

RECONCILER

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Who Follows a Star?

By Karen Miller

"Not me!" That's what I said when I got my star word last year, after sharing with the children the story of those who followed the star. I was entering 2024 with lots of big decisions on my mind—things coming to an end and the challenges of perimenopause—and I needed my star word to solve it all! I wanted to see something like "examine," "discern," or "wisdom." Nope. I got "joy." I was not happy about this. I can find stress in most things—now that's easy.

We are often inclined to dwell on the things that are not going well in our lives. It is hard to let a little piece of paper, or wood, or cardstock lead us, but what's the harm in looking for the good? I think it is because we need to take care of ourselves to take care of others and we cannot do that when we dwell on the bad. But, of course, it was just the word I needed. It was a rough year in many ways, but my word reminded me to find the joy, and I did.

The story of the wise men following the star to find the Christ child mirrors this modern tradition of receiving star words as a form of spiritual guidance. Just as the wise men embarked on a journey of faith, trusting in the light of a star to lead them to something holy and transformative, we, too, receive star words as beacons for our spiritual journeys. These words invite introspection, growth, and action, pointing us toward deeper truths and divine purpose.

I feel this practice reflects the evolving ways people connect with God, emphasizing personal revelation and the ongoing movement of the Spirit in diverse and creative forms. Both the ancient travelers and modern seekers are united by their openness to follow where they are led, trusting that their paths will draw them closer to the sacred.

NEWS AND EVENTS

Over my Christmas break, I read the book *The Measure*. It is about the world waking up one day to a box outside their door with a string that shows them the length of their lives. It of course caused lots of moral and ethical dilemmas that were fascinating, but one part hit home as I was thinking about our stars.

“Maybe the boxes are like that, too. Nobody can offer any foolproof explanation for them, so they just end up meaning whatever we want them to mean - whether that’s God or fate or magic.”

Your star can mean what you want it to mean, what you need it to mean. I needed to focus on joy because I knew I would not do it myself, I spent half the year denying and the other half really seeing what joy 2024 brought me. I hope this year, you will join me on this journey with our star words and let them draw us closer to the sacred—and to one another.



Star Words

Join us for Epiphany Sunday, January 5th, to receive your star word for 2025, or pick one up in the Narthex after.



YOUTH AND CHILDREN



The youth held their annual Christmas Secret Santa on 12/15 at the Jakubiak/Thomas home.



Youth Group will meet:

January 5

Let's plan the second half of our year!

January 12

TBD

January 19

TBD

ADVENT IN PICTURES



NEWS AND EVENTS



Congratulations Ellen!

Our very own Ellen Davis wrote an article that has been published in the History Essays section of the Hektoen International Journal.

You can view it here:

<https://hekint.org/2024/12/19/they-made-their-own-insulin-the-story-of-eva-and-viktor-saxl/>



GIVING AT
THE REC



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JANUARY DUTIES

ELDER ON CALL:

5th Diana Barefoot
12th Kristin Bowers
19th Allen Wilcox
26th Courtney Chavez

LITURGIST:

5th Allen Brimer
12th Ann Loomis
19th John Peterson
26th Stu Cameron

CHANCEL SET-UP:

5th Meri-Li Douglas & Gene
Johnson
12th Howard Carter
19th Sandra Burt
26th Courtney Chavez

GREETERS:

5th Ellen Davis & Robbie Blue
12th Jeff & Cheryl Chambers
19th Kristin Bowers & Sandra Burt
26th Colleen Boatright & Sharon Mujica

CAREGIVERS:

5th Helen Maxwell & Beth McArthur

OFFERING COUNTERS:

12th Alex Gordon & Sue Regier
26th David Robinson, Jeannie Goguen, &
Dennis Uhler

MUSICIANS:

5th Jeanetta Powell
12th Dale Herman
19th Jeanetta Powell
26th Dan Mason

REC TECH:

5th Anne Lutes
12th Allison Scott
19th Jess Bowers
26th Michael Jokich

FLOWERS:

5th Robbie Blue
12th Jeff & Cheryl Chambers
19th Sandra Burt
26th Colleen Boatright

January

SPECIAL MUSIC

5th Brassissimo!
12th Choir
26th Handbells

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Worship
with Us

11 AM SUNDAYS IN
THE SANCTUARY OR
ON ZOOM

IN-PERSON OR ONLINE

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ON YOUTUBE