

Sign Post

**January –
February, 2024**

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Sign Post is online at
www.iowaeastdeaf.org.
It is the newsletter for:

Word of God Lutheran
Church for the Deaf
1515 29th St. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

Rev. Tim Eckert
DeafLutheran@q.com
Home: 563-424-7141 VP
or 563-359-7105 V/TTY

Then God said, “Let there be light!” So there was light. God saw the light was good. So God separated the light from the darkness. God named the light day, and the darkness he named night. There was evening, then morning—the first day. Genesis 1:3-5

This past week, I was thinking about what topics to write about in the newsletters this year. We send out six newsletters every year. What are there six of in the Bible? Six days of creation! This year each newsletter will look at one day of creation, what God did on that day, and what it means for us.

On the first day of creation, God created light and He separated the light from the darkness. When you look at other days, it looks like God did a lot more on the other days. For example, on Day 4, God created the sun, moon, and all the stars in the entire universe. On Day 1, He only made light. That might seem like He didn’t do much that day. Not true! His work on Day 1 was very important.

There are two things we should notice. First, how did God create? He spoke. His word is powerful. Also, He started with nothing. When we create something, we have to start with something and we have to use our hands to do it. For example, if you want to make a cake, you have to get a cake mix and all the other ingredients. You put them all together, mix them, put them in a pan, and bake them. You can’t just say, “Let there be cake” and a cake suddenly appears. God creates something new where nothing existed before, and His Word has power to create. That shows us that God is awesome and powerful.

The second thing we should notice is how important light is. In the Bible, light isn’t just light. When we think of light, we think of the sun coming up or flipping a switch to turn on a light. The Bible uses “light” to mean God or everything good that comes from God. Look at these verses as examples.

- Psalm 27:1 The Lord is my light and my salvation.
- Psalm 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- Matthew 5:14,16 You are the light of the world...Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.
- John 1:4-5 In Him (Jesus) was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.
- John 8:12 Again Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Continued on p. 2

Day 1 – Light (continued from p. 1)

You can see from those verses that light means life and everything good that comes from God. Darkness means sin and death and everything bad. When God made light on Day 1, He made the light that lets us see everything. But that light also reminds us that God creates everything good. If we want good things, we can only go to God for them. No one else can give us truly good things.

God also separates the good from the bad. When God created light, He separated the light from the darkness. Light and darkness are not the same. In the world today, sometimes people try to say there is no good or bad. There is only your opinion and my opinion. You do what you want and I will do what I want. But the Bible doesn't talk that way. God doesn't say good and bad don't matter, or good and bad are the same. He says they are different and He separates them. That shows us that God judges. One day Jesus will come again and He will separate the good from the bad when He brings His holy people to live with Him forever and sends unbelievers to hell.

How can we be ready for that day? 1 Peter 2:9-10 reminds us, "You are chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, people who belong to God. You were chosen to tell about the excellent qualities of God, who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not God's people, but now you are. Once you were not shown mercy, but now you have been shown mercy."

God showed mercy to you in Jesus! He forgave your sins and brought you into His light and life. When you go outside on a beautiful, bright sunny day, think about God creating light on the first day. But more important, thank God that He gives you life in Jesus and you can look forward to living in God's eternal light in heaven forever.

Pastor Eckert

Prayers

Please remember these people in your prayers:

- ✦ On Epiphany (Jan. 6), we remember the wise men visiting Jesus. God used a star to lead them to Jesus. Thank God that He also leads us to Jesus, the light of the world, and that He gives us faith in Him.
- ✦ We continue to see the sad news about war, shootings, troubles in government, etc. These are all signs that we live in a dark sinful world. These things will not end until the world ends. Ask God to use these problems to make people "wake up" and realize we can't solve all the world's problems. Everyone must trust in Jesus to save us from this place of sin and death.
- ✦ Jesus said **you** are the light of the world (Matt. 5:14). You are light because you shine Jesus' light. Pray for all of God's people, especially in our deaf churches, to shine God's light in everything we do and say.
- ✦ Ask God to bless people with health: Mollie Schmitz, Doris Harris, Shirley Green, Susan Green, Barbara Zimmerman, Norma Jean Mangrich, Kent Kischer, Lisa Oelberg, Janet Weber, James Weber, Curtis Bethurum, Kathy Anderson, Gerald Mitchell, Arlene Ritze, Ricky Moore, Paula Slavin, Nancy Griffin, Jeanette Kern, and many family members and friends.
- ✦ Pray for people who are studying to serve God and His church: Vince Mroz, Dan Wallis, new student John Szupica, and Pastor Luvisha in Kenya (as pastors), Nola Gray, and Peggy Gott (as deaconesses).
- ✦ All shut-ins to keep strong faith in Christ Jesus.

Dive Into God's Word

Epiphany

Have you heard of the 12 Days of Christmas? Do you know where that comes from? In church, the Christmas season is 12 days long, from Dec. 25 to Jan. 5. For those 12 days, we celebrate Jesus' birth, the fact that God's Son became fully human to live with us and save us. January 6 is the beginning of a new part of the church year, Epiphany. This study is about what we celebrate on January 6. *Answers are on page 4.*

1. After Jesus was born, who came looking for Him? Matthew 2:1-2
2. Who were these wise men?
 - a. Were they from Judah, or were they from another place?
 - b. Does that mean they were Jews or non-Jews? Matthew 2:1
3. What were the wise men saying about Jesus? (Note: They didn't know His name was Jesus. They just talked about the one who had been born.) Matthew 2:2
4. The wise men said they came to find Jesus to do what? Matthew 2:2
5. King Herod was a very jealous man. He was king and he didn't want anyone else to be king. So he called the chief priests and law teachers together and asked them where the Christ would be born. What was their answer? The Bible said the Savior would be born where? Matthew 2:3-6
6. Herod wanted the wise men to tell him where they found the new King.
 - a. What did Herod tell the wise men he wanted to do? Matthew 2:7-8
 - b. What was Herod's real reason he wanted to know where Jesus was? Matthew 2:16
7. What led the wise men to Jesus? Matthew 2:9-10
8. What did the wise men do when they saw Jesus? What gifts did they give Him? Matthew 2:11
9. Did the wise men go back to tell Herod where Jesus was? Matthew 2:12
10. God sent an angel to Joseph to give him what message? What did Joseph do? Matthew 2:13-14
11. How long did they stay in Egypt? Matthew 2:15
12. When the wise men didn't come back to Herod, what did he do? Matthew 2:16-18
13. What lessons do we learn from the story of the wise men?

Answers to Dive Into God's Word, p. 3.

1. Wise men came looking for Jesus.
2. Who were the wise men? The Greek word for them is "magi." Probably that meant they were men who studied the stars and used the stars and other knowledge to advise kings and rulers. They were important leaders because they were trusted advisers.
 - a. They came from the East. They were not from Judah. The "East" could mean that they came from Babylon or Persia (modern day Iraq and Iran).
 - b. They were not Jews. But they still knew that God was sending a Savior who would be born a Jew! They probably knew about the Savior because the Jews lived as captives in Babylon and Persia for a while in the Old Testament.
3. The wise men were looking for the one who was "born King of the Jews." They didn't know His name was Jesus. But they knew the star meant that a new King was born for the Jews. It is interesting that the Jewish people didn't know about Jesus' birth, but these men from another country knew!
4. The wise men came to worship Jesus.
5. The chief priests and law teachers read from the prophet Micah. Micah 5:2 says a ruler for the Jews will be born in Bethlehem. They understood that this meant the Savior will be born there.
6. After the wise men found Jesus, Herod wanted them to tell him where Jesus was.
 - a. Herod said he wanted to go and worship this new king. That was not true.
 - b. Herod wanted to kill Jesus. Again, Herod was very jealous. We know from history that Herod even killed his own sons when he thought they wanted to be king.
7. The star led them to the house where Jesus lived.
8. When they saw Jesus, they bowed down and worshiped Him. They gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold was a gift that is right for a king. Frankincense was an incense that people were supposed to only burn for God. Giving this to Jesus was honoring Him as God. Myrrh is a very strong perfume that people used on dead bodies when they were buried. That is a strange gift to give a toddler. But it is a right gift, because it showed that Jesus came to die for us.
9. No, the wise men didn't see Herod again. God warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they went back home a different way and they didn't go back to Jerusalem.
10. King Herod wanted to kill Jesus. God knew that and sent an angel to warn Joseph to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt. Herod didn't rule Egypt, and there were other Jews who lived in Egypt. Joseph, Mary and Jesus would be safe there. So Joseph quickly got Mary and Jesus, that same night, and they ran away to Egypt.
11. They stayed in Egypt until King Herod died, which was probably only about a year or so later.
12. King Herod was angry that the wise men didn't come back to him. So he sent soldiers to kill every baby boy in Bethlehem and the surrounding area. He said to kill all the boys up to 2 years old. The wise men told him when they first saw the star, so Herod used that to figure out about how old Jesus was. This was a very sad time because of Herod's hatred and wicked murder.
13. There are several lessons we can learn from this story.
 - a. First, Jesus came to save all people, both Jews and non-Jews. Jesus was named "King of the Jews." But the wise men were not Jews and they still came to worship Him. The same, Jesus is also our King and Savior, even if we are not Jews.
 - b. Everything about Jesus' birth and life was what the Old Testament said would happen. He was born in Bethlehem, the same as the prophet Micah said would happen. Isaiah said the nations will come, just as the wise men came. (See Isaiah 60:3-6, 62:1-2.) Hosea 11:1 said that God would call His Son out of Egypt.
 - c. Even if other people hate Jesus, we can still be brave to worship and honor Him, the same as the wise men.

January 2024

	1	2	3 7:00 WL – Worship	4	5	6 10:00 QC – Worship
7 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	8	9	10	11	12	13 10:00 QC – Worship 1:00 DU – Bible Study
14 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	15	16	17 7:00 WL – Study	18	19	20 10:00 QC – Worship
21 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	22	23	24	25	26	27 10:00 QC – Worship
28 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	29	30	31			

BR – Burlington. Concordia Lutheran Church, 2901 Cliff Rd., Burlington. 4th Sunday worship at 3:00 p.m.
 CR – Cedar Rapids. Word of God Lutheran Church Deaf, 1515 - 29th St. NE, Cedar Rapids. Every Sunday, Bible Study at 10:00 a.m., Worship at 11:00 a.m.
 QC – Quad Cities. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1705 E. Locust St., Davenport. Every Saturday, Worship at 10:00 a.m.
 WL – Waterloo/Cedar Falls. Immanuel Lutheran Church, 4820 Oster Parkway, Cedar Falls. 1st Wednesday worship at 7:00 p.m., 3rd Wednesday study at 7:00 p.m.
 DU – Dubuque. Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 2145 John F. Kennedy Rd., Dubuque. 2nd Saturday Study at 1:00 p.m.

February 2024

				1	2	3 10:00 QC – Worship
4 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	5	6	7 7:00 WL – Worship	8	9	10 10:00 QC – Worship 1:00 DU – Bible Study
11 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	12	13	14	15	16	17 10:00 QC – Worship
18 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	19	20	21 7:00 WL – Study	22	23	24 10:00 QC – Worship
25 * See below for worship and Bible study times.	26	27	28	29		

BR – Burlington. Concordia Lutheran Church, 2901 Cliff Rd., Burlington. 4th Sunday worship at 3:00 p.m.
 CR – Cedar Rapids. Word of God Lutheran Church Deaf, 1515 - 29th St. NE, Cedar Rapids. Every Sunday, Bible Study at 10:00 a.m., Worship at 11:00 a.m.
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The Light of Heaven

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The beginning of the Bible says God created light. The end of the Bible talks about how God is light. Revelation 21 describes heaven. We may not understand the description very well because it will be so different from earth now and so much better. One thing that Rev. 21 says will be different is that God will always be our light there, and there will never be any darkness or night. That also means there will be no sin, no death, no sadness or trouble of any kind. We will live with God in eternal joy. We can truly look forward to that! The reading is from Revelation 21:22-27. Find the underlined words.

L M S S H I N E H R M I S R G
 B E S E M A N L T P N T U D R
 E M O F T S L O T H G I N P R
 C I A I E A S H L G F W L K A
 G A O L M I G E S A S E O G N
 O N U F P I N E I E M A P G N
 S R O O L P I R O G W D U R E
 F G L K E M K Y O L S W O M K
 G O L O H A D P L E H W L G N
 P A P O T L O E P E I R S N P
 W L N B R G H O K S L S L T N
 E O K O O Y T I C C I N K F R
 R R W P O O G M M I T K T F L
 U I O N E M O G U Y O A A B B
 P P G K E K O E N G T W E I A

I didn't see a temple in the city. That's because the Lamb and the Lord God who rules over all are its temple. The city does not need the sun or moon to shine on it. God's glory is its light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by the light of the city. The kings of the world will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut, because there will be no night there. The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it. Only what is pure will enter the city. No one who causes people to believe lies will enter it. No one who does shameful things will enter it either. Only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will enter the city.

January

- 3 Dalton Anderson
- 14 Janelle Legg
Susan Sacco
- 15 Diane Yotter
- 30 Rosie Glime

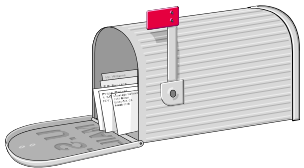


February

- 3 Neita Dommer
Gerald Mitchell
- 5 Evelyn Powell
- 8 Brady Olsen
- 12 Curtis Bethurum
- 14 Roselyn Schultz
- 19 Lorne Schultz
Sarah Eckert
- 29 Melody Eiben

Word of God Lutheran Church
for the Deaf
1515 29th St. NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

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