



PARAGOULD FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
404 West Main Street, Paragould, AR 72450 | fumcparagould.org

Thursday, Dec. 31, 2020

Greetings Paragould FUMC,

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! I hope you are continuing to enjoy a safe and holy holiday celebration.

THIS SUNDAY: We continue our Christmas Celebration through Epiphany which is recognized on January 6 each year. On Epiphany we remember and celebrate the magi who sought and celebrated Christ. Notably, the magi are the first non-Jewish participants in the Christmas story. Therefore Epiphany marks God's self-revelation of Godself in Christ to Gentiles - that's us! Epiphany is a significant day of celebration for you and I! Because January 6 can fall on any day, we typically celebrate on the Sunday before and will do so this week. Join us for worship this SUNDAY January 3 streaming at 9am & 11am (fumcparagould.org/worship--streaming.html) and read ahead Matthew 2:1-12!

As I have mentioned a few times lately, I want to thank you and encourage you in your end of year giving toward FUMC. In a typical year, December offerings are approximately twice other months. I hope and expect that to be the case this year. You may mail your gift, drop it off at the church office, or give online (fumcparagould.org/giving.html). Thank you!

January often means a time of self-reflection and recommitting ourselves to our highest priorities (e.g. New Year's Resolutions!). I have a few things in mind myself. However, one lesson I've learned this past year is to be careful committing myself to grand ideas to such a degree that I am greatly upset when they do not come to fruition. Which does not mean we should lower our expectations, but I and we are learning to create expectations that are "mold-able" to the moment. How can I commit myself in this new year in such a way that I can remain faithful to Christ no matter what unusual challenges come my way? For example, I can commit to participating in worship three times per month whether in-person or online, at-home or traveling. I can more consistently support our church or other ministries through regular giving by electronic funds transfer. What lessons from 2020 will you take into 2021 to better shape your faith and faithfulness?

Grace & Peace,
Rev. Dane