

Pastors' Introduction to the 2011 Annual Report

Epiphany 2012

“When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh” (Matthew 2:10,11).

How many times have you heard those words? The wise men arrive in Bethlehem to worship the Christchild. Overjoyed, they offer to him the best of what they have to offer – gifts of thankfulness for the One who had given them so much. At Gentile Christmas we marvel again at God’s gift of his Son – a gift he has given to the whole world. The wise men’s joy is a reflection of the same which filled the shepherds’ hearts when the angels announced to them the good news and they found the baby in the manger, just as they had been told.

The Christmas gospel is so simple, so familiar (you probably can recite most if not all of it). Yet, it is so profound. God’s Son comes down to earth from heaven. He humbles himself to take on human flesh, a Savior born to you. He does this because you desperately need him to be perfect in your place. This good news of Christmas points ahead to another day we call good – Good Friday. In the depths of his humiliation God’s Son faces death for you, even death on a cross. He does this because you desperately need him to take the punishment that sin deserves in your place. Even though it is familiar, you never get tired of hearing it. It’s such good news. Like the wise men, like the shepherds, you too are overjoyed.

We are privileged to be the beneficiaries of a most gracious God. He has made us wise for salvation through his Christmas gift to us. He has entrusted that simple and familiar good news to us. We get to hold on to it as our dearest treasure. We get to give it away to those in spiritual poverty who don’t know it or have forgotten. We get to give ourselves to the One who has given us everything. That is why we exist as a congregation of believers – to make known again and again the truth that God revealed at Epiphany: Christ is the world’s Savior. He’s your Savior. He’s mine.

As we look back over a year full of blessings, let us dedicate the New Year in service to our King, just like those wise men of old.

*As they offered gifts most rare at your cradle, rude and bare,
So may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ to you, our heavenly King.*

In His Service,
Pastors Seifert and Quinn