

The Brooke ~ January ~ 2018

King Herod the Great is probably one of the most infamous Roman-appointed “kings” thanks in part to the Gospel of Matthew. Matthew describes how the three wise men, or Magi, from the East consulted with King Herod upon their arrival. They were following the Star of Bethlehem which, to them, signified the birth of the greatest “king of the Jews.” It would have been natural to assume that King Herod may know of this birth. After all, maybe this baby was his son.

The Magi’s inquiry intensified King Herod’s paranoia since he acquired his rank by dubious means. He has been described as both a madman and an evil genius, willing to commit any crime (including murdering members of his own family), to retain his power and position. And so, after his advisors told him where the Messiah had been foretold to be born, King Herod told the Magi to go to Bethlehem and then come back to tell him all about their visit.

When King Herod realized that the Magi were not coming back, Matthew tells us that he ordered all the male children who were two years old and younger to be killed. The story of the slaughter of male infants in Bethlehem is not mentioned in any other historical sources, but it would have been totally in character for King Herod to commit such a terrible act. Some scholars theorize that, because Bethlehem was a small town, perhaps only 20 or so male babies were killed. This number of deaths would have been tragic to the families involved, but it would not have warranted a mention by any historical sources of that day, especially since King Herod had committed worse acts. One last thing to note: John the Baptist was about 6 months older than Jesus. He may have also been affected by this decree and so his parents may have hidden with him in the wilderness (whereas Jesus was hidden in Egypt), thus fulfilling Isaiah’s prophecy as being “the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord.’ ”

Pastor Nancy

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January Scripture and Sermons

- January 7** Epiphany (Communion Sunday)
Readings Isaiah 60:1-6 and Matthew 2:1-12
Scripture Focus In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem. ~ Matthew 2:1
Sermon "The Original Wise Guys"
 From the wise men to the chief priests and scribes, all the way up the chain to King Herod, everyone was wrong about Jesus. Jesus was never crowned the king of the Jews, and he never tried to govern Israel. In all the misinformation that was put out by the wise men and scribes and chief priests and completely believed by Herod, perhaps the only grain of truth was that Jesus was born in Bethlehem.
- January 14** Second Sunday after the Epiphany
Readings 1 Samuel 3:1-10 and John 1:43-51
Scripture Focus The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ~ John 1:43
Sermon "Come, Follow Me"
 This week and next the gospel reading offers stories about Jesus calling people to become his disciples. How the call comes, and how different persons respond is different for each. This week we hear how Jesus called Philip and Philip, in turn, called Nathanael to discipleship to Jesus. The invitation to us during these two weeks is to do likewise: hear the call of Jesus to become his disciples and invite others to join us in this journey.
- January 21** Third Sunday after the Epiphany
Readings Jonah 3:1-5, 10 and Mark 1:14-20
Scripture Focus As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea--for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." ~ Mark 1:16-17
Sermon "Fishers of Men"
 Jesus came to Galilee right after the arrest of John the Baptizer. Jesus did not "flee" from the trouble that had beset John. Instead, he located his ministry in one of the leading trading posts in the heart of Herod's territory, in Capernaum. Jesus was a man with some nerve! Being called as a disciple by this gutsy man proclaiming that message in Herod's territory was either the most exciting or the most terrifying prospect one could imagine. Perhaps there was some combination of both. But for these four men on that day by the sea near Capernaum, excitement won. And they began to follow Jesus.
- January 28** Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany
Readings Deuteronomy 18:15-20 and Mark 1:21-28
Scripture Focus Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. ~ Mark 1:23
Sermon "Who's In Control?"
 When the people saw Jesus casting out demons and healing diseases, they were amazed at His power. What we need to understand today is this: He still has the same power today! He can still handle all the disruptions of your life. Whatever has you in its grip today, is no match for Jesus.

Directory Update

John Sauer
5668 Strathmoor Drive
Rockford, IL 61107

Parable of Talents

For those who participated in this year's Parable of Talents Marketplace, proceeds may be returned to church office or placed (labeled) in offering plate.

Fellowship

Thank you to all who supplied goodies for fellowship in December. A couple of people were missed in the last newsletter – Vivian Schwab and Sharon O'Hara.

Offering Envelopes

In an effort to save money, we will not purchase offering envelopes for 2018. Instead we ask that you use the envelopes in the pews, or just place your check in the offering plate. We will provide each of you with your envelope number and ask that you note that on your check or write it on the pew envelope. You will also see your envelope number on your contribution statement. If you have any questions, please ask Sandy McCallum or Linda Johnson. If you prefer to direct deposit your offering into the church bank account, you may also do that. Just ask us, and we'll tell you how to do it! We really appreciate your understanding and your help.

Monthly Finance Update

The Finance Committee has provided the following Current Fund information:

November income: \$11,040.38 **November disbursements: \$11,306.49**

This information is always available by contacting Sandy McCallum (Treasurer).

Gift Wrapping Fundraiser

Thank you SO MUCH to all that helped make this such a successful fundraiser! In addition to our faithful wrappers from The Brooke, we were blessed to have the help of an additional 34 volunteers not presently connected to our congregation.

Although this is mainly a fundraiser (we collected \$13,962.90!) it always turns out to be so much more as many customers share their heart-felt stories with us.

Until next year....

Christian Education

There will be a Lenten study beginning Thursday, February 15 at 6:30 PM at the Church. Pastor Joe will be leading this one using the lectionary readings. If there is enough interest we will schedule a morning class as well as, or instead of, the evening class.

Living As a Covenant Community

by Evy McDonald, an ordained elder in the United Methodist Church, having served both rural and urban churches beginning

January 9 - February 13, 2018 10 AM in Adult Room Leader: Joella Warner Cost: \$10

Covenants are found in the Bible from the moment God created man and woman until the last page of Revelation. This study examines major covenants throughout the Bible and what they reveal about God's character and eternal love for us. It will enhance your understanding of how God works with us, in us, and through us. As you explore these covenants, you will discover that covenantal living calls us to acts of mercy and justice, not only with those in our community, but with all – regardless of their social, political, financial, or religious standing. Through covenantal living, we are connected to God, others, and the whole creation. As you grow to understand the divine covenants made by God with our ancestors, and thus with us, your faith and your lives will transform. Your responses to God's covenants will guide your lives towards greater compassion and openness. Living as a Covenant Community will engage you with our covenant God, for each other, and for your neighbor near and far! **You need to sign up now so books can be ordered!!**

United Methodist Women

About 19 women and one man enjoyed the December luncheon at Hoffman House. Thanks to all who came.

Our first meeting will be on January 9, 2018 at 1 PM at the church. The program focus is on the 150th Anniversary of UMW. From the UMW program book, we'll look at the lesson:

THE SACRED SPACE OF LEGACY/ INHERITANCE.

Joella will lead the lesson. Char Doyle is hostess.

Beginning January 7, UMW will have an area for donations to The Paper Angel Project that Brooke Road sponsors. Some items in the closet are at a slim supply, so help us resupply it. Items needed are: laundry soap, bleach, dish soap, women' & men's deodorant, feminine pads, tampons, tooth-brushes, and shampoo. Paper grocery bags are needed for distribution.

Diabetes Group

The Diabetes Group will meet on January 17, 2018 at 10:00am in the library. Will discuss goals for 2018. Join us for a great discussion.

January Birthdays & Anniversaries

11th

Wendy Adams

12th

Lorraine Cline

13th

Sandy McCallum

Chris Mills

16th

Shirley Walker

Robert Shaver

19th

Boots Baxter

Kaya Dobbs

21st

Hazel Dyke

27th

John Pippel

17th

Duane & Sue Myles

Our Military

Matt Cowan, Matt Crabtree, Scott Dickson,
Thomas Helser, Will Hoyum, Ian Long, Joshua Mattson,
Jonathan Modler, Jerry Nettles, Stacy Huser,
Christine Tornow, Tommy Turnure, Ryan & Kate (Vowles) Levack

Family and Friends

Chris Beebe
John Dyke
Mike McClanahan
Bob Poppen
Doug Skrinski
Laurece Thompson

Rick Bried
Ardene Friest
Dan O'Connell
John Sauer
Art Swanson
Shirley Walker

Dorothy Carpenter
Thomas Helser
Jackie Parod
Jack & Linda Schelin
Charlene Taylor
Phil & Vivian Schwab

Mary Danekas
Ian Long
John Pippel
Mary Scofield
Ronna Tewell
Diane Zwirblis

January

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
	<u>1</u> Office Closed (New Year's Day)	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u> 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>7</u> 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	<u>8</u> 5:30pm Christian Education	<u>9</u> 10:00am Living as a Covenant Community 1:00pm UMW 5:30pm Finance 6:00pm Trustees	<u>10</u> 6:00pm Celebration Choir 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u> 9:00am SPRC
<u>14</u> 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	<u>15</u> Office Closed (Martin Luther King, Jr Day)	<u>16</u> 10:00am Living as a Covenant Community 10:30am Paper Angel Closet 6:00pm Council	<u>17</u> 10:00am Diabetes Group 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>21</u> 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u> 10:00am Living as a Covenant Community	<u>24</u> 6:00pm Celebration Choir 7:00pm Sanctuary Choir	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>
<u>28</u> 9:00am Sunday School 10:00am Worship	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u> 10:00am Living as a Covenant Community	<u>31</u>			

**BROOKE ROAD
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

1404 BROOKE ROAD
ROCKFORD, IL 61109

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Office Hours

Monday 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Tuesday 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Wednesday 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Thursday 9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Friday **CLOSED**

Phone: 815-398-8914
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www.the-brooke.org

Our Mission at The Brooke Is.....

to transform lives
through faith, love, and service.

Our Vision for The Brooke is.....

to be a transforming congregation
of believers to serve the community,
renew lives, and build faith.

Sunday Morning Schedule

Sunday School ~ 9:00am

Worship ~ 10:00am
Nursery available for NB - 4 years

Fellowship ~ Following Worship
