

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Dear Members and Friends of Desert Hills Lutheran,

Happy New Year! Today is Epiphany, or Theophany in the east, a Christian feast day to celebrate the revelation or theophany of God revealed in Jesus Christ. It is celebrated with primarily two stories: the visit of the wise men and in the East the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan. January 6 is the 12th day of Christmas. So, welcome to Epiphany, the belief that God is with us in Christ Jesus.

This weekend I'll be back, and I'll be talking with you about the baptism of Jesus. It was so nice to have a break and I thank John Martin and Pastor Ken for providing the messages and liturgies. I'm looking forward to baptism. The following week I'll begin a seven-week sermon series following N.T. Wright's new book, *Broken Signposts: How Christianity Makes Sense of the World*. Dr. Wright uses the Gospel of John to reveal how Christianity presents a compelling and relevant explanation for our world. The January signposts are justice, love, and spirituality. Basically, I'll compare how the world looks at these themes and how Christians and Jews look at these three. N.T. Wright is one of my favorite New Testament professors. He is an English New Testament scholar, Pauline theologian and Anglican Bishop. It might have been easier to do something else for those seven weeks, but I've always liked a challenge.

Do you remember the story of how I left Julie's car out in the storm and it hailed? We are not done with hail yet. We had a small leak in the garage during our last rain. It came from a roof drain. However, when I got on the roof with the contractor he said, "You need a roof repair." "What?!?!" He then pointed out the hail damage from that same storm on August 3. Don't you love to start a new year with a big expense? No, me either, but weather happens just like life.

We must continue to pray for our country. We are going through a terrible time of upheaval. But I'm confident that over time, God will prevail, and God's will be done in heaven and on earth. It is the season of light and revelation called Epiphany; we will hold onto it for all we are worth.

Blessings,

Pastor Martin