



# the messenger

first methodist church splendora

*Worship Passionately, Love Extravagantly,  
and Witness Boldly*

January 2026

[firstmethodistchurchsplendora.org](http://firstmethodistchurchsplendora.org)

Rev. Steven G. Lightfoot, Pastor

## pastor's message



### We Are the Magi

Rev. Steven G. Lightfoot

Matthew 2:1–12 NRSV

*In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."*

*When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:*

*'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd my people Israel.'*

*Then Herod secretly called for the wise*

*men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."*

*When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.*

### We are the Wisemen

I have always been fascinated by the story of the Wisemen, the Three Kings, the Magi... tradition maintains that there were three, although that is not directly supported by scripture. The number three is logical considering the three gifts mentioned, gold, frankincense, and myrrh, so three fits the narrative nicely.

There is also no mention of them being royalty, really, although their gifts were certainly indicative of substantial wealth. Their one characteristic which is truly supported in scripture is that they were wise, learned men, with a knowledge of astronomy and navigation, and the ability to discern truth from deception.

Tradition also places the wisemen at the manger scene, worshipping the newborn Jesus and presenting their gifts alongside the shepherds and animals in the stable, but scripture supports that some time, perhaps a year or even two, had lapsed between the birth and the arrival of the wisemen.

I think the thing that fascinates me most about the story of the Magi is their willingness to investigate the sign that was given to them... their hunger for answers to the questions raised in their hearts and minds by the appearance of an unfamiliar star in the heavens. Their perseverance in traveling great distances, seeking the answers to questions rooted in a foreign belief system, in a set of writings that were counter to the culture they were familiar with, comfortable with. In other words, they had to be willing to look outside their comfort zone, think outside the box, go against the grain, live out on the edge in order to gain the knowledge and understanding they were seeking.

I wonder, how many of us today have that kind of hunger for the truth? How many of us living in the world today have the willingness and initiative to set out on a journey of discovery based simply on the signs that we have been provided - signs given in scripture, signs given in our own personal experiences with the prevenient grace and justifying grace and sanctifying grace of God. How many of us have a working knowledge of what those different types of grace are, and why they are important? How many of us living today are even curious about, let alone willing to discover what those terms mean?

How many of us are willing to take the initiative to understand the basic tenets of our faith? How many people in our culture today are willing to drive down the street to their local church, never mind travel a thousand miles by camel or donkey or horse, to spend some time learning all they possibly can learn about the God who created them and His Son who came to save them?

There is a church every few hundred yards in this community, and every one of

them has a bible study or two and all of them have more empty seats than they do occupied seats on any given Sunday and at any given bible study. If every person in this community that needed to know Jesus actually attended those studies and church services, we'd all need to build bigger churches. Sadly, that is not the current reality, is it?

The thing is, all of us were created to be the Magi. Our true nature is to hunger for a relationship with God. Our true nature is to seek Him out and to not be satisfied with unanswered questions. When we follow our true nature, then we are the Magi - on the hunt for the truth, looking for the revelation of Christ in our lives. We are looking for the epiphany - the understanding of who He is and who we are in relationship to Him. We are looking for epiphany - the light of understanding to penetrate the darkness of ignorance; the light of life to cut through the darkness of the shadow of death under which we have been existing. We are the Magi when we seek Christ! Go... Seek Him!



**NEW YEAR  
SAME GOD**

**January**

calendar of events

- 1<sup>st</sup>- New Year's Day
- 4<sup>th</sup>- Holy Communion and Sunday Worship Service 9AM\*
- 11<sup>th</sup>- Sunday Worship Service 9AM\*  
Sunday School 10:15AM

Board of Stewards' Meeting 12:45PM

**14<sup>th</sup>**- Dinner & Bible Study 5:45PM

**17<sup>th</sup>**- Food Pantry Day 9AM

**18<sup>th</sup>**- Sunday Worship Service 9AM\*

Sunday School 10:15AM

**21<sup>st</sup>**- Dinner & Bible Study 5:45PM

**25<sup>th</sup>**- Sunday Worship Service 9AM\*

**28<sup>th</sup>**- Dinner & Bible Study 5:45PM

\* *Worship In-Person or Online*



8 **Keegan Graves**

9 **McKenzy Keith**

10 **Debbie Horne**

13 **Dell Hart**

7 **Lonnie Johnson**

17 **Barbara Martin**

23 **Chloe Hendry**

26 **Kathy Johnson**

27 **Jacob Vasquez**

### prayer list



### January birthdays

5 **Chari Ricks**

Pastor Steven & Angela, and extended family members - Comfort & Peace  
Family of Joan Vaughan Molin - Comfort & Peace

Travel Mercies for all who will be traveling this holiday

Chantel Wilson - Cancer

Beaver Lovelady - Cancer/removal of kidney

Wally Lemaster - Chemo/Radiation

Bill Lemaster - Chemo/Radiation

Mikkie Lemaster - Peace

Ann Elliott - Healing

Sandie Hales - Caretaker

Barbara Martin - Healing

Van Ostrand Family

Keith Family

Blake & Smart Families

Sherrie Johnson & Family

Craig & Christie Hantelman

Melanie & Terry Bratton

Shirley & Bob Adams

Tracey & Joey Crouch

Anita Gaudreau

The Duke, Masterson & Shugart Families

Shirley Schumaker

Renee McMillian

Carolyn Tompkins

David Goodrum

Billy & Connie Gibson

Josh Wineman

Doyle McGee

Alton Moore

Robert & Mae Bible  
Bonnie Walker  
William Frazer of Servants Heart  
Technologies  
Charles & Mawana Jones  
Our Church  
Our Nation