

The Master's Message

The Newsletter of the Church of the Master

January, 2026

Virtual Adult Bible Study
Wednesday, 7:00 PM
Saturday, 12:00

2783 Lafayette Avenue
Bronx, N.Y. 10465
718-597-6298

Sunday Worship
Sunday 11:00 am

WWW.COTMBRONX.ORG

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden, Pastor



UNFORTUNATELY, we tend to sing only the first stanza of most Christmas carols, even though the depth of meaning is often found in later stanzas. Everyone knows that the wise men brought gifts, but what was their significance? John Henry Hopkins, an Episcopalian minister (as well as a news reporter and stained-glass artist), pondered this question in hymn form in 1857.

Gold was a gift for a king. Frankincense was brought by priests in their worship of God. Myrrh was a spice used in burial. Thus Jesus was honored by these sages as King, God, and Sacrifice.

How then shall we approach the King of kings? What gold shall we bring? What incense can we offer as priests of our God? How can we honor our crucified Lord? It makes sense to consider these questions today, the traditional date of Epiphany, celebrating the magi's worship of our Lord.



Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

Matthew 2:1-2, NKJV

We Three Kings of Orient Are

We three kings of Orient are;
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
Following yonder star.

*O star of wonder, star of night,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding,
Guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never
Over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I;
Incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and praising all men raising,
Worship Him, God on high.

Myrrh is mine: its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom:
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

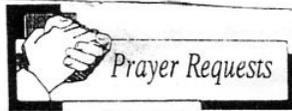
Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia!
Sounds through the earth and skies.

John Henry Hopkins, Jr. (1820-1891)

SPECIAL DATES

- New Year's Day, *January 1st*
- Epiphany, *January 6th*
- Baptism of the Lord, *January 11th*
- Martin Luther King Observation, *Jan. 19th*

News From the Pews



Continue praying for:
Allen Ford, Carole Mahon,
Loretta Byrd, John Bruno,
Alice & Alex Rivera

Our **Online Bible Study** meets
Wednesday at 7:00 PM and Saturday at 12:00.
Contact Ron Rivera (917-716-8273)
for information on joining



Begin the year
with God

They loved their church

During the Great Depression, First Methodist Church in Willard, Ohio, was in great danger of closing. It wasn't that the church lacked members. So many of them were unemployed or had a meager income that they could give very little.

Because the church was in debt, the time came when the members had a choice: They could mortgage their homes and save the church they loved, or they could shut the doors and try to find another place to worship. Many families mortgaged their homes, thus saving their church home.

After the Depression waned and the members were a bit more stable financially, they decided to rename the church Grace Methodist. They said the church had been saved by the grace of God and his blessings for them.

CHURCH CHUCKLES

Two old ladies are sitting in church. One of the ladies leaned over and whispered, "The sermon is so long and my butt fell asleep." Her friend whispered back, "I know, I heard it snoring."

Dear Pastor,
I think they call them pews because they smell funny,
Gabby, age 8

A devout Christian and an atheist had been friends since they were boys, and they never missed an opportunity to poke fun at the other's beliefs. The atheist, visiting his friend's family cabin, noticed a beautiful chart depicting the various constellations and stars of the heavens. He inquired who had made it.

"What do you mean, who made it?" the Christian said wryly, teasing his friend. "Nobody made it. It just happened



Not forgotten

My wife, Lesa, and I attended a pastor-appreciation event put on by a radio station. When the worship leader asked attendees to turn to one another and share prayer needs, my wife met a pastor who described his church plant, which wasn't growing. He was discouraged and unsure what the future held.

When Lesa asked the name of the church, she smiled and asked if it was near a campground. The pastor said yes. Lesa responded, "Just a few weeks ago, we were camping nearby. A friend and I walked right past your church, and God led me to be praying for it!" In a room of more than 300 people, God put Lesa next to this discouraged pastor so he could know that God hadn't forgotten him.

God is working behind the scenes in ways we may never see. Despite life's challenges, God is for us and not against us. We aren't walking this journey alone.

—Rev. Mike Paulson

Our feathered friends

Their voices, plumage patterns and antics are fascinating.
Celebrate the wonder of birds on January 5, National Bird Day.



Townsend's
solitaire

Back- story

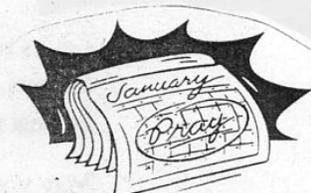
CREATED IN 2002 by the Avian Welfare Coalition, National Bird Day exists to raise awareness of the plight many birds face due to loss of habitat, illegal pet trading, disease and other threats.

National Bird Day is a great time to visit a

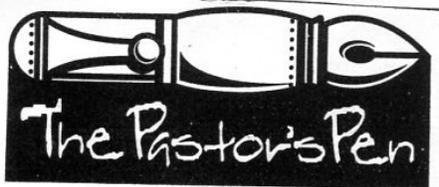
bird park, learn how to protect these amazing animals and their environments, and spread awareness with the hashtag [#NationalBirdDay](#).

Positive Thinking

Sometimes friendships can be harmful or can bring out the worst in us. Think of friendships like food, says psychologist and *Happiness Podcast* host Robert Puff. Some foods agree with us, and others don't. But Brigham Young University psychology and neuroscience researcher Julianne Holt-Lunstad recommends we maximize the positive by focusing on the many things you have in common with someone rather than the few things you don't.



Start the New Year with
Prayer



January 2026 Newsletter Article

January ushers in a New Year. One with new possibilities, new challenges, new joys and sorrows, new hopes and new miracles, and most of all new opportunities to be of service to others, and for a closer walk with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!¹ I was moved to share the below "A New Year's Prayer" by Rev. Marcy Sheremetta.²

I pray it will be a blessing to you all as we enter into 2025 with God's blessings and His divine guidance for what lies ahead for each of us. Praying you all have a Happy, Healthy, and Blessed New Year!

Shalom to you now,

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden

Pastor

Church of the Master

A New Year's Prayer

"As the dawn breaks on a new year,
let us give thanks for all we hold dear:
our health, our family and our friends.

Let us release our grudges, our anger
and our pains, for these are nothing but
binding chains. Let us live each day in
the most loving ways, the God-conscious
way. Let us serve all who are in need,
regardless of race, color or creed.

Let us keep God of our own
understanding in our hearts and
to chant God's name each day.
Let us lead the world from darkness
to light, from falsehood to truth
and from wrong to right.

Let us remember that we are
all one, embracing all, discriminating
against none.

May your year be filled with peace,
prosperity and love. May God's
blessings shower upon you and
bestow upon each of you a bright,
healthy and peaceful new year."

¹ This Newsletter Article was reprinted from 2022.

² 22 Best New Year's Prayers. (

(Accessed on December 6, 2021)).