

St. Pauli News in Detail



Greeting and Ushering

Feb. 3 Craig Torkelson
 Feb. 10 Wallace Torkelson
 Feb. 17 Chad Torstveit
 Feb. 24 Val Torstveit

Altar Preparation: Tammy Haugen

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February Milestones

Birthdays

Feb. 20 Gary Iverson
 Feb. 25 Arlo Rude
 Feb. 26 Evie Johnson
 Feb. 27 Edna Rondorf



Anniversaries

None that the editor is aware of

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Northlands Rescue Mission

During Lent, we will once again collect items for our “Baskets of Promise,” but there is another opportunity we might consider for sharing our blessings. Northlands Rescue Mission wrote a thank you letter for our \$200.00 Fall Event donation and in the same letter said they give “Bags of Blessings” to each one of their clients at Christmas.

Perhaps we can accumulate some of these items this year and donate them to the Mission for their 2019 Bags of Blessings? Please let us know your opinions.

Items needed:

- Shirts: any form in men’s & women’s sizes M-XXXL
- Pants, Sweatpants or Pajama Pants: men’s & women’s sizes M-XXXL
- Hats, Gloves, Scarves: men’s and women’s
- Chapstick
- Foot Powder
- Nail Clippers
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Deodorant

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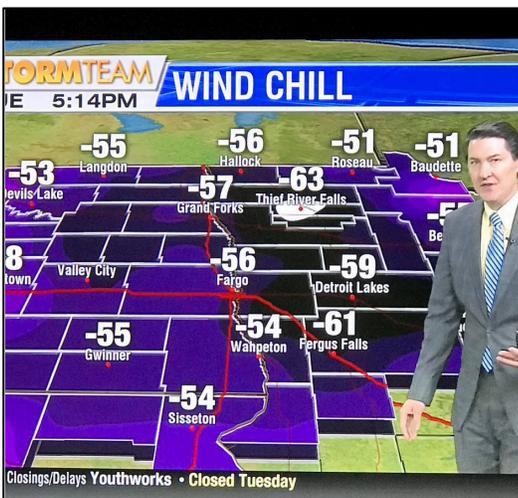
Quilting

WELCA ladies held another successful quilting day on January 10th. We will gather again on Wednesday, February 20, and Thursday, February 21. No prior training is necessary. Everyone is welcome! A wonderful hot lunch is served and the conversations are both stimulating, enlightening, and fun.

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For your enjoyment, Christopher Ingraham’s January 30th article in *The Washington Post*, “This is what minus-40 feels like,” is reprinted inside this newsletter.

Brrr... It has been COLD!



Minutes of the Church Council

November 11, 2018

The St. Pauli Church Council met on Sunday, November 11, 2018 at 11:30 a.m. at St. Pauli Church following worship services. Board Members present: Pastor Carl Hansen, Faye Auchenpaugh, Ivette Garrett, Larry Hurst, Gary Iverson, and Arlo Rude.

President Garrett called the meeting to order.

The only item on the agenda was the determination of which funds should be selected for the annual ELCA

Disaster contribution. **M/S/C** (Auchenpaugh/Rude) to split the contribution 50-50 between hurricane disaster assistance and fire disaster assistance.

M/S/C (Rude/Iverson) to adjourn.

Faye Auchenpaugh
Secretary

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December 20, 2018

The St. Pauli Church Council met on Thursday, December 20, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. at St. Pauli Church. Board Members present: Faye Auchenpaugh, Ivette Garrett, Gary Iverson, Arlo Rude and Pastor Carl Hansen.

The meeting was called to order by President Garrett. Pastor Carl opened the meeting with prayer.

Approval of Agenda: Approved as submitted.

(The November meeting was very brief, with only one item on the agenda, and was held after worship services. No secretary's or treasurer's report was read at this meeting; both were carried over to the December meeting.)

Secretary's Report: **M/S/C** (Iverson/Rude) to approve the October 18 and November 11, 2018 secretary's reports.

Treasurer's Report: **M/S/C** (Auchenpaugh/Iverson) to accept the report as presented for the months of October and November.

Balances as of 10/31/2018:

Checking Account as of 9/30/2018:	\$ 17,474.40
Income	\$ 3,322.00
Expenses	\$ (1,200.79)
Checking Account as of 10/31/2018:	\$ 19,595.61
Investor Savings	\$ 36,180.60
Edward D. Jones Investments	\$ 64,886.80
Memorial Fund Savings & CD	\$ 10,857.01
Education Fund Balance	\$ 516.02
Mission Grant Fund Balance	\$ 4,034.34
Total Church Funds as of 10/31/2018:	\$ 136,070.38

Balances as of 11/30/2018:

Checking Account as of 10/31/2018:	\$ 19,595.61
Income	\$ 2,055.00
Expenses	\$ (1,514.73)
Checking Account as of 11/30/2018:	\$ 20,135.88
Investor Savings	\$ 36,201.42
Edward D. Jones Investments	\$ 65,722.29
Memorial Fund Savings & CD	\$ 10,857.36
Education Fund Balance	\$ 516.23
Mission Grant Fund Balance	\$ 4,036.00
Total Church Funds as of 11/30/2018:	\$ 137,469.18

Pastor Carl's Report:

Larry Hurst has been convalescing at Villa St. Vincent in Crookston for the past two-plus weeks. He is feeling better and hopes to be discharged this Saturday (December 22).

Pastor Carl was very thankful for the warm and inspiring prayer service for Brad Swanson on December 14. The remarks by family and friends were warm, funny, inspiring, and altogether appropriate.

Pastor Carl will be leaving for Texas on Christmas Day and anticipates returning to Thief River Falls on the evening of January 28. Pastor John Voelker from Trinity (218-686-2237) will be on call during his absence.

Thanks to the Sunday School students, teachers, helpers and musicians for an excellent Christmas program. Somehow the message of Christmas is extra special when told and sung by children.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday Holy Communion on March 6. Easter will be celebrated on April 21.

A new bishop will be elected in 2019.

Reports of members in sickness or distress: Prayers were given for Larry Hurst as he continues on a treatment plan that may include multiple surgeries.

New members or interest in membership: Auchenpaugh will bring a plate of goodies and welcome the people who bought Evie Johnson's farm to both the neighborhood and the church.

Reports.

- 1) WELCA: The 2019 Handbook is ready for distribution.
- 2) Board of Education: Christmas program went very well. Iverson said the parents worked so well with the kids and there was teamwork all around.

Old Business:

- 1) Pastor Carl's contract:
- 2) Pulpit Supply list: Garrett requested this list so she can arrange for pulpit supply in Rude's absence.

New Business:

- 1) The bishop has given his approval for a six-month contract from this point forward, rather than the three months we have been under since Pastor Carl began

serving our church. **M/S/C** (Iverson/Garrett) to renew Pastor Carl's contract for six months.

- 2) Annual Meeting Date: With Pastor Carl being away the entire month of January, the annual meeting date needs to be changed. **M/S/C** (Rude/Iverson) that we will hold this year's annual meeting on February 3rd 2019.
- 3) St. Pauli Cemetery Association Annual Meeting will be held at 8:00 pm following the Council meeting on January 17, 2019.
- 4) Pulpit supply during Pastor Carl's absence: Kari Torkelson will serve three Sundays: December 30, January 6 and

January 13. Garrett will arrange for the remaining two Sundays. Color of altar paraments during Pastor Carl's absence should be: Blue for December 23; White for December 24, December 30, January 6, January 13; Green for January 20 and 27.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer. **M/S/C** (Iverson/Rude) to adjourn at 8:10 p.m.

Faye Auchenpaugh, Secretary

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WELCA Minutes November 14, 2018

The St. Pauli Women of the ELCA met November 14, 2018 with six members present. President Cindy led us in devotions, "How giving thanks can deepen your joy."

Secretary's report was read and approved.

Cindy gave the treasurer's report as follows:

Checkbook balance as of 9-30-2018:	\$ 653.74
Income:	2,005.91
Expenses:	(370.41)
Checkbook balance as of 10-31-2018:	\$ 2,874.33
Savings Account:	\$ 867.01
CD:	\$ 6,038.40

Virginia gave the stewardship report. Shipping is November 3rd. We sent 20 school backpacks and 15 baby care kits. She had delivered the graduation quilt to Val and purchased packing tape with funds left on the Thrivent card.

New Conference 2 officers: Janet Lian, coordinator; Gelene Lundeen, recorder; Linda Kaushagen, treasurer.

Old Business:

- Christmas Brunch is December 1st, 9:30am at the Country School. Becky Carlson will cater.
- November Thanksgiving services are at Trinity. Pie will be served.
- Sunday School Christmas program is December 16th. Group A-F responsible for serving and clean-up.
- Christmas Eve Services at 5:00 on December 24th. Virginia has altar and communion prep for December. Janet has Christmas Eve communion.
- Planning committee for 2019 will meet December 6th at 2:00 at Janet's house.

New Business:

Discussion on Fall Event funds: Ivette made motion that we contribute \$2,000 to charities. Seconded by Virginia. Carried.

ELCA Good Gifts	\$ 500.00
Project 24 Kenya	200.00
Salvation Army of TRF	300.00
Little Brother/Little Sister	200.00
Pennington County Christmas	200.00
TRF Area Community Fund	100.00
Northlands Rescue Mission	200.00
Women of ELCA Scholarship	200.00
TRF Fire Department	100.00

Ivette made a motion that we accept these charity donations, seconded by Virginia, carried.

Prayer partners were exchanged and offering taken.

Thankoffering program given by Virginia and Kathy.

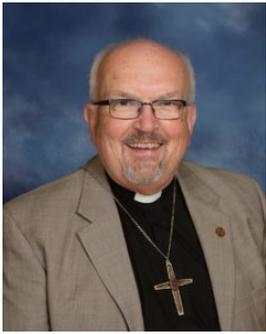
Lord's Prayer and Table Grace said.

Thank you to Cindy for serving lunch.

Kathy Alberg, Secretary

Photos from Quilting Day





Bishop of the NW Minnesota Synod Rev. Dr. Lawrence R. Wohlrabe

Larry began his ministry as
bishop of the synod on
September 1, 2007.

In the ELCA synod bishops serve six-year terms, and their duties are described in detail in Chapter 8 of the *Synod Constitution*. Many of the constitutional duties of the Office of Bishop are carried out by other members of the synod staff. Larry has viewed his ministry as bishop as having several key components:

- **Preaching the Word and teaching the faith**
Larry has sought to set the tone (theologically, relationally, organizationally) for how the people of our synod participate in God's mission.
- **Asking imaginative, missional questions**
Larry has tried to keep God's mission in Jesus Christ front-and-center in all that we do. This has often involved helping others "reframe" the concerns, questions or anxieties they have brought to him. In partnership with Keith Zeh he has helped chart a course for missional ventures and pathways to congregational renewal in the synod.
- **Garnering resources for God's work**
Larry spearheaded efforts to invite financial gifts to the work of our synod and the ELCA churchwide organization. In partnership with the synod council, he exercised careful stewardship of the resources available to the synod.

- **Tending servant-leaders in God's mission**
In partnership with Laurie Natwick, Larry related to rostered leaders from the point of their entry into the ELCA candidacy process through their retirement from active rostered service. He attended to the gifts, health and fidelity of our rostered leaders—including their relationship to the synod and the ELCA. He and other members of the synod staff gave focused attention to the call process. Larry also worked with other synod staff in encouraging, supporting and equipping elected and appointed lay leaders in congregations and other ministries.
- **Leading the synod staff**
Larry provided direction, clarity, and feedback for members of the synod staff. He helped them function as a team in service to God's mission.
- **Cultivating connections within the synod and the ELCA**
One way Larry did this was by serving *ex officio* on boards of directors for ELCA and ecumenical ministries. He also bore responsibility for tending global partnerships, especially our "companion synod," the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church in southern India.
- **Navigating transitions and change**
Larry viewed most church conflict as symptomatic of the rapidity of change in the 21st century church. Since 2007 the synod has reflected these changes in myriad ways—through moving the synod office (2008), right-sizing the size of the synod staff (2009-2010), and dealing with losses of members and congregations following the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. "Change may be the only constant that we face," he likes to say. Relying on the constancy of God's love and grace provides hope in the midst of such rapid changes.

During the final eight months of Bishop Wohlrabe's term, the Synod is republishing selected monthly bishop's studies from the last twelve years. The following study is from January 2015.

Starry Night



Bible Passage: Genesis 15:1-21

Please read this passage before exploring this Bible study.

Getting In A Word Edgewise

We human beings spend about a third of our lives asleep. It's startling simply to say that out loud. Our tendency is to think of "our lives" as our active engagement in the world around us; we tend to discount our "down time."

More happens when we're asleep than we often realize, though. We may be "out" for roughly eight hours a night, but there is One who neither slumbers nor sleeps (Psalm 121:4). Truth be told, sometimes God gets through to us best when we're not fully conscious, awake, seemingly in control of things.

During 2015 I'm offering the people of our synod a series of Bible studies on dreams and visions in the Bible. As we consider the faith practice of *creatively imagining the contours of God's promised future* we will do well to stop, look and listen to what God is doing in the world. Where

is God leading us? How might we best align our own plans and energies with God's dream for the whole creation? This is what "mission planning" looks like for congregations filled with people of faith who believe God is always out ahead of us.

But it's not easy or automatic to "stop, look and listen" for God in this noisy, busy, hectic world. That's why God is always on the lookout for opportunities to get a word in edgewise with us. Often such opportunities arise when we aren't trying to manage the universe by ourselves. God seeks out times when we're vulnerable and open to what God wants to share with us.

This Bible study series will lift up eleven of such "holy intrusions" that marked key turning points in the scriptural story.¹

God Starts Over With Abram

The first eleven chapters of Genesis are often called the pre-history (or primeval history) section of the first book of the Bible. These chapters (focused on creation, fall, and flood) set the stage for all that is to follow.

Starting with **Chapter 12** Genesis narrows the focus to God's method of choosing one nation— Israel—to be God's chosen people, the instrument of God's rescue and redemption of all humanity. Even though God could have taken any number of nations already in existence and made them God's chosen people, God decides to start afresh with a man and his wife and to fashion from them a people.

So in **Genesis 12:1-3** God focuses the story on Abram, a nobody-in-particular who lived in "Ur of the Chaldeans," probably located in present-day Iraq. Out of the clear blue—for no reason other than God's own free act of choice— Abram is commanded to leave his homeland and strike out for a land that God will show him. There God will make of Abram a great nation by whom "all the families of the earth will bless themselves."

In **Genesis 15** God reiterates and expands upon this in the context of a vision that Abram receives at night. Enjoining Abram not to be afraid, God proclaims, "I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." God meets Abram where he is at—vulnerable, uncertain—and pours gracious promises into Abram's hungry ears.

But Abram is not utterly passive in this vision. He responds honestly to God, naming the obstacle that seems to block his path: "I continue childless." God, it seems, has chosen an empty vessel, ill-suited for becoming a "great nation."

So God beckons Abram out into the night and directs his gaze toward the heavens: "Number the stars if you are able....So shall your descendants be." Abram drinks in God's promise of fertility-in- the-face-of-barrenness, and in this fashion Abram's trust in God is "reckoned to him as righteousness." That is, God counts Abram's assent to God's promises as constituting a life-giving relationship with God.

Then, in a somewhat bizarre scene of slaughtered animals and a floating fire-pot and flaming torch, God enters into a solemn agreement (God literally "cuts a covenant", v. 18) with Abram in which Abram is promised

- **A land that he will possess** (the boundaries of which correspond to the extent of Solomon's kingdom at the period of its greatest extent, cf. I Kings 4:21),
- **A deliverance of his descendants** in the distant future, after a time of sojourning in a "land that is not theirs" (i.e. a reference to the Israelites' slavery in Egypt and the Exodus), and

- **A long life for Abram** that will see him "go to [his] fathers in peace...buried in a good old age."

What's remarkable about this strange dream is that in it "God himself enters a communal relationship with Abraham under the forms which among men guarantee the greatest contractual security."² In other words, God "comes down" to earth, via this covenant with Abram, and is bound to Abram in the same way humans in that time made covenants with one another.

God's call to Abram in Genesis 12 and the vision of Abram in Genesis 15 illustrates well some of the characteristics of God's "holy intrusions" throughout the Bible and in our own lives:

Holy Intrusions—Then and Now

1. **"Holy intrusions" always reflect God's surprising initiative in our lives.** There isn't even a whiff of a hint that Abram did anything to deserve God's intervention in his life! God simply seized the moment to start something new in the world, with Abram and his wife Sarai.³
2. **"Holy intrusions" often come when things look dark or uncertain.** Abram is keenly aware of a huge problem that makes God's promises seem so improbable: his wife Sarai is barren. In his vision (Genesis 15:2-3), Abram is not passively mute but gives voice to the predicament God's promises must confront: "I continue childless...a slave born in my house will be my heir." Abram may have been asleep or in a trance-like state, but in his mind's eye he was still trying to work things out, make things add up. God seeks out times like this to get a word in edgewise with Abram—God is always looking for such opportunities to address us, too. As Walter Brueggemann observes: "We do well in our management while we are awake, and we keep the light, power and control on 24/7. Except, of course, that we must sleep...Unbidden communication in the night opens sleepers to a world different from the one they manage during the day...[and] this unbidden communication is one venue in which the holy purposes of God, perplexing and unreasonable as they might be, come to us."
3. **"Holy intrusions" mark key turning points in the story of God and God's people.** Starting here with God's call to Abram, the biblical story transitions from pre-history to the history of God with the people Israel. An unexpected future is opened up. From our perspective as Christians, the remainder of the Bible tracks the twisting, turning but always progressing adventure of how God made good on his promises to Abram and Sarai. This adventure continues beyond the pages of the Bible, into the ongoing history of God's people in Christ. To cite an example closer in time to our own day, Brueggemann calls Martin Luther King Jr. "perhaps the greatest dreamer of the mid-20th century," whose famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963 "was a gift of imagination from beyond the realm of political realism...the product of study, of suffering and of long-term nurture in the black church."

In these holy seasons of Christmas and Epiphany, we recall with great joy all the ways God has made good—and continues to make good—on his promises to Abram and Sarai.

Through them and their greatest descendant Jesus the Christ, “all families of the earth shall be blessed.”

For reflection and discussion:

1. When is the last time you had a sense that God was “getting in a word edgewise” with you?
2. Recall a time when things looked dark or uncertain for your congregation (or another congregation you’ve been part of). What was that like? How did the congregation come through that time? How do you think God might have been involved?
3. Old Testament scholar Gerhard von Rad says, regarding Abram’s call by God, that “one must always remember that to leave home and to break ancestral bonds was to expect of ancient men almost the impossible.”³ Are there any ways in which your congregation might need to “leave home” to travel to a place God wants to show you? How might God

be calling your congregation to leave its comfort zone and change for the sake of a new way to “be church” for the sake of God’s mission?

¹ I’m indebted to Walter Brueggemann for this pungent phrase. See his wonderful article from the June 28, 2005 issue of *The Christian Century* at <http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=3218>

² Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary, Revised Edition* (1972, Westminster Press), p. 187. 4

³ If the names “Abram” and “Sarai” sound strange to you, see Genesis 17:5, 15. 5

Lawrence R. Wohlrahe
Bishop, Northwestern Minnesota Synod

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Understanding the 2019 Bishop Election

2019 Bishop Election Committee

1. Roseau Conference: Ms. Patti Swanson, Hallock (Maria of Kennedy)
2. Thief River Falls Conference: Pr. Mark Helgeland, Thief River Falls (Zion)
3. Crookston Conference: Mr. Dale Knotek, Crookston (St. Paul’s)
4. Bemidji Conference: Mr. Allen Paulson, Shevlin (Clearwater)
5. Moorhead Conference: Dn. Julie Wilson, Moorhead (Good Shepherd)
6. Detroit Lakes Conference: Ms. Sharon Josephson, Detroit Lakes (Trinity)
7. Fergus falls Conference: Pr. Chris Eldredge, Fergus Falls (Zion-Hedemarken)
8. Alexandria Conference: Pr. Jean Ohman, Elbow Lake (United)

Timetable for the 2019 Bishop Election

Source: S9.04.C17. in the Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions of the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Although the ecclesiastical ballot, as described in S9.04, is the method used to elect the synod bishop, the synod sponsors a pre-nomination process described in this continuing resolution. The goal of this process is to surface names of potential nominees and provide information on these individuals to the people of the synod prior to the synod assembly. The components and timetable for this pre-nomination process include the following:

- The Task Force on Transition in the Office of Synod Bishop, authorized by the synod council in June of 2016, drafted a Ministry Site Profile for the 2019 bishop election process.
 - On **June 9, 2018** the synod council announced appointment of the bishop election committee.

- On **June 21, 2018** the synod council approved the final draft of the Ministry Site Profile for distribution to the synod.
- No later than **October 22, 2018** the bishop election committee disseminated information on the remaining steps in the pre-nomination process.
- On **December 1, 2018** the congregations and rostered ministers of the synod were invited to start submitting pre-nominations to the bishop election committee.
- No later than **February 7, 2019** the bishop election committee will contact all persons pre-nominated for the office of bishop, providing them with biographical information forms to be filled out and returned to the bishop election committee.
- No later than **February 12, 2019** the assembly pre-nominations will close.
- No later than **March 8, 2019** all completed biographical information forms will be due from pre-nominees.
- No later than **April 8, 2019** the bishop election committee will announce names of pre-nominees and share biographical information on them with the synod.
- The 2019 Synod Assembly will take place **June 7-9, 2019** on the campus of Concordia College.
- The new bishop will assume office on **September 1, 2019**.

In the first ballot at the synod assembly, each voting member will be asked to write in the name of one person who is eligible to serve as synod bishop. Anyone who was pre-nominated still needs at least one voting member to write in his/her name on the first ballot in order to be nominated for the office of bishop. **The names of eligible persons not pre-nominated may also be written in by voting members on the first ballot.** When the results of the first ballot are tallied, any nominees who were not already pre-nominated must submit to the bishop election committee the same biographical information that pre-nominees completed prior to the assembly if they wish to proceed to the second ballot.

Kari Torkelson's Message

Epiphany of Our Lord, January 6, 2019

Readings: Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

We are so fortunate to have a member who is willing and so very capable of filling in, as her schedule allows, when Pastor Carl is away. This year, she conducted services on December 30, 2018; January 6 and 13, 2019.

Grace and Peace be to you.

One of the things I thought about right away as I read the Matthew text is the star. I've always been captivated with space and stars and how fascinating it would be to be in space looking down on earth. But, I think it is quite fascinating to be on earth and looking to space and stars.

Just this Friday night I saw the Northern lights. I also had a wonderful experience looking at the night sky when I was on an eye mission trip to Tanzania, Africa. In fact, my pastor at United Lutheran Church in Grand Forks had been to this same place, Tarangarie National Park, before I had gone on my trip. She said, "I would encourage you to sit out on the veranda and contemplate the wonders of God's creation."

She was absolutely right. This place didn't have electricity after 10pm so there was no chance of any other light disturbing the views of the sky. It was truly wonderful to think of all of the mighty and unique animals that were roaming about the veranda below me and to see the beautiful night sky above me.

The Magi in our Gospel text wouldn't have had to contend with any light pollution either, as they looked at and studied the stars. This one particular star stood out among all the others and they decided to follow it. The text says they saw His star. How did they know it was His star and why did they follow it? Most likely they were not Jewish but they knew that the prophets had foretold the birth of the King of the Jews in Bethlehem and had been awaiting a sign that the Messiah had been born.

As someone who likes to know how things work I've often wondered how the star led them. How is that possible? Two days ago I learned of a former astronomy professor at the University of MN, Karlis Kaufmanis, who said that the Star of Bethlehem (I am greatly, greatly simplifying his findings) was an event where Jupiter and Saturn emerged in the glowing rays of the morning sun and they kept moving toward one another.

But, like many other stories in the Bible of manna falling from the sky, the Red Sea parting, and Jonah and the whale, that is not the point of the story. The point is not *how* it happened but *why* it happened.

I think the *why* in the Gospel for today is that the star shows us how God works in all of creation. The star is doing something that it can't do on its own; it is guiding the Magi to Jesus to worship him.

Matthew's gospel is the only one to tell of the visit of the Magi. There seems to be no real agreement on where the

men from the East came from, but when I hear the song lyrics for "We Three Kings of Orient Are," I think of Asia.

Many scholars think they were from Iran. But, no matter where they came from, these men traveled 500 miles or more and that is why we celebrate Epiphany 12 days after Christmas. It took them a long time to travel to the baby Jesus. So, unlike my nativity scene at home and that of about every Sunday School program, the Magi or Kings weren't there at the manger.

Once again, we don't have to be hung up on the details. It is the realization or *epiphany* that Jesus is God's son that is the important detail to remember.

Who were these Wise Men? They were astrologers or people who looked to the stars to interpret human behavior. These wise men would have been the people writing our horoscopes that we read in the paper. In our day and age you can't get a Bachelor of Science degree in Astrology. But, in the time of Matthew's writing they were considered renowned scientists and valuable advisors.

They were likely wealthy based on the gifts they brought: Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. Matthew doesn't go into detail about why these particular gifts were given. However, gold was a gift given to honor a king. Frankincense was burned as incense and wasn't used in the average household; it was used in worshiping a deity. And, Myrrh was used as a perfume and used in preparing bodies for burial. All three gifts seem appropriate as we think of Jesus' life as a King, God's son and his death on the cross.

God is once again working through all of creation and is using people from a different country to tell of the birth of His Son. He wasn't using the prophets and teachers or Kings. In fact, King Herod didn't know the writings of the Old Testament prophets and had to ask these men from another land and his scribes to tell him where the Messiah was to be born.

Matthew 2 verse 3 says, "When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him." Why was all of Jerusalem frightened?

I came across a devotion by Dr. Kari Vo where she explains it this way: "Anyone who has ever lived with someone like Herod could tell you the answer. They were probably afraid of what Herod might do in his rage. Herod was a violent and unpredictable man. He even put to death some of his own sons and their mother; his favorite wife. Later, when he himself was dying, Herod had the leading men of the day imprisoned and gave orders that they should be killed as soon as he himself died, in order that there would be genuine mourning at his death. A man who would do things like that might do anything. No one in Jerusalem wanted to be around when Herod got upset."

So, Herod wasn't happy about the situation and tried to trick the wise men by telling them to find Jesus and then report back so he could worship him. But what he really wanted was to kill him because he thought Jesus was a threat to his power. The wise men never returned to Herod because they had been warned in a dream to return home a different way.

Matthew 2:16 says, "When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was infuriated, and he sent and killed all the children in and around Bethlehem who were two years old or under..."

Joseph had been warned in a dream to leave and flee to Egypt because Herod was about to search for the baby Jesus and destroy him. Herod was a man who would commit mass murder in order to preserve his perceived power. No wonder all of Jerusalem was frightened.

Today we celebrate the event of Epiphany. Truthfully, I had to look up what exactly is meant by Epiphany. Here are the definitions: 1. The manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi. 2. A festival commemorating the Epiphany on Jan. 6th (pastors are quite excited that January 6th is on a Sunday this year) and 3. A moment of sudden revelation or insight.

The definition of Epiphany that I know best is the moment of sudden revelation or insight. Perhaps you could call it that "Ah ha" moment. The birth of Jesus and the Wise men coming to worship him and declaring to all the nations that Jesus is God's son is the biggest "Ah Ha" moment ever. Epiphany declares that Christ has come.

Unlike Herod and all of Jerusalem, this is nothing to be frightened about. In fact, returning to Dr. Vo's words: "How

much better is it for us, who belong to the real King! We don't have to walk on eggshells around Jesus, or be afraid that He will do terrible things to us in his anger. Our King came to have mercy on us and to give His life for His people. Our God is the opposite of abusive. He loves us, is patient with us, and calls us back to Him in faith and repentance, time after time after time."

Miraculous things happened around the birth of Jesus. God moved the heavens and the earth to proclaim that Jesus is his Son. We can't move the heavens and the earth, but we can be like the Wise Men who followed a star, proclaimed Jesus to the world, and rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

Amen

References:

- 1) University of MN-Department of Astronomy Newsletter; Vol. 18. Fall 2003/2004.
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"THIS IS WHAT MINUS-40 FEELS LIKE"

by Christopher Ingraham, *The Washington Post*, January 30, 2019

RED LAKE FALLS, MINN—Temperatures the week of January 28, 2019 were excruciating, to say the least. The fact of the matter is I do not know exactly how cold it got at my house today.

The mercury thermometer on our porch only goes down to minus-30. The digital thermometer in our backyard weather station bottoms out at 40 below. For roughly two hours on Wednesday, this thermometer registered minus-40.0, even as the actual air temperature descended below that level to depths unknown.

What I do know, however, is beyond a certain point the only thing you feel outside is pain.

My family moved to rural Minnesota in 2016 from Baltimore, and our first winter late that year brought my first exposure to sustained temperatures below zero. In those days, I came to the belief that all temperatures below zero are essentially the same in terms of how they are experienced. Ten below is bitter cold. Twenty below is also bitter cold. Therefore, by the transitive property, 10 below and 20 below are the same.

I now know this to be false.

There are, in fact, endless variations of cold, pain and suffering a person may experience on the long, dark slide from 0 to minus-40 and beyond. Down to about 20 below things are not so bad, honestly. You need to hustle a little bit on your way out to the car, and you've got a few seconds to futz with your keys at the door before the cold starts to dig into your skin. You get a kind of thermal grace period between when you first expose your skin to the air and when the cold starts to bite.

As long as it is above minus-20, it is not uncommon to see Minnesotans out and about without a hat or gloves, or even in shorts. I used to think they were insane, but having lived here for several winters I now understand if you're just making a quick jaunt out to the mailbox or into a store, it's overkill to go through the hassle of suiting up all the way. Rule of thumb: If the amount of time you expect to spend outdoors is less than the amount of time it will take to get your coat, hat, mittens and scarf on, you can just dash out of the house in whatever you're wearing.

Below minus-20, however, this calculus changes. Beyond this threshold, the thermal grace period shrinks rapidly and disappears altogether. By about 30 below the cold doesn't

feel like cold anymore — it's just pure, unadulterated pain; a sharp, burning sensation. After a few moments, the burning gives way to a deep, dull ache that feels like it's radiating from your bones. I've never been brave and/or dumb enough to test what comes after the ache, but my assumption is it's deeply unpleasant and possibly irreversible.

At -29 it's officially cold enough to turn boiling water into snow!

Wind adds a separate dimension to the experience of the cold up here. Starting around 20 below the wind stops registering as a tactile sensation and is experienced primarily as a more urgent kind of pain. At 30 below, it's like a hot iron on your exposed skin. At 40 below, it's a burning scream.

At the moment, there is about a 100-degree temperature differential between the air in our house and the air outside, which causes some weird things to happen. In the middle of the night, we hear thunderous creaks and pops emanating

from the walls of the house as the building materials contract and settle. We have a thick layer of ice growing on the interiors of our double-paned windows. Sometimes our doors get frozen shut, and when we open them it lets in a blast of frigid air that sucks all the moisture out of the house and turns it into a rolling fog.

Most of the homes around here are very well insulated, so we don't worry too much about frozen indoor pipes. Last year, however, part of the water main on our street froze solid. For several months, one of our neighbors had to run a hose to someone else's house to get water. The city instructed the rest of us on the block to keep a faucet running at all times (they credited us the difference on our water bills).

After today, the temperature is forecast to rise again — by Thursday we'll be back in the single digits below zero, which will be a welcome relief after several days below negative 20. I may even put my shorts on to celebrate.

* * * * *

85 USELESS FACTS

1. Rubber bands last longer when refrigerated. The natural rubber that is used to make rubber bands crystallizes over time, giving us what is commonly called "dry rot," where the bands are "dry," crumbly and no longer elastic. This process occurs fastest at room temperature. Putting the rubber bands in a cooler condition slows down that conversion as there is less energy inside the rubber to help it align itself for crystallization.
2. Peanuts can be one of the ingredients of dynamite. Peanut oil can be processed to produce glycerol, which can be used to make nitroglycerine, an explosive liquid used in dynamite. However, there are other processes that can be used to make dynamite without using peanuts at all.
3. The national anthem of Greece originally had 158 verses.
4. There are 293 ways to make change for a dollar bill if you count a one-dollar coin as change.
5. The average secretary's left hand does 56% of the typing.
6. It is said that a shark is the only fish that can blink with both eyes but neither fish nor sharks blink, although sharks do have eyelids. There is no need to blink because the water cleans their eyes and obviously keeps them moist. Most sharks do have what are called nictitating membranes that they use to cover and protect their eyes when they strike their prey. Nictating membranes are fascinating; they're transparent (or at least translucent) to allow the animal to see when their eyes are covered. There are some species that don't have these (the Great White Shark for example), so instead, they roll their eyes into their head for protection during attack.
7. There are more chickens than people in the world. The chicken has been domesticated for over 8,000 years. Romans invented the omelet and the idea of stuffing chickens before cooking.
8. Two-thirds of the world's eggplant is grown in New Jersey—66% of the total grown.
9. All of the clocks in the movie Pulp Fiction are stuck on 4:20.
10. No word in the English language rhymes with wolf, month, orange, silver or purple.
11. "Dreamt" is the only English word that ends in the letters "mt."
12. Almonds are members of the same family as peaches and apricots.
13. Maine is the only state whose name is just one syllable.
14. There are only four words in the English language which end in "dous": tremendous, horrendous, stupendous, and hazardous. There's also the specialist zoological term *apodous*, which means 'without feet'.
15. Los Angeles is an abbreviation of the original full name: "El Pueblo de Nuestra Senora la Reina de los Angeles de Porciuncula." (In English, "Town of our lady the Queen of Angels of the River Porciúncula.") It can be abbreviated to 3.63% of its size, "L.A."
16. A cat has 32 muscles in each ear, compared to a human's 6 muscles in each. A cat can rotate its ears independently 180 degrees, and turn in the direction of sound 10 times faster than those of the best watchdog.
17. An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.
18. Tigers have striped skin, not just striped fur.
19. In most advertisements, including newspapers, the time displayed on a watch is 10:10.
20. Al Capone's business card said he was a used furniture dealer.
21. When the University of Nebraska Cornhuskers plays football at home, the stadium becomes the state's third largest city.
22. A dragonfly has a lifespan of 24 hours.
23. A goldfish has a memory span of three seconds.
24. A dime has 118 ridges around the edge.
25. On an American one-dollar bill, there is an owl in the upper left-hand corner of the "1" encased in the "shield" and a spider hidden in the front upper right-hand corner.
26. It's impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.
27. The giant squid has the largest eyes in the world.
28. Who was that playing the piano on the "Mad About You" theme? Paul Reiser himself.
29. The male gypsy moth can "smell" the virgin female gypsy moth from 1.8 miles away (pretty good trick).

30. In England, the Speaker of the House is not allowed to speak.
31. The name for Oz in the “Wizard of Oz” was thought up when the creator, Frank Baum, looked at his filing cabinet and saw A-N, and O-Z, hence “Oz.”
32. The microwave was invented after a researcher walked by a radar tube and a chocolate bar melted in his pocket.
33. Mr. Rogers was an ordained minister.
34. John Lennon’s first girlfriend was named Thelma Pickles.
35. The average person falls asleep in seven minutes.
36. There are 336 dimples on a regulation golf ball.
37. “Stewardesses” is the longest word that is typed with only the left hand.
38. The “pound” key on your keyboard (#) is called an octotroph.
39. The only domestic animal not mentioned in the Bible is the cat.
40. The “dot” over the letter “i” is called a tittle.
41. Table tennis balls have been known to travel off the paddle at speeds up to 160 km/hr.
42. Pepsi originally contained pepsin, thus the name.
43. The original story from “Tales of 1001 Arabian Nights” begins, “Aladdin was a little Chinese boy.”
44. Nutmeg is extremely poisonous if injected intravenously.
45. Honey is the only natural food that is made without destroying any kind of life. What about milk you say? A cow has to eat grass to produce milk and grasses are living plants.
46. The Hawaiian alphabet has only 12 letters: A, E, I, O, U, H, K, L, M, N, P, W
47. Honey is the only food that does not spoil.
48. And one single teaspoon of honey represents the life work of 12 bees.
49. Flamingos can eat only with their heads upside down.
50. It’s physically impossible for a pig to look up at the sky.
51. The first internet domain name to ever be registered is Symbolics.com on March 15, 1985.
52. At birth, a human has over 300 bones and cartilage elements. At adulthood, we have only 260 bones. Many bones that will eventually fuse together are still separate at birth, although joined by tough membranes.
53. It is impossible to tickle yourself.
54. A typical pencil can draw a line that is 35 miles long.
55. Astronauts get taller in space due to the lack of gravity.
56. The total surface area of human lungs is 750 square feet. That’s roughly the same area as one side of a tennis court.
57. Mosquitos have contributed to more deaths than any animals on earth.
58. An octopus has 3 hearts, 9 brains and blue blood.
59. The hair on a polar bear is actually not white but clear. They appear white because they reflect light.
60. A chameleon can move its eyes in two different directions at the same time.
61. Buttermilk does not contain any butter and is actually low in fat.
62. A giraffe can go longer without water than a camel can.
63. Australia has the biggest camel population in the world.
64. Snails can sleep up to 3 years.
65. Methane gases produced by cow products creates as much pollution as cars.
66. The majority of the dust in your house is made up from your own dead skin.
67. Most lipstick contains fish scales. This “pearlescence” is primarily sourced from herring and can be found in many lipsticks, nail polishes and other cosmetic products due to the shimmer effect it creates.
68. The Philippine island of Luzon contains a lake that contains an island that contains a lake that contains another island.
69. The Hudson Bay Area in Canada has less gravity than rest of the world and scientists are still trying to know why.
70. Less than two percent of the entire world’s population are natural redheads. Scotland boasts the highest percentage of natural redheads, with 13% (40% might carry the gene there) while Ireland comes in second with 10%.
71. There are 7 different kinds of twins: Identical, Fraternal, Half-Identical, Mirror Image Twins, Mixed Chromosome Twins, Superfecundation and Superfetation.
72. Before the 17th century, carrots were actually purple but there were some offshoots — yellow and white ones appeared in the wild. Over time, 17th century Dutch carrot growers managed to cultivate these yellow and white ones carrots into the orange ones we are familiar with today.
73. Scorpions can hold their breath underwater for up to 6 days and go for a year without food. This makes them immune to some insecticides.
74. In zero gravity, a candle’s flame is round.
75. Only 8 percent of the world’s money exists in physical form, the rest is in electronic bank accounts around the world.
76. Crows are able to recognize human faces and even hold grudges against ones that they don’t like.
77. Your cellphone carries up to ten times more bacteria than a toilet seat.
78. Humans and bananas share about 50 percent of the same DNA.
79. Humans have fewer chromosomes (46) than a potato (48).
80. An American Pharmacist named John Pemberton invented Coca-Cola and advertised it as a nerve tonic for curing headaches and fatigue. Pemberton’s recipe contained cocaine—in the form of an extract of the coca leaf, which inspired the “Coca” part of the beverage’s name. The “Cola” in the name came from the kola nut, which contains caffeine, another stimulant. At the time of Coca-Cola’s invention, cocaine was legal and a common ingredient in medicines. It was thought not to be harmful in small doses.
81. Statistically, you are more likely to die on the way to buying a lottery ticket than you are to winning the lottery itself.
82. Hot water turns to ice faster than cool water. This is known as the Mpemba effect.
83. Apollo 7 Mission had the first “astronaut ice cream” to fly in space. However, it was so unpopular among astronauts it was retired from the menu after that one trip.
84. The Apple Macintosh had the signatures of its design team engraved inside its case.
85. Japan has the most vending machines per capita, a staggering 1:23.

PENNINGTON COUNTY MASTER GARDENERS
PRESENT:

“Gardening & Beyond” Gardening Workshop Saturday, February 23, 2019

Evangelical Free Church
211 Arnold Ave N
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
9 a.m. Registration
9:30 a.m.—3:15 p.m.
\$25.00 (includes lunch)

Optional: plus \$20 for hands on floral arrangement activity.

Pre-registration required by Feb. 15, 2019

*To request additional information or brochure: Contact
Lindsay Foy: Lindsay.r.foy@gmail.com or message the
uofmnextensionpenningtoncountymastergardeners
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Workshop Topics:

“Improving Existing Home Landscapes”; “Growing Raspberries and Honeyberries”;
“The Great Tomato Race” & “Make your Own Floral Arrangements”



Speakers

Don Kinzler

Garden Columnist with Fargo Communications, hosts WDAY’s Lawn and Garden Radio, and maintains the Growing Together Blog

Allie Enge

Owner and florist of “The Shed” in Thief River Falls.

The Back Page

THINGS TO PONDER

1. If the No. 2 pencil is the most popular, why is it still No. 2?
2. Why do we press harder on the remote control when we know the batteries are getting weak?
3. Why are you “in” a movie, but “on” TV?
4. What was the best thing BEFORE sliced bread?
5. Why do we drive on parkways and park on driveways?
6. How can a “slim chance” and a “fat chance” be the same, while a “wise man” and a “wise guy” are opposites?
7. Why do British people never sound British when they sing?
8. At a movie theater, which armrest is yours?
9. When does it stop being partly cloudy and start being partly sunny?
10. When French people swear, do they say, “Pardon my English?”
11. Why do people say “heads up” when you should duck?
12. Sweet meats are candy, but sweetbreads, which aren’t sweet, are meat.
13. Quicksand works slowly.
14. Boxing rings are square.
15. Why is it that a writer writes, but fingers don’t fing, grocers don’t groce, humdingers don’t hum, and hammers don’t ham?
16. If you can make amends, can you just make one amend?
17. If you have a bunch of odds and ends and you get rid of all but just one, what do you call it?
18. Why do you recite at a play, but you play at a recital?
19. Why do we ship by truck, but send cargo by ship?
20. Why do feet smell and noses run?
21. Why is “quite a few” the same as “quite a lot?”
22. Why does a building burn up as it burns down?
23. Why do you fill out a form by filling it in?
24. Why does your alarm go off by going on?
25. Why is it that when the stars are out they are visible, but when lights are out they are invisible?
26. Why is it called a hamburger when it’s made out of beef?
27. Why does sour cream have an expiration date?
28. If “con” is the opposite of “pro” then what is the opposite of “progress”?
29. Why is lemon juice mostly artificial ingredients, but dishwashing liquid contains real lemons?
30. How much deeper would the ocean be if sponges didn’t grow in it?
31. Why do we wait until a pig is dead to “cure” it?
32. Do Roman paramedics refer to IV’s as “4’s”?
33. Why do we put suits in a garment bag and put garments in a suitcase?
34. Whose cruel idea was it for the word “lisp” to have an “S” in it?
35. Why don’t sheep shrink when it rains?
36. Should vegetarians eat animal crackers?
37. If you drove your car at the speed of light and you turned your headlights on, would they work?
38. What happens if you get scared half to death twice?
39. What do you call a defective Milk Dud?
40. If it’s zero degrees outside today and it’s supposed to be twice as cold tomorrow, how cold is it going to be?
41. Why are they called apartments, when they’re all stuck together?
42. Why doesn’t Tarzan have a beard?
43. What is the speed of dark?