

Sermon 2010 Epiphany
Text: Ephesians 3:1-12
Theme: "Growing in Christ"

The day of Epiphany is the day the wise men came from the East and we all know that story don't we. They were the first Gentiles to worship Jesus and they brought gifts that represented his three fold office as Prophet, Priest and King. Yada, yada, yada and then we drift off to sleep in the pew humming "Little Drummer Boy" to ourselves. Rumpa pa pum, rumpa pa paum, rumpa pa pum.

That's the day of Epiphany but the SEASON of Epiphany is oh so much more. Listen to St. Paul.

Ephes. 3:1-6

For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— ²assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

"...assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you,..." Epiphany started when the wise men came but it continues even today. Our mission statement here at Trinity is what? "Always Growing in Christ."

Say it with me again, "Always Growing in Christ." There never comes a day when we are through growing in Christ – certainly not prior to our reception into heaven and I suspect even then we will continue to grow.

As we see more and more of Christ, we grow more and more in faith. We don't like to admit it but we are not born Christians. We are born enemies of God and ignorant of his grace. Christ enters us through Word and Sacrament and claims us as his own. At the moment he claims us the stewardship of his grace begins to flow into us. Through Word and Sacrament, our faith that he creates grows and we take a firmer and firmer grasp of salvation.

The day of Epiphany is white because it honors the purity of Christ but the season of Epiphany is green like the season of Pentecost because it is focused on the growth of our faith as we grow closer to Christ.

We are never stagnant. At every moment of our lives we are either growing closer to Christ or pulling away from him. There is no middle ground. There is no neutral with Christ. That

is why it is our hope, mission and calling to help everyone in our community to be growing in Christ.

That is why the historic liturgy is so important – because it delivers God’s Word and Sacrament so efficiently to people so that they can grow. That is why we have a ministry to youth, to pre-schoolers, to Seniors and to families because through that ministry we deliver Word and Sacrament or we create the relationships where it can be delivered. That is why we have a sign out front and a visitors’ center in the back. Our whole focus here is to find ways to help people nourish their faith in Christ and grow.

So, remember that we are not a club with an exclusive membership. Nor are we the holy and pious who have risen above. We are a cafeteria of Word and Sacrament whose whole point of being is to make our Lord manifest to the world around us and at the same time continually strengthen our own hold on him. AMEN.