

Faith's Happenings...

January, 2021

Happy Birthday

Linda Hughs	2nd
Noma Hickok	6th
Niki LeVasseur	6th
Barbra Davis	14th
Ron Mines	16th
John Kohler	17th
Jim Taylor	19th
Linda Jackling	20th
Allison Ward	22nd
Steve Hoops	23rd
Toni Dufrene	26th
Jack Sturrock	26th
John Matz	28th
Laura Kohler	28th
Hannah Armen	30th

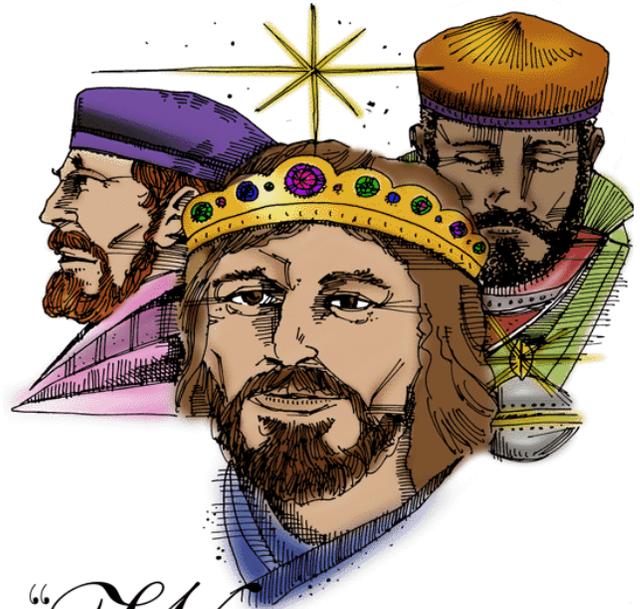
Happy Anniversary

Bruce & Margarete Rieck 14th

**If we missed your name/date, we're sorry.
Please notify Barbra in the church office
to have your special dates added.**

January at a Glance

Mark your calendars now!
Men of Faith Breakfast: January 5
Budget Forum: January 24
Annual Meeting: January 31



“*W*here is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

M a t t h e w 2 : 2

During this difficult time, we want you to know the church office is open from 9 till noon if you have a prayer request or other need. (697-3313)



Every once in a while, I see a bumper or window sticker that shows a star, wisemen and camels. The inscription attached to the picture is, "Wise men still seek him." While I bristle at the archaic male reference, with this year's convergence of Saturn and Jupiter dubbed the Christmas Star, our attention is drawn again to the Magi from the East who followed a star to celebrate the birth of a king.

On Christmas we celebrate the light of God coming into our world in the gift of the Christ child, baby Jesus. The theme of God's light dispelling the darkness connects with us in a special way in a year that has been marked by pandemic, restrictions of all sorts, and keeping distance from others in social settings to avoid passing on the virus.

We hurt on so many levels: economically for workers whose hours have been cut or jobs lost, professionally for those challenged to work from home without the support of colleagues and office staff, for those in school having to adapt to on-line teaching/learning models supported by technology that is new and rarely works as well as advertised, parents who are trying to support their students who are at home while the parents juggle work schedules at home or at the office. And this is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg.

On December 21 Jupiter and Saturn will reach the pinnacle of their convergence, an event that has not happened in 800 years. This is a visible reminder to us that something special is happening and our world takes notice. It is not hard to imagine the world responding in similar fashion 2000

years ago. People who followed the stars took notice of the movement of the heavens and attached significance to their observations.

The Magi, learned persons from Persia, saw whatever star or convergence happened at that time. The significance in their world view was, "a new king is born." A king that was greater than people in their position and status, and who was a greater king (or ruler) than their king. Hence, they took their best gifts and began a two-year quest to find the baby.

Jesus, son of God, is born of Mary. With Mary and Joseph, Jesus will be nurtured and grow in wisdom and understanding. His heart will be to know, and make known, God's way in our world. Jesus will be light in the darkness, hope for the hopeless, help for those in need, healing for the sick, encouragement for the discouraged, and so much more. This year the Christmas Star points us all to the Christ child who brings hope into our heart-aching world.

Many think of Christmas as only one day, after which life returns to "normal". In the church, Christmas is a season that begins with the Christ Child's birth and concludes with Epiphany and the arrival of the Magi, that moment when the world (those outside Judaism) took notice of what God was doing. This Christmas season, God blesses us with many reminders of the significance of this event: the Christmas Star, Mary, Joseph, the Innkeeper, a stable and manger, cattle lowing, shepherds in the field, the heavenly messengers, and Magi who seek the newborn King.

May this Christmas and Epiphany season be a time to hear God's good news, and seek anew the one who is born, the babe of Bethlehem, Jesus, our Savior.

Blessings this Christmas Season,
Pastor Brian (and Lori)