

peace be with you

# weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler

SAINT PAUL BENSON

## Christmastide

After four weeks of  
reflecting upon Isaiah's prophecies  
lovely hymns and prayers

four weeks of creatively  
browsing, shopping and wrapping gifts for loved ones,  
cleaning, baking, and list making

Advent is complete  
and I look forward to the beautiful gift of  
'Five Golden Rings.'

Photographs freeze smiles  
while buttery cookies and pumpkin pie  
rest softly about my waist.

In the first light this day  
brilliant oranges stream across the sky bringing  
hope in the quietness.

Concerns are presently  
released upward for healing while immense  
joy charges my soul.

Continued

***December 28, 2022***

## **Matthew 2: 1-12** ***Coming of the Magi***

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup> They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. <sup>4</sup> He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

<sup>6</sup> You, Bethlehem, land of Judah,

# Christmastide

Continued

Like hungry birds feeding  
I feast upon God's grace, birthing hope again  
In a heart filled with fear.

In solitude I give thanks  
for Love streaming down and offer my life in faith  
while keeping watch in wonder.

I am grateful for learning on this journey of life and trust that each day is a teaching experience. When ice skating for the first time this winter, my legs felt like rubber and self-doubts arose that I'd ever glided effortlessly across the pond. I tried singing softly to distract myself and help my body remember what it knows. "Sleigh Bells Ring" and "Skating in a Winter Wonderland" came to mind. Singing was helpful but will definitely take more practice to get back to where I was last year, and my legs are gliding instead of awkwardly stepping. Still, I'm grateful I didn't fall and hurt something and truly did enjoy the time outdoors with my daughter.

Reminded of God's miraculous gift come down to us at Christmas, and the journey of the magi bringing their particular gifts, brings these questions to mind:

How can I contribute and witness to Christ's Love using the gifts I've been given?

When the world seems dark, will I remember to search the heavens for a guiding Light?

In the stress and disappointments of everyday life, the Christmas narrative provides hope!

We pray that you embrace the journey of Christmastide that leads us through the confusion and fears and into the peace of Jesus Christ.

Together we follow the Star,

*Marta*

Rev. Marta Wheeler

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## Matthew 2: 1-12

*Continued*

by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah, because from you will come one who governs, who will shepherd my people Israel." <sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared.

<sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you've found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him."

<sup>9</sup> When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was.

<sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. <sup>11</sup> They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

<sup>12</sup> Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.