

The Master's Message

The Newsletter of the Church of the Master

January, 2024

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

cotm47@verizon.net

WWW.COTMBRONX.ORG

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden, Pastor



Great outdoors

January is National Family Fit Lifestyle Month, and what better way to celebrate than to get outside and enjoy all that winter has to offer?

Get out there

TRY INCORPORATING FAMILY activities into your winter routine to make this your healthiest month yet; here are a few suggestions:

Sledding. Get your blood moving while climbing hills. You'll have so much fun you won't even remember you're exercising!

Winter walks. Take in the beauty of nature at your local park or hiking trail.

Preparing healthful meals. Shop for seasonal fruits and vegetables as a family, and see what healthful meals you can whip up.

SPECIAL DATES*

- New Year's Day, January 1st
- Epiphany, January 6th
- Baptism of the Lord, January 7th
- Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Observance, January 15th

News From the Pews



Prayer Requests

Continue praying for:
Ellen McCullough,
Allen Ford, Carole Mahon,
Loretta Byrd, Alice & Alex Rivera

Everyone is invited to join our virtual **"Hour of Prayer Power"** every Friday at 7:00 PM. The conference call-in number is 605-475-4860, code: 371231#

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



Rev. Hayden and the Consistory would like to thank all our friends and former members who receive this newsletter for their warm holiday wishes and very generous holiday gifts. We sincerely appreciate both and wish everyone a very happy and healthy 2024!

- We must learn to live together as brothers or perish as fools.
—Martin Luther King Jr.

CHURCH CHUCKLES

The nervous young pastor had taken over the church just weeks before one of the most distinguished members had passed on to glory. Wanting to make a good impression and knowing there would be a large turnout for the funeral, the pastor worked long and hard on his notes for the service. He was doing very well, until he reached what he thought would be a very meaningful analogy: "The body of a Christian is like that of an almond." He pointed to the casket and said, "The body is only the shell, and our dear friend, the nut, has already gone on..."

A minister was driving home one night when a police officer stops him for speeding. The officer smells alcohol on his breath, sees an empty wine bottle on the floor, and asks, "Sir, have you been drinking?" The minister replies, "Just water." The officer asks, "Then why do I smell wine?" The minister looks at the bottle and exclaims, "Good Lord! He's done it again!"

Epiphany of the Lord

The word *epiphany* comes from the Greek word *epiphaneia*, which means appearance or manifestation. It is an important word for liturgical churches. Epiphany is observed annually on January 6. It refers to the wise men, who were the first Gentiles to see the manifestation of God's appearance in the baby Jesus.

In the early church, January 6 was a day for baptism. The central significance of Epiphany is that Christ came as the Light of the World, not just for the Jews but for Gentiles as well. Christ's light is for all.

In France, to celebrate Epiphany, children from Christian homes often put oats in their shoes on the evening before January 6. The oats are for the camels of the "Wise Men." When they awake the next morning, the children hope to find the oats gone and gifts left in their shoes.



TWELVE COMMANDMENTS FOR SENIORS

#1 - Talk to yourself. There are times you need expert advice.

#2 - "In Style" are the clothes that still fit.

#3 - You don't need anger management. You need people to stop pissing you off.

#4 - Your people skills are just fine. It's your tolerance for idiots that needs work.

#5 - The biggest lie you tell yourself is, "I don't need to write that down. I'll remember it."

#6 - "On time" is when you get there.

#7 - Even duct tape can't fix stupid, but it sure does muffle the sound.

#8 - It would be wonderful if we could put ourselves in the dryer for ten minutes, then come out wrinkle-free and three sizes smaller?

#9 - Lately, you've noticed people your age are so much older than you.

#10 - Growing old should have taken longer.

#11 - Aging has slowed you down, but it hasn't shut you up.

#12 - You still haven't learned to act your age and hope you never will.

... And one more:

"One for the road" means peeing before you leave the house.

Death requested

Thank you, Lord, for the New Year and all of the prospects it offers. I pretty well know what you wish for the world, but what do you have in mind for me?

All right, I get it. I need to stop making excuses. I'm good at it, am I not? I'm at least as good as Moses when he tried to get out of going to Egypt to lead his people to the Promised Land. I have dodged serving the homeless or teaching a class at the church. And yes, I have claimed I was too busy to really study the Bible or too old to work with the youth or too strapped to be more generous in my giving.

I could go on but you know full well that I'm in spiritual trouble. I need to get right with you.

To do so, I have to ask a favor. I want to ask you for death. No, not the death of me, but the death of my excuses. When I tell you I can't do what you want me to do, then give me a guilty conscience and make me restless until I repent and recant of my excuses. May all of my excuses perish permanently so that I am totally surrendered to you. In Christ's name. Amen.

—Charles Ferrell

When God becomes real for us

The Jewish scholar and rabbi Dr. Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) once said that God was either everywhere or nowhere. He meant that God was either in our world — our lives, our homes, schools, businesses, theaters, government, etc. — or God was nowhere. In short, the teacher believed that we must live in the presence of God in the most complete way or suffer the consequences of ignoring God, which would be a tragic world.

According to Dr. Heschel, "Only in His presence shall we learn that the glory of humankind is not in its will to power but in its power of compassion. We will reflect either the image of God's presence or that of a beast. There can be no neutrality."

- We can major in our fears ... or major in our dreams.
—Dr. Bruce Porter
- The world's most basic needs can be summed up in four words: bread, brains, belief and brotherhood.
—Dr. J. Wallace Hamilton

Happy New Year ♡ Happy New Year ♡ Happy New Year



What God can do with nothing

Martin Luther said, "Since it is God's nature to make something out of nothing, we must become nothing before God can make something out of us."

Adelaide A. Pollard, a 20th-century poet, made the same point in the hymn "Have Thine Own Way":

Have thine own way,
Lord! Have thine
own way!

Thou art the potter, I am the clay.
Mold me and make me after thy will,
While I am waiting, yielded and still.



- A man who lets himself be worshiped mocks God.
—Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards.
—Søren Kierkegaard



"Did God write the Bible Himself?
Or did He have some Holy
Ghost writers?"

**ADAM & EVE
THE FIRST PEOPLE
TO NOT READ THE APPLE
TERMS & CONDITIONS**

I'd like to thank ...

Many years ago, comedian Garry Moore — hot when television was a new thing in the 1950s — was the recipient of a television award for spontaneity. Moore facetiously paid tribute to "the four guys responsible for my spontaneity: my writers."

When the next award went to Bishop Fulton Sheen, he rose and approached the podium. "I also want to pay tribute to my four writers," he declared, "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John!"





January Newsletter

January ushers in the new year of 2024! Will you be among the millions of people who make New Year resolutions? Some people resolve to lose weight, to join a gym, to spend more time with family, to save money, to stop smoking, and/or to stop drinking. All of these resolutions are admirable. But before the New Year is old they will be forgotten and broken!

I have come to view the New Year as a time for a fresh start, a new beginning and a time to take spiritual inventory of my faith walk. That being said, this New Year I pray and ask God to help me resolve to serve the Lord better than I did last year; resolve to serve his people better than I did last year; resolve to be more patient and understanding with my child; resolve to increase my faith and trust in the Lord, and to resolve to have a closer walk with Jesus.

As an individual alone I may not be able change the course of political events and the uncivil vitriolic rhetoric. I may not be able to usher in world peace as a voice of one. But I can do more than wring my hands and cry that someone should do something to change our nation and the current state of our politics and society. I can join in prayer with other believers in Christ Jesus and ask God to let there be peace on earth. The peace that the Scriptures tell us surpasses all understanding will guard our hearts our minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7). And, I can pray with the voice of one, Lord, "let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me!"

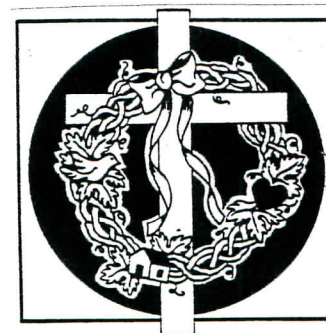
Shalom to you and Happy New Year!

Rev. Dr. Melva J. Hayden

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Church of the Master

Reformed Church in America



Begin the year
with God

A New Year wish

May the New Year bring us:
Enough happiness to keep us sweet;
Enough trials to keep us strong;
Enough hope to keep us lively;
Enough sorrows to keep us dependent upon God;
Enough failure to keep us humble;
Enough success to keep us eager;
Enough friends to give us comfort;
Enough wealth to meet our needs;
Enough enthusiasm to keep us looking forward;
Enough faith to overcome despair;
And enough determination to use every day
and situation somehow for good.

