

**Epiphanies**  
**Sunday, January 2, 2022**  
**Maple Grove UMC**  
**Rev. Patricia Wagner**

*Matthew 2: 1- 12*

*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the East came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.”*

*<sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup>and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.*

*<sup>5</sup>They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup>‘And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”*

*<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.”*

*<sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.*

<sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother;  
and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their  
treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and  
myrrh.

<sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod,  
they left for their own country by another road.

Its been cloudy most of this last week  
we haven't been able to see the stars  
in the night sky.

It made me think about the Magi  
Surely on their journey of many months,  
they would have had nights when the  
star they followed disappeared.

They would have had to stay encouraged  
by the stories they'd saved up  
of other holy awakenings  
other epiphanies.

They did not turn back though,  
because  
the light of that star showed them  
something new,  
something older than the known world  
Something beyond this world,  
and yet part of it.

Once they had seen the light  
they had to follow it.  
For all the other lights were lesser ones

Then once they had seen the child

they would bow down for no other.

I read a first person account this week  
of a man who was raised without a faith tradition  
considered those who did to be  
incurious dupes,

He started on his own quest,  
exploring one practice after another,  
until it was evident that the only way  
that fed his mind and soothed his soul,  
that sought him  
was the path where he met the Christ

Especially in season full of clouds  
when the stars in our sky grow faint,  
It may be easier to live our lives by lesser lights  
to have faith in more practical and provable truths.

But like the Magi, like this fellow,  
once we have seen the star,  
once we know this one called Jesus,  
we find that we cannot cease to look for him,  
that light in him that reveals  
what came before and is beyond  
and yet here with and within us.

We find evidence of God in our holy texts,  
but epiphanies come, too,  
in encounters with other human beings  
especially those who, like Jesus,  
live without the securities to which we are accustomed.

Doug Davis has a story of an Epiphany to tell you.

- Patricia Wagner