



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

December 28, 2020 – January 3, 2021

Sermon by Rev. Kelley Lane

Epiphany

Sermon Title: “Clue”

Notes from sermon on 12/27:	Things For Which to Pray This Week:
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Family Focus Question:

When the magi finally arrived in Bethlehem, after a very long journey, they knelt before the baby Jesus, presenting him with gifts and worshipping him.

How do we respond when we see Jesus?

Questions for Small Groups

1. 2020 was a very strange year. Most of us traveled very little. In fact, many of us stayed home quite a bit. Furthermore, the beginning of 2021 looks like it will also include much time at home for many all around the world. How might we “travel” to encounter Jesus?
2. What gifts do we have to offer back to God? (time, talents, gifts, and witness) When we offer gifts to God in worship, how are we transformed?
3. The Magi “left for their own country by another road” because they were warned in a dream of Herod’s evil intentions. As we look to the future and making a strategic plan for Reveille’s mission in our community and the world, what new roads might we need to travel?

Monday, December 28: Read Matthew 2:1-12

We have much to celebrate this week. The twelve days of Christmas are here, and as we celebrate them, we also look forward to a new year...possibly more than we have ever looked forward to a new year before! This Sunday, we also celebrate Epiphany, which is honestly a bit of a mystery. Today’s familiar story from the gospel of Matthew has been a source of scholarly debate for centuries. We know little about these nameless strangers from the east – “magi” could mean “magicians”, or it could refer to Persian priests, astrologers, or kings. And what was the star? A comet? A congruence of several stars? The Great Conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn? This Sunday, Kelley Lane will dive deeper into the facts of this mystery.

What we do know, however, is these Magi were on a pilgrimage – one that not only led them to Jesus, but transformed them. Their travels did not end when they reached Jesus. Ours does not, either. How have we been transformed with our encounter with Jesus, and how will we carry on through 2021 in our pilgrimage to bring the light and hope of Christ to our world?

Tuesday, December 29: Read Isaiah 60:1-6

We are not the first generation to encounter darkness. So many people throughout the world and throughout time have yearned to hear the words, "Arise, shine; for your light has come." All of us need to "lift up [our] eyes and look around," both to see the light and gifts that surround us AND see all those in desperate need of the light we can shine. As we celebrate this day of Christmas, let us find ways to be "radiant," to "thrill and rejoice," and recognize the "abundance" around us. There are still many mysteries ahead of us; we don't yet know what the new year will bring, or how it will look in our congregation, but God has left us many clues as to how we can act and what we can depend on from God, both now and in the years to come.

Wednesday, December 30: Read Ephesians 3:1-12

Here's that word again: "mystery." Paul describes the "commission of God's grace," God's plan, and even Christ as a "mystery." His letter to the church in Ephesus is to enable the readers to "perceive [his] understanding of the mystery." Paul is deeply aware that God is working in the world in an incredible, profound, and deliberate way, and that God has given Paul a unique insight into this plan through Paul's background as a passionate defender of Judaism, a Roman citizen, and a man who encountered Jesus himself on a deserted road. Paul's passionate and tireless effort to share and spread this insight have transformed billions of people for over 2000 years. Today, we are all still living in mystery, but God has given all of us both universal and unique clues to God's love, plan, and power that we can share. What clues can we uncover today? How will we share them?

Thursday, December 31: WATCH NIGHT: Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-13

Could there possibly be a more perfect scripture passage to be read on this last day of 2020? Also wonderful is how our lectionary names New Year's Eve: "Watch Night." "For everything there is a season," the familiar passage begins. "A time to...and a time to..." Let us spend time today reflecting on the past year and what it brought us. Twenty-twenty certainly was not a time for many of the habits and traditions we hold dear. But what was it a time for? What gifts did 2020 give us? Next, let us spend time in prayer and meditation on what 2021 can bring. We know that difficult times are still ahead, and if there is one thing 2020 taught us, it's that anything can change. Twenty-twenty-one is a mystery, but we know God has left us clues as to what is possible and what sources of strength, love, peace, and resilience we have been given.

Friday, January 1, 2021: NEW YEAR'S DAY: Read Psalm 8

Woohoo! It came! 2021 is here, and there is much to celebrate. Today's psalm is such a perfect expression of awe and gratitude of the mystery of God's power and grace. We celebrate 2021 without knowing everything (or anything) it will bring. We celebrate God's love and power without knowing how it works. We celebrate the beauty of all creation without knowing when we will be able to travel again to see it. We know we are living in the midst of a holy mystery, and we know we can be okay with that. More than okay. We can enter 2021 looking for the silver linings, the hidden quiet joys, the daily discoveries, and the unexpected victories that lie ahead of us. Yes, we have much to celebrate today as individuals and as a congregation. We are here, we are with God, and we have proven we can be together in ways we never would have imagined possible. Happy New Year!

Saturday, January 2: Scripture Memorization: Psalm 8

In gratitude of the gift of Christmas and the New Year, let us commit to memorizing this entire short Psalm so that it can always be on the tips of our tongues this year!

Sunday, January 3: EPIPHANY SUNDAY: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying this prayer for the New Year: *Creative God, you make all things new in heaven and on earth. We come to you in a new year with new desires and old fears, new decisions and old controversies, new dreams and old weaknesses. Because you are a God of hope, we know that you create all the possibilities of the future. Because you are a God of love, we know that you accept all the mistakes of the past. Because you are the God of our faith, we enter your gates with thanksgiving and praise, we come into your presence with gladness and a joyful noise, and we serve and bless you. Amen.* (Maren C. Tirabassi, p. 295, UM Book of Worship)