

On the mind of the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser

The Season of Christmas ends with the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6. This Feast, which we celebrated at Thursday's service of Candlelight Communion, commemorates the visit of the magi to the manger in Bethlehem. Epiphany, a word that means revelation or manifestation, invites us to recognize and adore Jesus as the light of the world, God Incarnate, born of Mary to become one of us.

The 12 verses in Matthew's Gospel that describe the magi's journey have evoked countless pieces of music, paintings, poems, and popular practices that continue to stir our imagination. Each year, I am captivated by this story about people on a long, mostly nighttime quest. They sought out the King of the Jews, initially going to Herod's palace, which seemed a likely place for this king to be. What they ultimately found was the Christ Child in a stable, lying in a feed trough, covered in rags, with only his parents, poor shepherds, animals, and the stars above as company. (Or, according to Matthew, he might have been in a house. But whether we look to Luke or Matthew's account, the nature of Jesus' birth in poverty and obscurity remains.)

Were the magi surprised? Probably so. Disappointed? Definitely not. The Scripture tells us they were overwhelmed with joy. They were able to see the truth of Jesus' kingship even in his humble circumstances. We might say they were able to see God in an unexpected place.

The season of Epiphany is a time to look for the light and to have eyes of faith. Even if – or perhaps especially if – we're feeling worn down by the pandemic, life in general, or whatever else, we can be assured that God through Jesus is here. He's in the joys and sorrows. He's in the wonder and the mundane. Most especially, he's in our relationships and encounters with other people.

In her Epiphany sermon, Deacon Denise reminded us that "Regardless of how much we accept Jesus as our Savior, until we see him in the face of others, the path to him remains unlit."

May we seek Jesus' face in the knowledge that he lives within each of us. May we find him in Christian community, for which we were made. And may we be blessed with eyes of faith that allow us to see God in unexpected places, and respond with surprise and joy.

COMING UP AT INCARNATION

Sunday, January 16

10:00 to 10:30 a.m. We begin a new Bible Study series comparing Paul's letter to the Galatians with his letter to the Philippians – two very different messages written to two very different churches. We all know that context matters, both in the life of the community and in the life of Paul. Come see just how much!

Wednesday, January 19

7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Vestry meets on Zoom

Thursday, January 20

7:00 p.m. 20s/30s will gather (a) in-person at an outdoor bar or (b) virtually on Zoom to discuss the theology and legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. Or perhaps we can pull off (c) a hybrid approach. Email the Rev. Nate Lee at nlee@churchoftheincarnation.org to RSVP and let him know your preference of how to gather. We'll make the call soon!

Sunday, January 23

6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Annual Meeting of the Parish held on Zoom. The Annual Meeting features brief reports from parish leadership as well as voting for the 2022 Vestry Election. All parishioners are invited and encouraged to attend. Join our email list by filling out the yellow Connect Card found in your pew to receive Zoom access information.

Tuesday, January 25

7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Join us on Zoom for a screening of *The Most Reluctant Convert*, a film about C.S. Lewis' journey from staunch atheist to becoming one of the greatest Christian apologists of the 20th century. The film will run approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. After a brief break, you are invited to stick around for a time of group discussion. Join our email list to receive Zoom access information.

NEW SMALL GROUP SERIES COMING SOON!

Our winter small group series begins the first week of February and will focus on *Being Christian* by Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury. This book is a simple, beautiful reflection on the heart of Christian belief and practice. Small groups will meet weekly for four consecutive weeks. Email the Rev. Nate Lee at nlee@churchoftheincarnation.org if you would like to participate in a lay-led small group of five or six parishioners. Let him know what days of the week and times of day (morning/afternoon/evening) are most convenient for you, and whether you prefer to meet in person or on Zoom.

OFFERING ENVELOPES AND ONLINE GIVING

Offering envelopes are available to all parishioners who prefer to make their Sunday offering in the form of cash or check. If you requested offering envelopes when making your financial pledge for 2022, you can pick them up from the ushers at the entrance to the church. If you need to request envelopes, please email office@churchoftheincarnation.org, call the church office at 212-689-6350 ext. 2, or fill out a 2022 Commitment Card found in your pew.

For those who prefer to make their offering online, remember to pick up a green "I Give Online" card at the back of the church and place it in the offering plate.

HOW DO I JOIN?

To become a member of the Church of the Incarnation, you may transfer from another Episcopal parish or a Lutheran church. Or you may take our Spring Confirmation and Inquirers' Class, a six-week series that will help you explore the basics of Christian faith as experienced in the Episcopal tradition. The next Confirmation and Inquirers' Class will begin in March 2022. Contact the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser at adannhauser@churchoftheincarnation.org for more information.

EVERY WEEK AT INCARNATION

Sunday Bible Study: Bible Study is held in the Parish House on Sundays from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. (Masks are required.) We generally follow the Yale Bible Study program, which offers course materials on select books of the Bible, deepened by insights from Yale Divinity School professors.

Sunday School for Children: During the 11:00 a.m. service, children ages 3 to 10 depart the service with their teachers for Sunday School in the Parish House. (Masks are required, and all teachers have been vaccinated.) They return before the end of worship. See our website, churchoftheincarnation.org for more information on Children and Family Ministries.

Wednesday Holy Eucharist: Join us each Wednesday at 12:15 p.m. for this Rite I spoken service of Holy Eucharist, which includes a brief homily and organ music.

Thursday Candlelight Communion: Join us each Thursday at 6:15 p.m. for Candlelight Communion, a service of Holy Eucharist that incorporates chant and silence as well as elements of contemporary worship. This service is informal and contemplative, with music led by a Cantor and a brief reflection by one of the clergy. You can also stream this service on our YouTube channel, youtube.com/churchoftheincarnation.

Daily Office: Services of Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer and Compline are held via Zoom. Join our email distribution list, by filling out the yellow Connect Card found in your pew, to view the weekly schedule and receive Zoom access information.