CITIZENS AND YOUTH – REFRESHMENTS.

HELD AT THE YM-YWHA OF UNION COUNTY, 501 GREEN LANE, UNION

FEATURING THE RED HOT HARMONIES OF THE FULL COUNT BIG BAND – DANCE TO THE RICH, FULL SOUND OF A LIVE, 18 PIECE ENSEMBLE.

(For directions and snow date information, call 908-289-8112)

Help the Hungry. Please bring non-perishable food for distribution to those in need.

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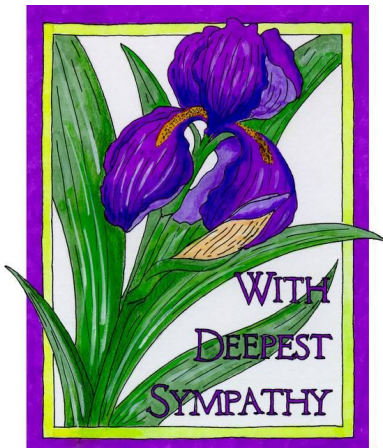
MEMORIES

Top - 1st picture - Anne Schickel, Gertrude Lamont, Ruth Schulte, Norma MacAlpine, Vivienne Merrill,
Top - 2nd picture - Al Henel, Rev. Dan Bottorff, Adam Bottorff, Bob Schickel, Sue Bottorff, Anna Bottorff, Jerry Zehrer
2nd row, - 2nd picture - Gertrude Baldwin, Doris Henel, Dottie Zehrer, Anne Schickel, Ethel Steiniger, Edna Eick
Middle - 1st picture - Bob Schickel, Bill Steiniger Middle - Joe Stamer Right - Dottie Zehrer, Al Henel
Bottom - 1st picture - John Zahorbenski, Anne Schickel, Mike Dziamba, Max Freshwater, Bob Schickel
Right - Anne Schickel, Grace Ross

**CHARGE CONFERENCE BOOKLETS AND
NEW MEMBERSHIP AND TELEPHONE
LISTS**

If you have not picked up the annual Charge Conference booklet or the new membership and telephone list, please speak to the church secretary, Doris Henel, and she will see that you receive them.

Call her at 908-486-5571 or speak to her at the Sunday worship service.



We were saddened to hear of the death of Connie Anderson, sister of Caroline Long. Connie had been living in California for many years after her marriage but she was brought up in our church and taught Sunday School in her younger years. Although Connie lived a distance away, Caroline flew out to visit her every year. Connie was in the same Linden High School graduating class (1942) as Doris Henel and Olga Lawson, both members of our church. She will be missed by her loving family and friends.

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ANOTHER CHURCH USING OUR FACILITIES

Our Pastor was approached by our District Superintendent to see if we could help out another Methodist Church on a temporary basis.

The New Canaan U.M.C. was sharing facilities with another church and they were having serious heating problems. It was finally decided that it could not be fixed by this winter, and so they needed another location from December through March. The recommendation from the Board of Trustees and the Administrative Council is that we offer them the use of our sanctuary, on Sundays from 5 to 8 p.m. and the use of Epworth Hall for the children and refreshments if they have any. This recommendation will be presented to the church membership on Sunday, December 25th following the worship service at a Church Conference. A covenant between both churches will be presented at this time. They will make a donation of \$150. per Sunday to cover any expenses.

We realize that this is not a good time to have a meeting, but according to the Discipline, we must give 10 days' notice before a Church Conference can be held. We hope you will stay for this meeting and promise that it will not be very long.

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PRAYER

“Don’t give God instructions – just report for duty!”

JANUARY, 2012

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9 am – Choir 10:30 – SundaySch. 10:30-Worship	2 7 PM – Board of Trustees (D.Beyer,T.Henel,B.Losyk W.Hanns,G.Baldwin, C.Ettel,J.Stamer) 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch.	3 10:30-Bible Study 12 Noon – United Methodist Women 4:30-Weight Watchers 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch.	4 9:30-CLEAN UP HANDLEY HALL HELP NEEDED 4:30-9:30-Fencing School	5 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	6	7 9:30-1:30 Fencing School
8 9 AM - Choir 10:30 - Worship 10:30-Sunday Sch. REMAIN AFTER CHURCH TO TAKE DOWN DECORATIONS	9 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing Sch.	10 10:30-Bible Study in Youth Room 4:30-Weight Watchers 4:30 -9:30 Fencing Sch.	11 4:30-9:30 – Fencing School	12 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	13	14 9:30-1:30 – Fencing School in gym
15 9 AM - Choir 10:30 - Worship 10:30 -Sunday Sch	16 4:30-9:30- Fencing School	17 10:30-Bible Study 4:30-6:30-Weight Watchers in Aldersgate Hall 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	18 . 4:30-9:30-Fenc.Sch.	19 4:30-9:30-Fenc.Sch	20	21 9:30-1:30- Fencing School in gym
22 9 AM – Choir 10:30-Sunday Sch 10:30-Worship	23 4:30 – 9:30 Fencing School	24 10:30-Bible Study 4:30-6:30-Weight Watchers in Aldersgate Hall 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	25 4:30-9:30 Fencing School	26 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch	27	28
29 9:00 – Choir 10:30-Sunday Sch 10:30-Worship	30 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch.	31 10:30-Bible Study 4:30-Weight watchers In Aldersgate Hall 4:30-9:30-Fencing Sch				