

Handley Happenings

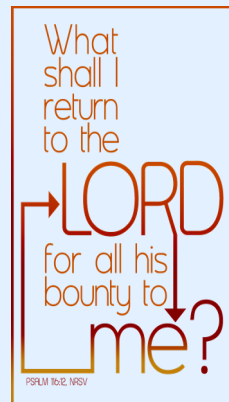
Feb 5, 2018

OPEN HEARTS OPEN MINDS OPEN DOORS
The People of the United Methodist Church

Bruce's Bible Study

We've been studying the story of the Wise Men and their visit to find the Christ child (the story is found in *Matthew 2*), even though Christmas is past ---but, remember, the Wise Men almost certainly showed up **long after** that first Christmas night--- maybe up to 2 years later, given Herod's decree to kill the boy babies in Bethlehem *up to two years of age*. This week, I want us to look at the gifts; we are told that there were three of them, and that's why we usually say that there were three wise men, although the Greek version of the New Testament is not specific about that. I've said in previous articles that my mother was a positive heretic; when I was little, she had a manger set with four wise men! Call out the Inquisition!

As to the gifts, they have long been considered to be prophetic of Christ's ministry. Gold was the traditional gift to a king; if you had an appointment with a king, you were supposed to bring him something of gold (not really a bribe, but just the accepted custom); at least one of the wise men brought gold, stating his belief that Jesus, seemingly a peasant child living in Bethlehem, was really a king! That called for faith---but the wise man/wise men who brought that gift knew how they had been guided by that miraculous star, and that the non-impressive appearance of this Child and His surroundings was deceptive. Notice that the gift was not taken back! Frankincense is obviously a type of incense, and if you have Roman Catholic friends, you'll know that incense figures in their worship services. It's used by the priests, and I think that the frankincense is to show that Jesus is *our great High Priest*, the go-between between us and God--the One Who bridges that "gap" between us caused by our sins. The wonderful (and anonymous) letter to the *Hebrews* in the New



Our Gifts & Presence Sunday, Feb 4, 2018

Total Worship.....	31
Total Sunday School.....	10
Budget	\$4162


Testament majors on this theme, showing how Jesus has superseded (yes, that's the right spelling) the work of the Jewish high priest, who had to perform the atonement ritual annually, whereas what Jesus has done is **sufficient for all time!** If you haven't read *Hebrews*, give it a whirl; you'll find it toward the end of the New Testament, between *Philemon* and *James*. It's a wonderful work. Incidentally, the author of the famous Epiphany hymn *We Three Kings* took the idea instead that, since incense is offered to God, the gift of frankincense showed that the giver/givers could see by faith that Jesus was *God in the Flesh*---which is absolutely true, but (not too surprisingly) I think my first guess is more to the point! As for myrrh, it's a gum-like substance, considerably like pine resin. It's fragrant, and it was often used in embalming jobs (to cover up the odor of decaying flesh). You might say, "What an awful gift to give to a Toddler!" But I think that it is prophetic of the great New Testament theme that **Christ came to die for our sins**--in other words, the shadow of the cross already hangs over the cradle of the Christ child.

We might ask, "What happened to the gifts?" They probably financed the trip to Egypt and back. One other thing we need to note about these gifts: they were all valuable. They weren't chintzy, cheesy gifts like you used to get out of a Cracker Jacks box. We should ask ourselves, "Is our giving valuable, or are we letting God have merely the leftovers?" I remember the old hymn in the *Cokesbury Hymnal*, "Give of your best to the Master." There's a message there for all of us. Let's do exactly that!

More next week.

Bruce

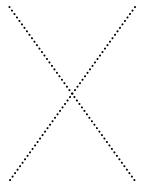
Handley UMC Events for February 2018

<p>28 Admin Council meeting 9:30 AM Small Group Gatherings 10:45 AM Traditional Worship Service 12:00 PM Lunch Fundraiser hosted by UMW</p>	29	30	<p>31 9:00 AM Backpack Buddies 10:30 AM Games 11:45 AM Lunch 6:15 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>Feb 1 7:00 PM City of Fort Worth meeting</p>	2	3
<p>4 Communion Set-up by New Horizons Class 9:30 AM Small Group Gatherings 10:45 AM Traditional Worship Service</p>	<p>5 5:30 PM Police Captain's meeting</p>	6	<p>7 9:00 AM Backpack Buddies 10:30 AM Games 11:45 AM Lunch 6:15 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	8	9	10
<p>11 9:30 AM Small Group Gatherings 10:45 AM Traditional Worship Service</p>	<p>12 6:30 PM Handley Neighborhood Assn</p>	<p>13 12:00 PM Mail out Newsletter</p>	<p>14  Happy Valentines Day!! 9:00 AM Backpack Buddies 10:30 AM Games 11:45 AM Lunch 6:15 PM ASH WEDNESDAY Service 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>15 No Food-bank this month</p>	16	17
<p>18 9:30 AM Small Group Gatherings 10:45 AM Traditional Worship Service</p>	<p>19 6:00 PM Finance Committee Meeting (confirm) 6:30 PM Trustees Meeting (confirm)</p>	20	<p>21 9:00 AM Backpack Buddies 10:30 AM Games 11:45 AM Lunch 6:15 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	22	23	24
<p>25 9:30 AM Small Group Gatherings 10:45 AM Traditional Worship Service</p>	<p>26 7:00 PM Friendship Circle</p>	<p>27 10:00 AM Grace Circle 12:00 PM Mail out Newsletter & Calendar</p>	<p>28 9:00 AM Backpack Buddies 10:30 AM Games 11:45 AM Lunch 6:15 PM Bell Choir 7:00 PM Chancel Choir</p>	<p>March 1</p>	2	3

Handley Happenings

Feb 5, 2018

2929 Forest Ave
Ft. Worth, Texas 76112



Address Service Requested

Church Office: 817-451-4321
Church Fax: 817-446-4013

Meetings & Events Schedule



February 7
Backpack Buddies
Wonderful Wednesday

February 12
Handley Neighborhood Assoc.

February 13
Mail Out Newsletter

February 14
Valentine's Day
Backpack Buddies
Wonderful Wednesday
Ash Wednesday Service

Handley United Methodist Church

February 18
First Sunday in Lent

February 19
Trustees / Finance (confirm)

February 21
Backpack Buddies
Wonderful Wednesday

February 25
Second Sunday in Lent

February 26
Friendship Circle

February 27
Grace Circle
Mail Out Newsletter
& Calendar

February 28
Backpack Buddies
Wonderful Wednesday

Usher Schedule

01/28—Bill Mann's Group
02/04—Glenn Estes' Group

www.handleyumc.org
handleyumc@sbcglobal.net

Sunday's Service:

"Making Shrines"
Mark 9:2-9



He was transfigured before them ...
and his clothes became dazzling white ...
Mark 9:2-3, NRSV