



Dove of the Desert

Dove Tales

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January 2021

“Increasing Love for God and Neighbor by Going Deeper, Reaching Farther, Transforming Lives”

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

*Happy
New Year*





Pastor Dave

Well before telescopes and computers, people named the stars and charted their long journeys through the heavens. These starwatchers noticed patterns and consistency in the movements of the orbiting bodies above. We can imagine they felt the stars were part of a greater story, and that they believed stars had the power to influence events on earth.

Early books of the Bible testify to the power of stars in the life of ancient people. Job mentions three constellations: the Bear, Pleiades, and Orion. In Genesis, Abram goes out at night and hears a promise from God that he will have many children, as numerous as the stars. Stars are said to “Sing together” and “shout for joy” in the Book of Job, and Psalm 147 tells us God names all the stars and determines their number. Clearly, the stars held meaning for the ancient people of God.

When we enter into the church season of Epiphany, we recall the story of wise men coming from the east, following a star. It is not clear to a modern reader how they knew this rising star announced the birth of “the king of the Jews,” as the connection between the rising star and the birth of a king is shrouded in mystery. What is even more strange, perhaps, is how everyone in the story—especially Herod—just rolls with it, accepting the wise men’s account of the star and the birth of the king. In fact, King Herod takes the wise men’s report so seriously that he drops everything to search for and eliminate the baby.

There are dozens of theories on where the wise men originated and how they knew so much about stars; the Greek word used in Matthew’s gospel is magi, a group of learned scholars who advised kings by interpreting dreams and astrology. While much about the wise men is unclear, what is clear is that these men are not Judeans, but Gentiles. They are bearing witness to a cosmic event of astronomical proportions: the birth of a baby—though nobody seems to know exactly where he is.

We can imagine their shock when they discover that Herod is clueless about where this baby was located. Surely, King Herod would know if a king were born in his kingdom! It is in this detail that we can see how foreign these wise men are; they are seemingly naïve, unaware of the dangerous politics of Judea and unaware of how different this new king will be from other kings. They are simply seeking the king whom the star announced.

They follow the star until it stops over the place where Jesus was. It’s so simple. While it may seem mysterious and strange to us to follow a star this way, it is not strange for them. It is simply how they understand the world. It is simply how they found Jesus.

We must be open to the many ways people find Jesus, especially the ways that people different from us find Jesus. The Feast of the Epiphany commemorates the manifestation of Jesus to the peoples of the earth. Just as every human culture is unique and different, the ways in which different cultures find and understand Jesus will be different, too. We cannot predict or assume how the diverse cultures within our own communities will find Jesus. We must be open to all the ways the Spirit leads people to our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Today, we are a community of people from many different backgrounds and places, gathered in the presence of Jesus. This itself is a miracle. This means that there is hope for a better world. This means the good news that Jesus died and rose again is a story for everyone, no matter how far they have come to find him. So, rejoice today that the wise men followed the star and found Jesus. Rejoice today because we found him, too.

Happy New Year, friends!

Blessings,
Pastor Dave





Pastor Louie

Here we come once again to a New Year, 2021. Who knew when 2019 ended and we wished in a New Year, 2020, that it would be a year like no other we have lived through? When Joyce and I did our usual closing of the year standing in front of our television at 10:00 pm Arizona time holding up a glass of sparkling apple cider to toast in the New Year as the ball dropped in New York City we wished for and EXPECTED another good year in 2020. What all of this leads to is “What will your (or where your thoughts depending on when you read this) thoughts be about 2021?”

Will you still focus on the same things or have you changed your priorities? I can’t speak for you or anyone else, but I know that I will not take my loved ones for granted again or my friends. The saying “Absence makes the heart grow fonder” is certainly true since we haven’t been able to visit with or see our children or grandchildren. The things we liked doing such as taking a cruise or two or going out to lunch or dinner with friends hasn’t occurred for Joyce and Louie. But here is where priorities come in... Going on a cruise pales when it is compared to visiting with family or friends. Zoom, Facetime or Facebook Live wasn’t part of my life nor was missing an in-person Sunday morning worship service. But there was a CONSTANT which I have been reminded of over and over. That constant is God. God has been present with us no matter where we were and whether or not we saw Him or felt God’s presence depended on “where we were at.”

I have had many people tell me how depressed they have been because they have not been able to be with others or do anything they wanted to do. Well, I have a word for you and that word is “Attitude.” That is how you look at things, whether it be positive or negative. I try to be a person who is a “half full glass” person instead of a “half empty glass” kind of guy. What about you? Where will your thoughts be this New Year’s Eve and as we enter into the New Year. I do know that we’ve made it through the past 10 months and will move forward into 2021 but with new insight. May that new insight be that “You can do ALL Things Through Christ That Strengthens Me” (Philippians 4:13). Dear Ones, you have made it this far so just a bit more patience is required of you. The vaccine is coming, a New Year is here and what was past has passed. It’s time to move forward with a Positive Attitude, not a positive Covid-19 test. So, take care of yourself, not taking foolish chances. I know that we were all disappointed not being able to worship on Christmas Eve in person in our beautiful worship setting. But I remind you God was present in your home as you worshipped via your computer screen or television screen. Did you feel His presence? I hope you did because our “New Normal” depends on your Attitude toward it.

I, as you are looking forward to worshipping together in person, seeing and spending time with family and loved ones in persons again. It WILL HAPPEN, just a little more patience please. That will be my prayer and wish as Joyce and I stand in front of our television screen at 10:00p.m. on December 31st watching the ball drop in New York as we end 2020 and welcome in 2021. May it be a Blessed and Wonderful year for you and your family...

Shalom,
Louie





Finance

Finance Update - Your church continues to be blessed by your faithful giving!! Dove's year-to-date (YTD) financial picture through November is positive with income exceeding expenses by \$11,722.40. As reported in prior months, this is a much better than expected position when compared to our original budget plans for the year. We are extremely grateful for the generous support of our Dove faith community through your tithes and offerings. Your faithfulness allows Dove to continue important work in the life and mission of the church in a new and different way until the day comes when we can safely reopen. Thank you!



Permanent Endowment Fund

**For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.
Psalm 100:5**

Most of the time when we think about the future, we think about tomorrow, next week, maybe next year. Maybe sometime in our lives we created a five year plan. In the above verse we are given a different perspective, forever, all generations, a sense of eternity. We do very little with a sense of eternity. The Permanent Endowment Fund gives us the opportunity to allow our love for Dove of the Desert UMC and its future generations to endure forever.

The purpose of this article is to introduce Dove's new members to the Permanent Endowment Fund and share an update concerning the Permanent Endowment Fund with the rest of the congregation.

An endowment fund is an investment account most commonly established by tax-exempt organizations, such as educational institutions, cultural institutions and religious establishments to advance and secure the future mission of the organization. In contrast to an everyday donation made to our church, which fulfills an immediate and present day necessity, a contribution made to the endowment fund stays permanently intact within the fund. With each contribution made, over time, the fund continues to grow. As the fund increases, so do the earnings and interest of this account. It is the earnings from this account that will be used to further supplement our church's yearly income, allowing for increased ministry opportunities in our church.

Dove of the Desert UMC approved our committee's resolution to begin the Permanent Endowment Fund in October 2013. In February 2014, we opened our account with the Desert Southwest United Methodist Foundation with \$5,000. As of our October statement we now have a balance of over \$82,000. This balance has been achieved through the generosity of approximately twenty-five families and the earnings from these gifts.

Our mission statement: With a Permanent Endowment fund we send the optimistic message that our church will be here tomorrow to make new disciples. We will be here tomorrow to encourage those disciples to put their gifts to work. We will be here tomorrow to put God's love into action. We will be here tomorrow to do our part to heal a hurting world. Gifts to the Permanent Endowment Fund allow us to save for our future, leaving a legacy to our family, our friends, and our church. By providing a vehicle for planned giving a Permanent Endowment Fund helps our church fulfill its mission by providing regular income for use in ministry areas we deem most important. Gifts to this fund literally do keep on giving forever.

We give thanks again to all families who have generously given to the Permanent Endowment fund.

Preparing an estate plan is good Christian stewardship – saying thanks to God, expressing your love and concern for family, and showing charity toward others.

Think about the part you want to play in our Church's future.

The Dove of the Desert Permanent Endowment Fund would appreciate your consideration of a final bequest.

If you have any questions please contact Curtis Gipson at 623-396-8075 or cgipson308@gmail.com or you can contact Roger Peckham at 623-572-0608 or roger.peckham@cox.net. Thank you.



Fellowship Opportunities

We will let you know when Fellowship Opportunities Resume



The **LUNCH BUNCH** meets the 1st Thursday of each month for good food and fellowship. Please call: 623.931.4283 for reservations or information. Newcomers are always welcome! *(Currently not meeting.)*



DOVE MEN'S BREAKFAST meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month for a time of devotion, prayer, and fellowship. Please join them at **8:00 am** on Saturday, January 9 via Zoom!

Please R.S.V.P. to Louie Lyon, 623.238.8455 or e-mail CarePastor@doveofthedesert.com and he will send you the Zoom information you will need to join the event. Don't forget to have your coffee and breakfast ready along with your Bible!!



PRIME TIME LIVE!

is the Dove of the Desert adult fellowship group and includes all Dove adults: married, single, young and young at heart. We meet the 3rd Friday of each

month at a member's home and enjoy the evening together with food, fun and Christian fellowship. The host supplies a main course, attendees bring sides and dessert. *(Currently not meeting.)*



PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

meets the 2nd and 4th of each month from 9:00 - 10:00 am in Room 7. The group knits or crochets shawls, baby blankets,

lap blankets, prayer squares, and other items to be given to Dove members and others in need of comfort.

For information, please call *Mimi Griffiths* at 602.762.6709 or at mimig7852@gmail.com.

(Currently working on projects from home.)

OTHER FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Many other opportunities exist for fellowship at Dove, including Adult Sunday School classes, Tuesday Talks, Women's Bible Studies, and Dove's musical groups including Celebration Singers, Dove Notes, Folk Group, and the Bell Choirs, Prime Time Live! plus many more. Please check the calendar found on the Dove website.



Thank You

Dear Pastor Louie and everyone at Dove, Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all the prayers, concerns, cards, kindness, texts, phone calls and well wishes!!

Mackenzie is home and recovering. God truly heard your prayers and was beside her the whole time! God is Good!!!

Sincerely,

The Emersons

Mitch, Tara, Marcus and Mackenzie



Thank-you for the prayers, cards, care and concern for Ginger and me this past year. Ginger seems to be better, but still has some more tests to go. I have largely recovered from the stroke, but the cancer is currently winning. God is good in all situations, all of us have a limited timeframe. I wanted to express my appreciation to you, the church and the individuals within the church, for the ongoing support and care. Blessings to you in the new year.

Wayne and Ginger Worden



Special Prayers

Condolences to:

Mike & Debi Ports and Family on the death of Debi's mother, Kathryn Kietzman

Dave, Katie & Finn Wasson on the death of Katie's grandfather, Ray Tool

For these churches:

Staff of Desert Southwest Conference

Wesley & Golden Gates Community Centers

Justa Center, Phoenix



Prayer Line

For a daily prayer and devotion with Rev. Louie please dial **602-375-PRAY (602-375-7729)**

Please send all prayer requests to Rev. Louie at carePastor@doveofthedesert.com



Missions

Please deliver directly to the Mission
Donations for St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance
Pet Food & Supplies to Animal Shelters
Justa Center Donations
UMOM Donations



Care Ministry

Care Ministry Team Don & Velma Trotter, Co-Chairs

AED/CPR Training

Jean LaMore, Coordinator 928.237.0335

Baby Brigade & Casserole Brigade

Provide meals for Dove families

Baby: Carolyn Moody 602.663.0191

Casserole: Sharon Eshelman 623.566.2798

Blood Pressure Screening

Anita Burnett 623.581.2732 &

Lee Ann Harter 520.289.9744, Coordinators

Care/Prayer Notes

Notes in Narthex for Dove members/friends

Dave Smith, Coordinator 623.810.6518

Daily Congregational Prayer Chain

Rev. Louie Lyon, Coordinator 623.235.9908

Dove's Congregational Card Ministry

Cards to those with requests/joys

Jacque Kottmann, Coordinator 623.572.7271

Duet, Partners in Health and Aging

Dove is a faith partner with Duet –

trained volunteers assist homebound adults

602.274.5022, www.duetaz.org

Don & Velma Trotter, Liaisons 623.376.9506

Funeral Reception Team

Sue Couch, Coordinator 623.825.5916

Homebound Communion

Peter Mather, Coordinator 602.547.1909

Home Care Equipment for Loan

Wheelchairs, walkers, shower chairs, etc

Don Trotter, Coordinator 623.376.9506

Grief Support Groups:

“Life After Any Kind of Loss”

Rev. Louie Lyon, Coordinator 623.235.9908

“Passages from Grief to Hope”

Jacque Kottmann, Coordinator 623.572.7271

Pet Care Ministry

Pet items/cash donations for no-kill pet shelters

Jan Smith, Coordinator 623.910.3520

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Mimi Griffiths, Coordinator 602.762.6709

Transportation & Visitation

Don & Velma Trotter, Coordinators 623.376.9506

Youth Representative:

Kate Schwebke, Coordinator 602.321.3958

Available resources:

Alzheimer's

Anita Burnett, Coordinator 623.581.2732

Cancer Care Ministry

Don Trotter, Coordinator 623.376.9506

Pre-Diabetes/Diabetes

Diane Byler, Coordinator 623.933.0045

Stephen Ministry

Joyce Lyon, Coordinator 623.235.9908

Ad Hoc Members:

Donna Anthony, Doreen Borgmann and

Pat Kaufman



Music Ministry

We wanted to let you know of some "missional outreach" of the Palomas bell choir. Ten of us performed at the ACES school in Tolleson for their students (socially distanced and masked!) ACES specifically serves autistic students across several school districts, and Beth Sanders, who works there, thought that many of the students didn't have many opportunities to see this kind of thing. The students were very receptive, and especially liked singing along with Rudolf and Jingle Bells. Members of the ensemble also collected and donated \$180 for the school's adopt-a-family program. Here's a picture (without students):



Zoom Groups

Come to the "M.O.R.E." (message, online, reflect and engage) discussion group, as we go deeper into the message. We gather Sundays from 11 am to 12 pm on Zoom. Email mkburt2@att.net (Peggy Burt) for the Zoom link. **Thursday Morning Women's Bible Study** ~ meets weekly on Zoom. We have a time of fellowship from 9:30 to 10 am, study begins at 10 to 11 am. Join us as we dive into timely, relevant, scripture, based book studies. Contact Peggy Burt mkburt2@att.net, 847-727-4763 for zoom link.

2021

Have a blessed

New Year!

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Choral Director: Lovita Christianson
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Bell Choirs Director: Brent Fike bfike2@cox.net

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Dove of the Desert

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Return Service Requested

Sending January Blessings to:



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