

From the Desk of Pastor Lindsey

May the peace, love, joy, and hope be with you all. I greet you in the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

There are two incredibly unique events according to the Liturgical calendar that will be observed by Christians in January. Epiphany and the Baptism of the Lord. Why are these two events so important and what does it mean to you and me.

Let us start with Epiphany. The name Epiphany comes from the Greek *epiphaneia*, meaning “appearance” or “manifestation,” and refers to the manifestation of Jesus Christ to the world. The holiday is also called the Feast of Epiphany, Theophany, or Three Kings' Day. In the New Testament the word is used in 2 Timothy 1:10 to refer either to the birth of Christ or to his appearance after his resurrection, and five times to refer to his Second Coming. It is a special date in the Christmas story because it is when people celebrate how a star led the Magi - also known as the Three kings or the Wise Men - to visit the baby Jesus after he had been born. It is a time for believers to consider how Jesus fulfilled his destiny and how Christians can fulfill their destiny too.

Baptism of the Lord In the liturgical calendar, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord signifies the end of the Christmas season. The Baptism of the Lord is notable because it marks the beginning of Jesus' ministry and confirms his identity as the Son of God. This event is documented in all the gospels except John. The baptism of the Spirit is an “immersion of the Spirit.” When you are baptized with the Holy Spirit, you will receive strength, power, and boldness from God to accomplish your work and overcome sin in your own life.

We will need a sudden, intuitive perception of or insight like an Epiphany to find the strength to get through a new year using every tool in our toolbox especially with an out-of-control pandemic and rapid changes in the climate. The only way to get through it is with the Holy Spirit and fire given to us from our redeemer. Jesus Christ is our only hope to survive. We must lean on each other, and the love promised to us through the Baptism of our Lord.

Go in faith knowing that Our Heavenly Father and Our Lord and Savior “will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” He is with us now and forever. Amen.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Madelynne Lindsey