

“Shine with That Star” 1/2/2011

Isaiah 60:1-6, Matthew 2:1-12

*What a gift we have been given, as we share our gifts with the “least of these” we shine with the light of God’s love.*

Kenmore UMC

Rev. Dr. Peter LeValley

This morning, I want to invite you to give the gift that keeps on giving. I want to invite you to give the first gift of the magi, I want to invite you to give the gift that shines with the radiance of the brightest star. I want to invite you to give the gift that will lead and guide and orient your life all year long, as the song says, “my finest gift I bring.”

It is a gift mentioned three times in the gospel reading and pervades the reading of the prophet.

It is the reason the magi dropped everything and went to follow the star, it is the gift that struck fear in those in power and it is the gift that is of greater value than any other gift.

*“on entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage.*

That’s the gift, homage, also translated, worship. They gave him honor, they were overwhelmed with joy, they gave their selves their being.

And when it came time for them to leave, *“they left for their own country by another road.”* Yes because of the fear the Christ child, the baby, invoked in the person in power, but most of all they went home another way, because the gift they gave shone within them and radiated from them, the very light of life.

The very reason the magi left to come to Bethlehem by way of Jerusalem, was to *“come and pay him homage.”*

When they told Herod what had happened and why they were there it threatened Herod and all those in power to the core of their being, Herod tried to deal with the threat by saying *“he too wanted to go and pay him homage.”* When in reality he wanted to quash the threat to his power.

I do wonder though, if Herod had seen the radiance of that love shining in the stable at Bethlehem what would have happened to him when he *came to the brightness of God’s dawn.*

When the magi followed the star and came to the place to pay homage, *they were “overwhelmed with joy!”* and after they knelt down and paid him homage, Then they offered him their other gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

In reality, I am inviting you to give yourself a gift that lasts all year, actually, for all time and beyond time, for pay homage to Emmanuel, to give him our worship, to give him honor and praise, to give him our very selves is to bask in the radiance of his love.

Barbara Brown Taylor says what giving our homage to Christ does well; *Today Christ’s kin get to behold his glow until they glow themselves. They get to rest in the glorious presence of God, whose bright dawn has broken not only upon Christ but also upon them.*

When we pay Christ homage we bask in the glow, we feed on his love and we shine with that Star.

Come, give the gift, pay Christ homage, and let the light of life shine upon you and then you will

*Arise, and shine for you light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.*

Thanks be to God. Amen.