

Epiphany Star Word Gift - perhaps the only New Year's Resolution you need.

A simple star cut from paper bearing a word - received as a gift from God on Epiphany or the Sunday closest to Epiphany.

Here's how it works: Individuals have the opportunity to pick out of a basket a paper star. The star will have a word on it, naming a gift from God; visually, nothing special, as God's gifts are not always flashy. Sometimes the gift is known by all to be one that you already evidence or experience in abundance. Sometimes you will feel that it is something you've needed, a challenge to work on. Often it's something you don't understand, or could learn more about. In any case, it will provide you an opportunity to ponder and pray in the coming year. It's suggested that you display it during the year in a place where you will see it often.

Be sure to pick out your star Word on Epiphany Sunday, Jan. 1, 2017 as you leave the Sanctuary after Worship!



Thank you Peggy Gulbranson for making the star words this year.

Do not be dismayed by the brokenness of the world,
All things break. And all things can be mended,
Not with time, as they say, but with intention.
So go. Love intentionally, extravagantly, unconditionally.
The broken world waits in darkness for the light that is you.

L. R. Knost



The work of Christmas

by Howard Thurman

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among people,
To make music in the heart.

RETHINKCHURCH

Methodist Dimensions

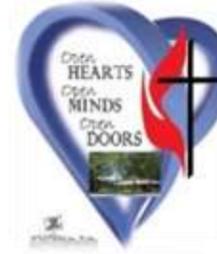
RUPERT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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FEEDING MIND, BODY, SOUL

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Epiphany:

Pay attention.

Be astonished.

Tell about it.

Use words only if necessary.

by, Dick Staub

Epiphany means to "be brought to light" or "to cause to appear". Epiphany is the day we celebrate the revelation that the word became flesh in Jesus Christ. This is the best of all news because as early church father St. Athanasius said, "He was made man that we might become god."

The poet Mary Oliver said, Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it.

I've been thinking lately about how we "tell about it."

My friend Susan Osborn has been helping me see the inadequacy of words and the importance of silence. Here is a powerful poem she wrote:

Kindling by Susan Osborn

If I am deaf and cannot hear
And if I am blind and cannot see
If I am mute and cannot speak
If all of my senses are numb and dull
Will I be saved?
Is the soul impoverished in any way?
Or does the utter silence ring
with the Truth?
Does Love care
what the words are
that lead us home?
The One I love speaks
of showing not telling.
Every breath
fanning the fire
until it completely
consumes the house.

I've been thinking about how "wordy" protestant Christians often are.

Don't get me wrong, words are important, but do not the heavens declare the glory of God without uttering a single word? Words matter. Ideas matter. But the incarnation is the reminder that even God, the Word, became most articulate by the act of enfleshing the word.

I wonder if there is an important lesson in the magi who came from the east?

They were called by a star and responded obediently to it, not to a spoken word. The message of the star was

augmented by the written word when the magi asked the teachers of the law, "Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

Isn't it ironic that the written word was searched out by King Herod, who wanted to use the written word to find and kill the newborn King, not to worship him."

Called by a star, further enlightened by the written word, the Magi's epiphany was revealed not in words, but in a baby.

So if I truly want to heed poet Mary Oliver's advice, "pay attention, be astonished, tell about it.", would not my telling be through the light of Christ within me shining like a star? Should it not be in the living Christ within me revealed in my acts? Should not verbal telling be used sparingly? Did not St. Francis say, "preach the gospel and if necessary, use words?"

Before we tell, we must see and be astonished. Is it possible those who resort to words are often those who have not actually seen?

This is what A.W. Tozer concluded. "Every age has its own characteristics. Right now we are in an age of religious complexity. The simplicity which is in Christ is rarely found among us. In its stead are programs, methods, organizations and a world of nervous activities, which occupy time and attention but can never satisfy the longing of the heart. The shallowness of our inner experience, the hollowness of our worship, and that servile imitation of the world which marks our promotional methods all testify that we, in this day, know God only imperfectly, and the peace of God scarcely at all.

If we would find God amid all the religious externals we must first determine to find Him, and then proceed in the way of simplicity. Now as always God discovers Himself to "babes" and hides Himself in thick darkness from the wise and the prudent. We must simplify our approach to Him. We must strip down to essentials (and they will be found to be blessedly few). We must put away all effort to impress, and come with the guileless candor of childhood. If we do this, without doubt God will quickly respond." Amen.

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Rupert, ID 83350
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umcluv@pmt.org
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Thank You

There is a village of people to thank for making December such a special month. If I don't mention you by name, please know that everyone is thanked and appreciated for your service.

Most of you know that our intention was to adopt a family, through the school district, for Christmas. When all was said and done, we adopted three families. We wish to thank the school district, Sue Hare and Ruth Bailes for bringing these families to us. You, the congregation of RUMC, are truly generous people. Thank you for the gifts you purchased and wrapped, and to those who were unable to shop, so donated money. Thank you, Leanna Bruns, for doing an amazing job of shopping. Thank you to the Girl Scouts, under the direction of Ruth Bailes and Christine Barr, for wrapping presents, and to Rev. Madden, Ruth and Tori Bailes and Marion Weickum for sorting all wrapped gifts into families for delivery. We were also able to give each family a large box of food, including a turkey. I can report to you that all the families were most appreciative.

I hope you noticed that again this year our front doors were graced with beautiful Christmas wreaths. Did you know that Cynthia Freeman supplies these wreaths every year? Thank you, Cynthia.



The Hospitality team for December deserves a special thank you, along with a few others who pitched in to help. There was something extra going on 3 out of 4 Sundays. There was an 80th birthday celebration (Barbara Rodgers), a special birthday party for Jesus, after the Sunday School Christmas program, and a special birthday celebration for Rev. Madden.

Thank you to the members of our choir for providing cookies and hosting the reception for the American Falls Choir and the 200+ people in attendance. This was an hour and a half of inspiring, goose bumps on the skin, music. They received two standing ovations. We are so blessed that they have included RUMC in their Christmas schedule.



Thank you to Cliff Hieb, Bryan Bruns, Steve Gulbranson, and Peggy Hess, for running the sound system, seeing that all the microphones were in working order, placed strategically, and turned on during all of the events. Special thanks to John Johnson, always, for keeping the radio station programmed and running (a big job).

Thank you to our Chancel Choir, director, Stan Bruns and accompanist, Judy Graham Barnes for the beautiful Christmas anthems and to the members of the hand bell choir under the direction of John Eilers, for their performances. It is always a special treat to hear the bells play. We don't hear them enough. A special thanks to Peggy Z. Gulbranson for all of the pre-worship music and to Judy for her beautiful organ music.



Thank you to Kris Somsen and to those who assisted her during the Lighting of the Advent Candles each Sunday.

Thank you to our Acolytes for doing their service each Sunday, as well as the Lay Readers, greeters, ushers and Communion servers.

Thank you to Jeff and Debby Hare for organizing the Moravian Lovefeast and to those who helped: Tim & Linda Gregersen, Jennifer Hieb, Steve Gulbranson, Brian & Irene Williams, Leanna Bruns, the choir, Tori & Ruth Bailes, Peggy Gulbranson, Judy Graham Barnes and Rev. Madden.



Thank you to Rev. Madden for setting the tone of our Worship services, and being our spiritual leader. I think you would all agree, we, the Rupert United Methodist Church, are richly blessed.



OPEN HEARTS FOOD PANTRY - Because of your generosity during the month of December, and also of the Idaho Food Bank, we were able to give out regular boxes of food, plus the 100 Christmas boxes, which included turkeys. A lot of you not only helped fill the boxes, you were also there on distribution day to help. Thank you. ❤️ It was perhaps one of the coldest days of the month, yet people began lining up an hour before the appointed time. Several people commented how grateful they were that we gave special boxes for Christmas.

The pantry is entering January in pretty good shape. The shelves and freezers are nearly full. Thank you for your continued support.

Thank you all for your tithes and offerings this year. We have ended the year in fairly good condition. Look for a full report in next issue of *Methodist Dimension*.



You can count on Santa to be in the building sometime around Christmas, and you never see him/her. Thank you, Santa for the very soft, very warm, very pretty throw you left with my name on the card. I really appreciate the gift, the card, and contents within. Sharon Crowe



The poinsettias were beautiful this year. They always make the sanctuary look so festive. Thanks to Sara Somsen for taking on this Ministry Team. There are plants left after Christmas Sunday. If you want a plant you ordered, please pick it up soon, and if you ordered and have not yet paid for a plant, please do so as soon as possible.



Check it out. The 2017 sign-up sheets are now available each Sunday in the Fellowship Hall. There are open spaces for Greeters, Lay Readers, Hospitality, Food Pantry, Radio Sponsorship, Altar Flowers, and C.H.A.T. Thank you for helping.

Did you know that not only can you listen to the Sunday service on KUMC LP 101.7 FM live, it is re-broadcast every Thursday @ 5:00 p.m.? Did you also know that we are streaming live each Sunday on YouTube, and you can watch it as many times as you want to during the week? Here is where to go on your computer: www.youtube.com/user/RUMC83350.

During the UMW Annual Christmas Tea Buffet and installation of their new officers, the women presented a gift of \$300 to RUMC. This gift can be used for anything the church needs, except operating expenses. The finance team decided to put the money into the New Table Fund. All of the older tables that are used during the UMW Harvest Bazaar, and other events are literally falling apart, and need replaced. Thank you Methodist Women for this gift.

FAMILY FUN TASTING EVENING - FRIDAY, JANUARY 20TH @6 PM
The Ministry Team of Peggy Hess, Claud Bowman, Cathy Jarolimek and Michelle Skaggs are putting together a Tasting Party Fundraiser. You are all invited to not only come, but to bring your favorite food dish, and the recipe. There will be a free will donation at the door, and recipes will be sold for \$1.00 each. Come join the fun and bring a friend.



The RUMC received the following Christmas letter from Janet Coe and her daughter, Martha. It is an interview with Janet by the editor of the Redwood monthly paper, "The Bark". The Redwood's, an assisted living facility, is where Janet lives in Mill Valley, California. Many of you will remember, Rev. Wendell and Janet Coe.

An Encore with Janet Coe:

She's sitting by her window overlooking the marsh, hearing birds she cannot see, the king tide turning the marsh into a lake she can 'feel', but not see. Though legally blind, Janet sees clearly through the lens of yesterday - before macular degeneration took her sight at 90. Now, at 99, memories return, clear and crisp, of her childhood in Portland, Maine, of 40 years as a preacher's wife, of four children (one lost in a car crash at age 16), and of 24 years at The Redwoods. She is now a treasured font of Redwoods history.

Janet was born in Springfield, Mass., in 1917 and raised in Portland, Maine. Her mother belonged to the DAR (which Janet never joined because of African-American Marion Anderson, not being allowed to sing at Constitution Hall in 1939). At the age of 18, she entered Pembroke College in Rhode Island, but left a year later. The Depression has drained family funds. Three years followed at the Newton Hospital School of Nursing paid for by the Department of Education. Then to Boston University, where she got a BS in Education and met her husband, a theology Student.

They married in 1944 and headed west on Highway 40, to his first pulpit in Portland, OR. Gas was 16cents a gallon; tires blew out regularly (wartime). It took three weeks to reach the west coast. The next 40 years of Methodist ministry were spent in Oregon, Idaho and two pulpit exchanges to England in the 1970s. "I didn't always like life as a minister's wife. You're put on show - I liked to stay in the background. The children had to be perfect, but weren't."

Eight years after her husband's death from cancer at 68, Janet moved into the Redwoods. (There is a long paragraph about life at the Redwoods, which space does not allow me to insert here. This letter is in the office.) Janet does tell the story of a resident who loved to dance and started the popular "Senior Prom". At the 1994 Prom, this woman fell to the floor, and said "Don't stop the music," and died. At 99, Janet exercises and walks daily. Head high, "young", unstoppable, Janet Coe looks life in the eye & smiles. She will be 100 on Oct. 7, 2017. You are invited.