

Devotional for the Week – Week 11 (January 6, 2021)

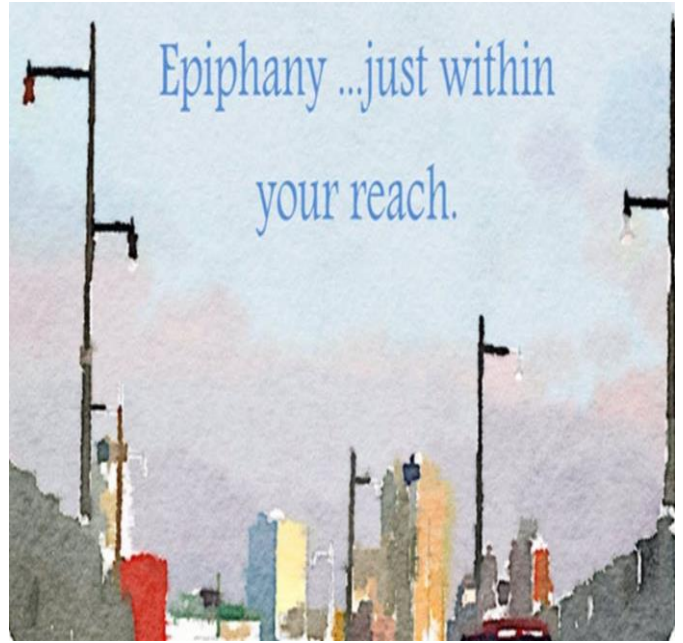
Epiphany Thoughts

Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

Isaiah 60: 1-2



Traditional Picture of Epiphany



A New Way to Think of Epiphany

Dear friends,

Today is January 6th – the Epiphany of the Lord liturgical day. It is a day when we commemorate the coming of the magi as the first manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles. It can also mean an illuminating discovery, realization or disclosure of something significant and meaningful. Don't we all want such experiences especially after the year we've had with all of its confusion?

We have begun a new year and I don't know about you, but I am **READY** for something new and different. Presbyterians have always valued learning, no matter how old we are. That is why every PCUSA pastor gets 2 weeks of continuing education and some funds to continue to learn. So, I hope you will join me as we experiment this year.

I am sure that you noticed that you did not receive a January newsletter. Last month, Sandy Boyce announced that she was resigning as the editor. We certainly appreciate her efforts, but it is time to reevaluate our situation. With Christmas and our Admin. Asst. (Melanie) being out sick, taking on a newsletter was just too much. So, I have tried to open my mind to new possibilities for sharing information. Of course, if any of you would like to take on the role of editor, I would be happy to hear from you. But in the meantime, I plan on sending out up-to-date news and announcements with my Midweek Devotional mailing each week. So, here is your first one.

Let's talk about **LEARNING**. It is a new creative skill, whether you are learning how to dance or embroider or whatever, it can be exciting, fun and calming. Any of these types of new creative challenges can help you to develop your concentration skills, and they are an ideal antidote to distraction.

Creative self-expression can also be extremely cathartic. No wonder "art therapy" is so widely used in the treatment of depression, anxiety and ADHD. The deep focus you feel when you're in the

“zone” stills your mind and leaves you feeling more relaxed and returned to calm. So, I would encourage each of you to LEARN something new and fun to enrich your life.

As a way to help you delve into something new and interesting to learn about, I am attaching the Introduction to a book the Session is reading/studying. It is called **Sailboat Church – Helping Your Church Rethink Its Mission and Practice**. Here is a blurb about it: “Rowboat churches depend largely on human effort. When church budgets shrink and membership declines, rowboat churches frantically row harder against a current, often frustrated and disappointed at their efforts. Sailboat churches, on the other hand, take up the oars, hoist sails, and rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them. Arguing that churches should be ‘sailboats’ Joan Gray encourages readers to shift concern from the many daily, practical concerns of their local church to fresh ideas that can be found using the guidance of the Holy Spirit.” As a way of inviting you to help NCPC participate in a wind-powered journey to new places, I am attaching the Introduction to this book.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Christian Education: It is not too late to participate in our study of *When Christians Get It Wrong* by Adam Hamilton. We will offer this study on Sunday mornings at 8:45 am as well as Tuesdays at 9 am (in person and Zoom). In addition, let Donna Casey know if you are interested in participating in an online Bethel course.

On **Wednesdays**, we offer a **Prayer and Share time at 5:30** – a time to gather around the table as we share concerns and joys, pray and share our dinners. Come one, come all.

A Bit of **Gardening Advice** from Jane Adams: 'DREAMTIME'

Presently all perennials, shrubs, and trees are sleeping/dormant, waiting to pop into leafy Spring bloom. Now is the time to gather your seed and plant catalogs, either print or online, and be tempted to try some seeds and/or plants you've not had before. Read the descriptions carefully and plan accordingly. As we are not actively digging in frozen ground, we can plan and dream of a lush flowering landscape.



We had a **Congregational Meeting last Sunday** after worship and we elected new officers. **This Sunday, we will ordain and install them.** I am attaching the NCPC Leadership page for your information.

PRAYER CONCERNS – I am attaching the Prayer List and Announcement page for your information. Any updates and/or prayers/announcements would be appreciated.

Any suggestions or information that you would like to have shared with the congregation can be sent to me as part of next week's email. This week, I hope you will enjoy – a current Prayer List/Announcement page, 2021 Leadership page, and the Introduction to Joan Gray's book. Stay tuned for more sharing!

May God bless and keep you,
and may this Epiphany brighten your life in new and different ways!

Carol