



# The Messenger

Monthly Newsletter of Grove Park Baptist Church | January 2022

## *THE GATE OF THE YEAR*

*'God Knows'*

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:  
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".*

*And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and  
put your hand into the Hand of God.  
That shall be to you better than light  
and safer than a known way".*

*So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God,  
trod gladly into the night.*

*And He led me towards the hills and  
the breaking of day in the lone East.*

*By: Minnie Louise Haskins*

## Thoughts From The Journey:

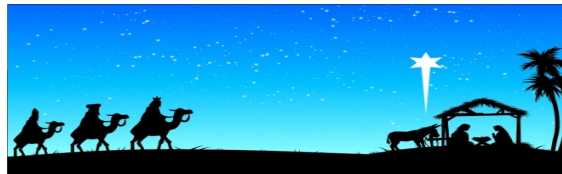
It seems hard to comprehend, but they had travelled a day's distance from Jerusalem and had settled down for the night when they realized he wasn't with them. I thought he was with your cousins said one. I thought he was with the neighborhood boys said the other. So began the frantic search for the adolescent Jesus. Just for a moment let us see this through a set of lens larger than parents overwrought with worry about a missing son. They have not simply lost a child, they have lost the Messiah, the long awaited King of Israel. A couple of things strike me as amazing in this narrative.

First, Luke tells us that these parents left Jerusalem "assuming that he was in the group of travelers." They did not check for Jesus' presence before their journey, they simply assumed His presence with their party. If Mary and Joseph so easily made such assumptions, how often do we fall guilty of the same assumptions? Far too often it seems in the Church today we have made assumptions about the fact that Jesus is with us on some matter when we have travelled far from Him. It is incumbent upon us as we launch into a new year that we take stock of whether Jesus is travelling with us or are we just making assumptions.

Secondly, I'm struck by the fact that it takes them three days to find Jesus. Where else would the Son of God be, but at the one spot where He could experience some renewed if incomplete restoration of the presence He had enjoyed for all eternity. Why would they think to look at their lodgings or the marketplace and not the Temple? Why waste so much time in all the wrong places? Again, we are presented with the a similar question. Why do we spend so much time looking for Jesus in all the places He likely won't be found? If Jesus shows through His life a propensity to be around the forgotten and the disinherited, the unloved and the unwanted, the ones others describe as unrighteous and ungodly, then shouldn't we look for Him there as well? Some might say it's impossible to find Jesus there. However, if in the midst of the world's imposed darkness we might shine Christ's light on those who have been relegated there, do we not think we will experience His presence in the same way those in His day did when He did the same?

I believe if we do these two simple things as the year begins, we too will experience something similar to what Luke tells us Jesus experienced upon his return to Nazareth. We too will grow in wisdom, which is important, but more importantly we will grow in favor with God and man. In other words, we will experience more and more of God's grace as He opens doors with our friends and neighbors for us to share about that wondrous grace. By doing this, we too will join Jesus being about the Father's business.

Grace Abounds,  
Marc



## Celebrating Epiphany

January 6 marks the conclusion of the liturgical observance of Christmas as we commemorate the arrival of the Magi in Bethlehem. It also marks the start of the season of Epiphany. Epiphany is from the Greek for "to bring to light." Accordingly, as we observe Epiphany this year we will seek to observe the life and work of the Trinity and the Church in new ways each Sunday. By looking afresh at these instances, our goal is to seek to reflect God's glory to more and more so that others are brought to the light themselves.

Pastor Marc's next Bible study, beginning in January, will be on the Books of 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians.

We will advise of the exact dates at a later time and send out the Zoom link.

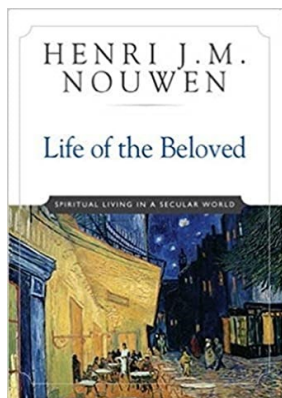
We hope you will join in as we learn more about the Word of God.



Our GPBC Book Club will be reading and discussing "Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World" by Henri J. M. Nouwen.

The book is available on Amazon and online thru Barnes & Noble.

We will be sending out a Zoom link in the near future.



The Women's Shelter is in need of 2022 calendars for their clients. This enables them to keep up with appointments, etc. If you have any that you will not be using, please drop them by the church office or leave on the table in the vestibule.



### New Fellowship Group

Are you a ROMEO? Our Romeo's are not of the Shakespearean variety as ROMEO for us means "Really Old Men Eating Out." We are launching a new fellowship group in 2022 for all our ROMEO's to gather, fellowship, and encourage one another. We will be providing more details in January. If you are interested in joining our ROMEO's please contact Bob Webster.

### (Our Known) January Birthdays

Cheryl Parrish	January 04
Janet Durham	January 06
Savannah Williamson Lambert	January 06
Owen Trull	January 07
Kim Wood	January 09
Linda Canada	January 13
Richard Shepherd	January 15
Debbie Hamlett	January 19
Irene Britton	January 20
Janice Byrd	January 21
John Evans	January 21
Matthew Evans	January 21
Larry Dodson	January 22
Norene Ray	January 22
Mike Byrd	January 23
Rosemary Faircloth	January 25
Tricia Medford	January 25
Altavista Pruitt	January 25



### MINISTERS ON CALL FOR MONTH OF JANUARY:

Dec. 30 thru Jan. 02	Deacon Jim Etheridge
Jan. 06 thru Jan. 09	Deacon Bob Webster
Jan. 13 thru Jan. 16	Deacon Joan Smith
Jan. 20 thru Jan. 23	Deacon Marian Brewer
Jan. 28 thru Jan. 31	Deacon Marc Sanders



**Grove Park**  
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**Office Hours:**  
Monday-Thursday  
8:30am - 3:30pm

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Instagram: groveparkchurch



**Upcoming Opportunities:**

January 03	Office Closed
January 04 at 11:30 am	Widow's Support Luncheon at Harbor Inn
January 09 at 6:00 pm	Deacon Fellowship
January 10 at 7:00 pm	Finance Committee
January 13 at 1:00 pm	SIA Team Meeting

