

JOY MISSION CHURCH Newsletter

Joy on mission...the hands and feet of God!

Thank you, Joy Mission! Along with our sponsorship of Melius Renika, we were able to donate 163 pairs of boxer shorts for our December Ministry of the Month. WAY TO GO!



January Ministry of the Month: Congo Mission International

We are once again this year supporting Pastor Stephane Kalonji, an NALC pastor in Texas and missionary to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). He and Pastor David Nuottila (pastor of St. Jacob's, Chapin) will return to DRC this summer to teach theology students, feed orphans, and free babies from hospitals.

Our donation from Joy will be used specifically to free the babies. Most women in DRC give birth at home. For those who must seek medical care for themselves or their babies, hospitals provide the help they need. But these same hospitals then hold newborn babies until their mothers can pay their bills - sometimes for months or even years. We will help get these babies home with their families. Thank you for your generous support of this ministry to set the captives free and share the good news of Jesus Christ in the Congo!

We are NOT the mission. Our mission is the Great Commission:

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)

This is why we exist- to: **Love God. Love neighbor. Serve with joy in Jesus' name.**

JOY MISSION CHURCH

We love God, love neighbor, and serve with joy in Jesus' name through worship, fellowship, and discipleship.

PASTOR'S CORNER

Happy Epiphany!

*The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it. (John 1:5)*

Merriam-Webster online dictionary defines the word *epiphany* as, "a moment in which you suddenly see or understand something in a new or very clear way." In the Church, Epiphany is a whole season (one of six seasons) marked by Scriptural revelations about Jesus. Each of these revelations shine light on Jesus' identity as the Son of God and Savior of the world.

Epiphany begins 13 days after Christmas, with commemoration of the wisemen's visit to young Jesus. Led by the light of His star, they brought Him precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. We often think of this event as part of the Christmas Season, but really, it is the beginning of Epiphany.

The Season ends with a commemoration of The Transfiguration of our Lord. Through this event, God revealed fully His divine glory in the person of Jesus Christ. On a remote mountaintop, Jesus was transfigured, or changed in appearance, as three of His disciples watched in awe and wonder.

All the Sundays of Epiphany feature some sign from Scripture that points to or reveals in some way the divinity, power, and glory of our Lord Jesus. Each week, we pierce through another layer of mental fog as who Christ truly is, becomes clearer and clearer...

and hopefully, **who we are in Christ**, becomes clearer as well.

Just as Jesus was declared the beloved Son of God at His Baptism in the River Jordan, so too, the Father lays claim upon each of us in the waters of Baptism. God forgives us, adopts us, and names us as His own beloved sons and daughters. Our old self is drowned, and we are raised to new life in Christ. It's an "aha" moment like no other, the beginning of life in faith and of our journey to the cross.

All along the way - worshipping among God's faithful people, hearing His Word and sharing His Supper, proclaiming the gospel in word and deed, serving all people in Jesus' name, and striving for justice and peace in all the earth - **we discover our true identity** and become the people God created and calls us to be. The light of **Christ shines on us, in us, and through us to give His light to all the world.**

This is our epiphany.

This is our mission. This is the Church.

Let us pray: Lord Jesus, thank you for shining your light into our lives. Help us to be faithful to you and live in your light that others may see you and know your love. We ask this to your glory and in your holy name. Amen.

In the light and love of Christ,
Pastor Paulette



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