

# JANUARY

## **The Significance of Epiphany**

Christians all over the world will celebrate the Day of the Epiphany on Saturday, January 6 (celebrated on the same date each year). For Christians, Epiphany is a day and a season of the church year.

In the Eastern Church, Epiphany Day commemorated Jesus' birth, baptism, and His first miracle. When the Western Church set the celebration of Christmas to December 25, the visit of the wise men took the shining light of Epiphany.

We don't know a lot about these visitors from "the East" except that they were most likely from in and around Persia (modern-day Iran). These wise men would have been very educated with many learning everything from astrology to medicine and religion.

We don't know how many wise men, or magi, made the trek to give gifts to the true King, but we do know what their gifts were and how the Church has traditionally recognized what each gift symbolizes.

### **Gold**

Gold is a gift fit for a king. When you think of ornate palaces of old, gold is most likely part of that vision. We know that part of Jesus' sacrifice for us was to not live as a typical king here on Earth. As we look toward the promise of the resurrection, we look forward to worshipping the True King in all of His glory.

### **Frankincense**

A good way to remember the classic purpose of Frankincense is by looking at its name. Frankly, it's incense. Many point to its use in honoring gods and would say that the magi were recognizing Jesus' deity.

### **Myrrh**

Myrrh has been used in different ways, but each of those ways is usually connected to death. Myrrh could be burned as incense, but also was often used in embalming. This gift reminds us that, even with the joy of the Christmas season and Epiphany, Jesus had a road ahead that led to the cross.

For our Bible study this month, let's look at the readings for Sunday, January 21<sup>st</sup>, the Third Sunday after Epiphany. As we continue through the time after Epiphany, stories of the call to discipleship show us the implications of our baptismal calling to show Christ to the world.

Jesus begins proclaiming the good news and calling people to repentance right after John the Baptist is

Read Jonah 3:1-5, 10

The book of Jonah is a comedy starring a reluctant prophet who is given a one sentence message: Nineveh will be destroyed in 40 days. Much to Jonah's dismay, the people of Nineveh repent. The point of the story is to get the reader to wrestle with the question "On whom should God have mercy?"

arrested for preaching in a similar way.

Knowing that John was later executed, we see at the very outset this cost of discipleship. Still, the two sets of

Read 1 Corinthians 7:29-31

Paul does not disapprove of marriage or other human social institutions. He does, however, want Christians to live in the present in fervent anticipation of God's future, which even now has dawned through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

brothers leave everything they have known and worked for all their lives to follow Jesus and fish for people.

Read Mark 1:14-20

Before Jesus calls his first disciples, he proclaims a message that becomes known as "the gospel" or good news from God. God is ready to rule our lives. Those who realize this will respond with repentance and faith. In today's world, we are surrounded by doubt & fear. Only God can work through us to make changes in our own lives.

West Freeborn Lutheran Church Council met via Zoom Dec. 11, 2023. Members present were Glenn, Kristin, Steve, Corky, Pat, Mike, Pastor Marcia and Becky.

Glenn called the meeting to order. Pastor Marcia gave a prayer. Pastor Marcia had sent each of the council members her report for the month on Nov. It will be posted on the church refrigerator. Becky read the secretary's report. Corky made a motion to accept the report as read. Pat/Kristin seconded it. Motion passed. Pat read the treasurer's report. We did not make budget this month again!!! ☹️ Kristin made a motion to pay the bills. Steve seconded it. Motion passed.

#### **Old Business:**

- **Property Insurance:** Paperwork was submitted.
- **Christmas and New Year's Eve Service:** Christmas Eve Service for West Freeborn will be at 9 AM. Cross of Glory will have their service at 4:30 that day. There will be no Christmas Day Service at West, but Pastor Marica will be making a Christmas Video to wish people Merry Christmas. This can be viewed on the What's Happening at Cross of Glory Facebook page, as well as Becky sending it out via text. New Year's Eve Service will be at Cross of Glory at 9 AM for both churches.

#### **New Business:**

- **Pastor's Salary:** Steve made a motion to go with the salary increase which Cross of Glory passed at their annual meeting for the Pastor. Kristin/Corky seconded it. Motion passed. We will bring this up at Annual Meeting to be voted on.
- **Boiler:** The boiler went out in the basement. It is being replaced
- **Annual Meeting:** Will be held Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024. We will have rolls and coffee after church and then start the meeting.

**Next council meeting will be Tuesday Jan. 08, 2024 at 8:00**

Steve made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kristin seconded it. Motion passed. Closed with the Lord's Prayer by Pastor Marcia.

Respectfully submitted, Becky Ausen, Secretary

### **Cross of Glory Council Minutes - December 5, 2023**

**Present:** Pastor Marcia Pedersen, Ron Bartness, Linda Brekke, Zack Jacobson, Martin Johnson, Carol Light, Paul Lynne, Jerry Morstad and Jill Morstad. President Jerry Morstad called the meeting to order and Pastor Marcia led us in a prayer. Jill read the minutes of the November 3, 2023 meeting. Secretary's report was approved as read. Linda gave the Treasurer's report. Paul made the motion to approve Treasurer's report as read and pay bills as funds allow. Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Marcia presented a detailed report to the council for the month of November. If you would like to see the report, there will be one in the office to view.

**Old Business:** Main sidewalk entrance cement work has been completed. Railings will be replaced soon. The men's bathroom in the basement will also have some updates made to the toilets. Our first annual Advent Celebration raised five hundred and twenty-one dollars. The New Richland and Ellendale food shelves will each receive \$175.00 and the Cross of Glory Good Samaritan Fund will receive \$171.00. Payment to Doug Ohman came out of the general fund.

There was good feedback from people that participated and attended. It was suggested to get together in January or February and review what went well and areas that could be improved for the event and

brainstorm for future celebrations for advent. There has not been an update from the MSP/LIS service for rural communities.

**New Business:** The annual meeting will be held on December 10 following the 10:30 service. Budget remains the same except for a few items. The insurance premium will decrease from \$7620.00 to \$5958.00 due to parsonage being sold. This will be the premium until we renew the policy in February. There is a possible increase at this time. There was \$8447.68 budgeted for the 2023 year for utilities. We spent \$8165.34. The budget was increased to \$9000.00 for the 2024 year. The office budget was increased from \$500.00 to \$700.00. Mileage expense for the pastor's travel expense was increased from \$800.00 to \$900.00. An increase in the World Mission Budget moved from \$2000.00 to \$3000.00. Martin made a motion to approve these increases and Ron seconded the motion. Motion carried. Paul made a motion to present Allyson Olson with a \$300.00 bonus for her accounting expertise. Carol seconded the motion and motion carried. The slate of officers for the 2024 calendar year remains the same as the 2023 calendar year. Write In's are welcome if anyone wishes to run for office. The top four suggestions for the use of the monies from the sale of the parsonage were: basement repair, air conditioning, retaining money for future repairs and the front entrance approach. Jill made a motion to split the loose Christmas Eve offering three ways: two area food shelves and the newly established Cross of Glory Good Samaritan Fund. Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried. Ron made a motion to purchase a new office chair and Linda seconded the motion. Motion carried. After a discussion regarding Pastor Marcia's salary and benefits package, Martin made a motion to increase the pastor's base salary by \$1000.00. Jill seconded the motion and motion carried. Ron made a motion to approve Christmas gifts to the following people: Cindi for secretarial work and organist, organists Judy and Karen, Alvin, groundskeeper and boiler maintenance and Kristen Malmberg, custodian. Zack seconded the motion and motion carried. Thank you for your financial support of Cross of Glory. It is much appreciated. A motion for adjournment was made by Martin and seconded by Ron. Motion carried. Meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer. **Next Council Meeting Date:** Tuesday, January 2, 2023 @ 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Carol Light, Secretary

*Thank  
You*

***A heartfelt Thank You to the Congregation & Church Council for the generous Christmas gifts.***

***From: Cindi, Judy & Karen***

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***Attendance for December, 2023- WF: not available at print time***

***Attendance for December, 2023-CG: Dec. 3 – 42; Dec. 10 – 35; Dec. 17 – 79; Dec. 24 - 76***

***Ushers for WF –January 2024: \*Casey Madson, Eric Grunzke***

**Statistics for Cross of Glory Lutheran Church**

	<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Improvement Fund</u>	<u>Mission Fund</u>	<u>Cemetery Fund</u>
Sun. Dec. 3	\$ 2,095.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 50.00
Sun. Dec. 10	1,165.00	0.00	140.00	50.00
Sun. Dec. 17	1,695.00	150.00	0.00	100.00
Sun. Dec. 24				
Sun. Dec. 31				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$ 4,955.00</b>	<b>\$ 150.00</b>	<b>\$ 140.00</b>	<b>\$ 200.00</b>

Complete numbers will be included in the next newsletter.

Cross of Glory email address: [cgwf@smig.net](mailto:cgwf@smig.net) - Cross of Glory Website: [www.crossofglory.weebly.com](http://www.crossofglory.weebly.com)

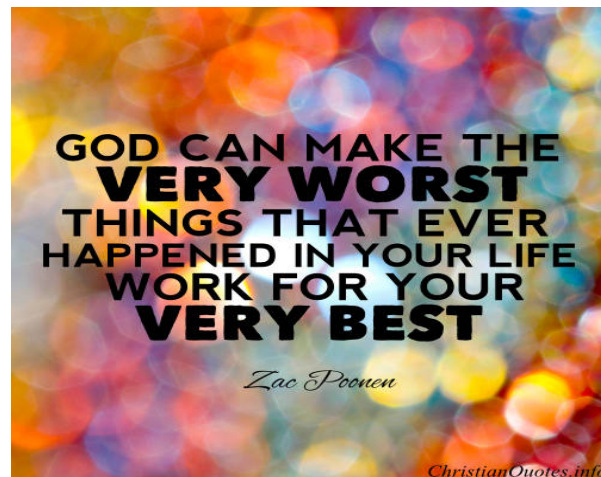
West Freeborn Website: [www.westfreebornlutheranchurch.weebly.com](http://www.westfreebornlutheranchurch.weebly.com)

**Pastor Marcia Pedersen – Office Hours: M-TH – 9:30 – 5:00 p.m. Cell # 507-509-3396.**

Jerry Morstad, Cross of Glory President : 507-373-0085 - Glenn Ausen, West Freeborn President – 402-4287

Church Office – 507-845-2818 – Fax # - 507-845-2732 - Stacie Madson, West Freeborn Custodian 845-2525

Cindy Morstad – contact for funerals, etc. 845-2255 (home) – 402-4577 (cell) - Alvin Morstad, Grounds keeper & boiler maintenance – 845-2813 (home) – 402-8612 (cell) - Kristin Malmberg – Custodian – 612-816-3271



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**January - 2024**  
**Cross of Glory & West Freeborn Lutheran Churches, Hartland, MN**  
**Worship times: West Freeborn– 9:00 a.m. Cross of Glory – 10:30 a.m.**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> New Year's Day Church office closed	<b>2</b> CG Council meets	<b>3</b> No Wed. Worship or Confirmation – Christmas Break	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> WF - Worship – 9:00 a.m. WF Sunday School resumes today CG – Worship - 10:30 a.m. <i>Communion</i>	<b>8</b> WF Council meets 8:00 p.m. via Zoom	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Wed. Worship 6:00 p.m. Confirmation 7:00 p.m. @ CG	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b> WF Worship – 9:00 a.m. CG Worship – 10:30 a.m.	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  Confirmation 7:00 p.m. @ CG	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> WF-Worship @ 9:00 a.m. Annual meeting to follow worship CG – Worship @ 10:30 a.m.	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>  Wed. Worship 6:00 p.m. Confirmation 7:00 p.m. @ CG – Mentor Night	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> WF Worship – 9:00 a.m. CG Worship – 10:30 a.m. <i>Communion</i>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>  Confirmation – 7:00 p.m. All-In-Night	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>