

Greenbank Weekly Newsletter – Friday, December 11, 2020

Do you know someone in need? Contact the church office, and we will find a way to assist.
office@greenbankcoc.org or 302-994-3800. **Office hours: Wednesday Only, 9:00am-3:00pm**
Email and phone messages will be accessed remotely throughout the week.

Reflection: Bethlehem's Supernatural Star by John Piper (edited)

“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” (Matthew 2:2)

Over and over the Bible baffles our curiosity about just how certain things happened. How did this “star” get the magi from the east to Jerusalem?

It does not say that it led them or went before them on the way to Jerusalem. It only says they saw a star in the east (Matthew 2:2) and came to Jerusalem. And how did that star go before them in the little five-mile walk from Jerusalem to Bethlehem as Matthew 2:9 says it did? And how did a star “rest over the place where the child was”?

The answer is: We do not know. There are numerous efforts to explain it in terms of conjunctions of planets or comets or supernovas or miraculous lights. We just don't know. And I want to exhort you not to become preoccupied — not to become fixated — on theories that are only tentative in the end and have very little spiritual significance.

I risk a generalization to warn you: People who are exercised and preoccupied with such things, as how the star worked and how the Red Sea split and how the manna fell and how Jonah survived the fish and how the moon turns to blood, are generally people who have what I call a mentality for the marginal.

You do not see in them a deep cherishing of the great central things of the gospel: the holiness of God, the ugliness of sin, the helplessness of man, the death of Christ, the sanctifying work of the Spirit, the glory of Christ's return, and the final judgment. They always seem to be taking you down a sidetrack with some new article or book that they're all excited about dealing with something marginal. There is little rejoicing over the great, central realities.

But what is plain concerning this matter of the star is that it is doing something that it cannot do on its own: It is guiding magi to the Son of God to worship him.

There is only one Person in biblical thinking that can be behind that intentionality in the stars: God himself. So, the lesson is plain: God is guiding foreigners to Christ to worship him. And he is doing it by exerting global — probably even universal — influence and power to get it done.

Luke shows God influencing the entire Roman Empire so that the census comes at the exact time to get an insignificant virgin to Bethlehem to fulfill prophecy with her delivery. Matthew shows God influencing the stars in the sky to get a little handful of foreigners to Bethlehem so that they can worship the Son.

This is God's design. He did it then. He is still doing it now. His aim is that the nations — all the nations (Matthew 24:14) — worship his Son.

This is God's will for everybody in your office at work, and in your classroom, and in your neighborhood, and in your home. As John 4:23 says, “The Father is seeking such people to worship him.”

At the beginning of Matthew, we still have a “come-see” pattern. But at the end the pattern is “go-tell.” The magi came and saw. We are to go and tell.

But what is not different is the purpose and power of God in the ingathering of the nations to worship his Son. The magnifying of Christ in the white-hot worship of all nations is the reason the world exists.

Lifting in Prayer

Many of our members have lost loved ones recently. Please keep all grieving families lifted in prayer.

Those recovering from Covid-19: Bobbie & Dave Cross: Bobbie is still in the hospital; **Anna DaCunha; Gwen Byrd; Carolyn Pinder; Sedric Willis; Luis Reyes;** Ron Cox's sister **Karen Lester & her husband** – he is in the hospital due to other serious health problems; **Jeff Brannock** (Ron Cox's brother) **& family Sandy Brannock:** in the hospital with respiratory issues; she is Ron Cox's mother **Jamie Jones** recovering from back surgery; he is doing well
Greenbank church: Godly guidance for our elders & minster as they make decisions for our worship and budget for the coming year.

The most recent requests are listed above. If you have an item for prayer or praise, please email it to office@greenbankcoc.org for inclusion in our weekly list. To view previous prayer requests and those on our ongoing lists, please visit the Weekly Bulletins page on our website www.greenbankcoc.org.

Announcements

From the Elders

Dear Ones,

As shared with you several days ago, the elders met on Monday night to, among other things, discuss what we believe is the wisest, most appropriate way to conduct our congregational services in light of the strong uptick in the coronavirus and the risk that poses to us all.

After evaluation and prayer to the Father for guidance, here is what we have determined:

- For the remainder of December our worship will be led fully by Domingo via online streaming from his home, as it was last Sunday, to effect minimal physical contact. There will be no worship service at the building.
- We hope by early January we will feel okay with again moving back to online streaming from the building with Domingo being joined by other worship leaders (singing, prayer, communion, et al) but with no one else in the building. In other words, everyone else will be worshipping with us remotely.
- Depending upon the activity of the virus and hoped for help from the vaccination process, we will then move back to a mode of having 30 or more of us joining in the worship at the building (like we were doing before the most recent "spike.") in well-disciplined safety mode as soon as it is deemed to be safe. We pray that will be soon, but let's not prejudge that.
- Sometime thereafter--again, in paraphrase, "Lord make it quickly"-- we **will** re-achieve full, in person fellowship....and a glorious thing it will be.

In the meantime, we urge you to continue in full everyday worship to God from wherever you are....and, on Sunday via on-line streaming with the full Greenbank body of believers.

Participate in the Wednesday evening and other Bible studies. They will strengthen you.

Pray for an end to this pandemic. Pray for one another. Pray for the nation. And, yes, pray for all of the people of the world...for the whole of His creation.

Love Him and love one another.

As always, we bless you for your patience. We love you each and every.

In Him

Jim, Paul, Ed, Doug and Domingo

NEW! Youth Bible Study

Beginning on Tuesday, December 15 our youth (all ages) will be meeting via Zoom for an online Bible study from 6:00-7:00 p.m. We will utilize the same Zoom link as we do on Sundays. We will also be utilizing Microsoft Teams rooms to communicate with our youth (12-older). Parents of younger children will receive communication through email. Many of our youth families have already been contacted, but if we happened to miss you, please let us know by calling or emailing the church office.

Ladies & Young Ladies Classes

Our next class session will be Saturday, December 12 at 11:00 a.m. Ladies class will cover chapter 3 in our study book. If you have not yet signed up for these classes, information to do so is below under the Online Bible Studies heading.

Mozambique Missions

We are pleased to be able to send \$2400 to Chad & Amy Westerholm to support their continuing work, as well as \$600 for the refugee relief fund. Thank you for your donations.

Job Opportunity

Housekeeping help needed. Please call in the mornings between 8-10 a.m. 302-292-0884

Housing Need

A Christian sister is looking for a 1-2 bedroom apartment or house to rent. If you know of anything that is available, please contact the church office and we will put you in contact with her.

Worship with Us Online

Sunday Mornings 9:00 a.m. Spanish service 10:30 a.m. English service @ 10:30 a.m.

1) **Facebook Live:** <http://www.facebook.com/greenbankchurchofchrist>

2) **Greenbank website:** www.greenbankcoc.org Click on the Facebook Live tab on the menu bar at the top of the page. PLEASE NOTE: You do NOT need to have a Facebook account to view the live feed through our website.

3) **Conference call:** If you do not have internet access, you can dial in on your phone to connect.
(301) 715-8592 Enter Meeting ID 889 4601 8992

Online Bible Studies

Wednesdays @ 7PM: Facebook Live <http://www.facebook.com/greenbankchurchofchrist>

Ladies & Young Ladies Classes: 2nd Saturday of each month at 11:00 a.m. Online using the Zoom platform. Register for class here: : <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0845AFAE2EA6FB6-ladies>
The book for the ladies class is Honorable and Dishonorable Women of the Bible by Crystal Reyes. It is available on Amazon Kindle for \$2.99. (It will be \$0.99 for 30 days starting October 4th.) Purchase it here: https://www.amazon.com/s?k=honorable+and+dishonorable+women+in+the+bible&rh=n%3A154606011&ref=nb_sb_noss

Options for Giving

We appreciate those who have been able to maintain regular giving. Ways to contribute:

- 1) **Write a check** and mail to 511 Greenbank Road, Wilmington, DE 19808, or hold all checks until we begin meeting again.
- 2) **Cash givers** can set aside your contributions and bring them when we begin meeting again.
- 3) **Online giving:** A PayPal option has been set up on our website www.greenbankcoc.org. Click on the "Donate" button and follow the instructions. (Note: there is a small fee assessed from each donation.)

Last Week's Contribution: \$15,248 Weekly Average: \$4,432