

December 2020

Church Life

- If you are a guest with us today, we want to **WELCOME** you! If you haven't done so already, we invite you to stop by our Guest Reception Center in the lobby at the scooter table following the service. Someone will greet you, answer any questions you may have, and give you a gift as a thank-you for worshipping with us today!
- **Bible Reading Plan** - This year, we are encouraging our entire church to read through the Bible in one year. Every weekend, we will be giving away a \$50 gift card to a person who read the readings for the prior week. So here's how this works, please visit the scooter table **BEFORE** service, write your name on a ticket (if you did the readings for the week), and drop it in the bin. Then, at the end of the service, Pastor Adam will pull out a name, and someone will go home with a gift card(all services). We want to encourage our church to be in their Bibles, happy reading!
- Here at Grace, we have a wonderful **meal train ministry**. If any of our church family undergoes a significant life event, like a new baby, surgery, etc., we like to take one thing off their plates by bringing them dinner. If you've done that in the past and would like to continue to be a part of the meal train team (or would like to start!), email Kate Dulmes at kate.dulmes@gmail.com.
- **Grace Family**, we need some friendly volunteers to join our serving teams. These times have been tricky, but we are so thankful to stay open and worship together! Please fill out your connection card if you are interested.
- This **Christmas**, we would like to generously bless each of our mission partners with gifts to help them celebrate our Savior's birth. The tree in the lobby is covered in ornaments that list various items that each ministry could use to be more effective in reaching people for Jesus and making disciples. If you would like to help, please take an ornament from the tree, purchase the item listed on the ornament, and bring that gift back to the church anytime before **December 15th**. It is your choice whether or not you wrap the gift, but please tape the ornament to the outside so we know where to deliver it.
- **Parents**, teens are opening back up this Sunday! We have heard loud and clear from our teens and parents that the teens need to be back in worship services designed for them. This will be happening from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at **Ebenezer's Church** in December. This facility has a better set up to accommodate our group's size. They have a parsonage that is converted into a youth house and a ½ court indoor basketball court! The address is 5166 Ottogan St, Holland, MI 49423.



December 2020

The Gift – Frankincense

Matthew 2:1-11, After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." ³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." ⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Frankincense oil: helps with anxiety, colds, coughs, indigestion, ulcers, alleviates stress and pain, is anti-inflammatory, it is immune-stimulating and cancer fighting, it possesses antiseptic properties....reduces fine lines and wrinkles... and on and on....

Hebrews 10:10, And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Hebrews 4:14-15, ¹⁴ Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin.

Hebrews 4:16, ¹⁶ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Life Application

Take this week to write a note of thankfulness to Jesus for laying down His life so that you could receive the FREE gift of eternal life.

Please keep this letter to read on Christmas Day.



December 6th 2020

The Gift – Frankincense

READ: Matthew 2:1-11

1. How did the Magi react to finding Jesus?
2. These wise men offered three gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Frankincense was a practical gift that helped heal sicknesses or treat wounds. It was also the oil the priests would use during the sacrifices. Why?

Frankincense represents the priestliness of Jesus.

3. The priest of the Old Testament was essentially the representative of the people before God and he did two things.
 - a. Made sacrifices for the forgiveness of sins.
 - b. Prayed prayers on behalf of the people.

The priest was the middleman between man and God.

4. Why was any of this necessary?
5. What was the problem of sinfulness vs. holiness?
6. How do you view the problem with sin in our culture today?
7. What does it mean that God is holy?

Holiness is the perfection of all of God's attributes.
8. Sin breaks our connection with God. How?

Sin separates us from God, it breaks our life, it destroys our life, and therefore God hates sin.
9. How does all this tie into this idea of Jesus as our high priest?
10. The priest would sacrifice an innocent animal, go into the tabernacle behind the veil to the place known as the Holy of Holies. The priest then would light the Frankincense, producing smoke rising toward Heaven, representing the cries of the people for God's mercy. Then the priest would sprinkle the blood on the mercy seat, symbolizing the death of an innocent one, in place of the guilty ones as a payment for our sins. Did you know this? Discuss.
11. Did you know about the day of atonement? The scapegoat?

A Quote from Pastor Adam... This whole "animal" process was a part of what Christians call "the old covenant." The GOOD NEWS is we are not people of the old covenant! We are under the new covenant with God. Our great High Priest, His name is Jesus, and He is the real reason for Christmas! Because our High Priest, Jesus, offered Himself to God as a single sacrifice for all sins for all time! Our High Priest loves us so much he gave His life for us! If you've ever felt like you couldn't reach the presence of God. Jesus understands. If you feel like God has left you alone in your pain. Jesus understands. He is our High Priest who has experienced all the pain of being in a human body! All the emotion of being rejected by friends! All the agony of hurting, feeling alone and abandoned. And He understands you...

READ: Hebrews 10:10

12. How are we made holy?

READ: Hebrews 4:14-15

13. What does this tell us about our high Priest?
14. Jesus understands what you're going through. Why?
15. Jesus experienced pretty much anything you can imagine. Do you see how He can relate to you?
16. God in His divine providence sent these magi, to offer these prophetic gifts declaring the nature of Jesus to come. Gold, He is our king. Myrrh, He's the suffering servant. Frankincense, He is our High Priest. Is this all making more sense now? Do you see the deeper meaning?

READ: Hebrews 4:16,

17. What can we do? Then we will receive mercy. Why?

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