# Third Street Presbyterian Church (USA)

# Conference Call-Midweek Prayer and Bible Study

# Wednesday, January 6, 2021 - 6pm- *Epiphany of the Lord*

*To join the Bible Study: Dial –* ***1347-514-7210*** *then enter meeting* ***ID#******3146213.***

 *Please limit the background noise in your home while on the phone line. This way we all can hear better while we study God’s Word. Thank you.*

**Introductions/ Welcome: Pastor Reid**

**Opening Prayer: Deacon Lois Camp**

**Opening Song: Elder Lowery with Music Ministry**

**The Word: Ephesians 3:1-13-English Standard Version**

**The Mystery of the Gospel Revealed**

**3**For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— **2**assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, **3**how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. **4**When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, **5**which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. **6**This mystery is[a] that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.**7**Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. **8**To me, though I am the very **least** of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, **9**and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, **10**so that through the church the manifold **wisdom of God** might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. **11**This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, **12**in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. **13**So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

**January 6, 2021 is Epiphany of the Lord Day.**

Epiphany is the celebration of God’s manifestation or self-revelation to the world in Jesus Christ. In particular, we celebrate the revelation of God’s promise and purpose to the nations of the world, as the magi came from the East to worship to the Christ child, and God’s covenant of grace is extended to all who believe the good news of Christ Jesus. The symbolism of light is important: not only because of the star that guided the magi, but as it relates to the bright dawning of God’s self-revelation in Christ.

#####  An excerpt from the Companion to the Book of Common Worship(Geneva Press, 2003, 94-95)

**Reflection:**

In this third chapter of Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesians we find Paul writing from prison. Paul becomes intensely personal as he describes the role he has played in bringing the truth of the gospel to the Gentiles.

Ephesians Chapter 3 Outline:

• He begins—by reminding his Gentile readers that he is in prison for their sake (Ephesians 3:1).
• He digresses—by explaining his special place in the church, the body of Christ (Ephesians 3:2-13).
• He concludes—by resuming the prayer he began in verse 1 (Ephesians 3:14-21).

In Ephesians 3:2-13, Paul becomes intensely personal as he describes the role he has played in bringing the truth of the gospel to the Gentiles. When he writes “ I, Paul” we hear the authority of his words.

Paul has been imprisoned on several occasions 2 Cor.6:5, Phil.1:13-14: Col.4:3 and Philemon 1, 9).Commentaries state that it is not clear which imprisonment is written here in Eph. 3.

How are we like Paul? Are we bold to witness about the goodness of God in our lives? Although we are under some stress and uncertain times, we can still be that witness for Christ. Paul was in bondage yet he was a servant according to the gift of God’s Grace!

**Guiding Questions for Bible Study Discussion**

Please feel free to join in during the study we all learn and are studying God’s Word together. This conference call study is not to judge but to support and fellowship as people of faith. We all are learning from God’s Word.

1. Which verse stands out to you in this passage? Why?
2. What do you know about Paul’s journey to become a Christian? What were some events in his story of faith? How does his journey relate to your faith journey?
3. Who is Paul writing to in this letter?
4. Paul’s statements of unworthiness: In Corinthians 15:9 he calls himself the **least** of the apostles. In I Timothy 1:15 he speaks of sinners among whom I am **foremost** of all. In Ephesians 3:8 he is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_of all saints.
5. How does the mystery *not made known (Ephesians 3:5)* relate to Romans 16:25 and Ephesians 6:19?
6. Eph. 3:10 reads “*so that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places*. How do you feel (we) the church makes the **wisdom of God**  known?
7. Ephesians 3:12 and Ephesians 2: 17-18 give us assurance of our access to God. How should we come to God with this access? In \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(v.12)
8. Paul describes himself as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (see Eph.6:20)

**Apply God’s Word to your Life:** How can you apply these truths revealed in Ephesians 3: 1-12 to your life right now? Paul although in prison is giving reassurance and guidance to the people in Ephesus. What words are you hearing in these passages for encouragement and hope?

**What Inspires you these days?**

It may seem like there is little today to inspire us. Hold on to inspiration find it in the midst of troubling times. Where do you find inspiration and hope these days? Is it a song, hymn, scripture or special reading? How has it helped inspire you? If you feel led, please share with the group.

﻿**Put your Faith in Action:**  During 2021 we are *hopeful* and need all of us to be prayerful that we can safely reopen the church doors. We also pray that we gather in some other way in person as the body of Christ. For now, the physical church doors are closed. This is God’s will for this time. We are God’s church wherever we are. We continue as the distant church to give our tithes and offering, to share, pray and reach out ***We are the Church.*** Please reach out to one another, text, call, email, US mail or virtual, that is our mission as the Body of Christ.

**Evening Prayer:**

#### Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16

**We lift up prayer requests at this time, we lift up our joys and concerns before the Lord.**

**Closing Song: Elder Lowery with Music Ministry**

**Words of Sending: - Pastor Reid Ephesians 3:20-21****20**Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, **21**to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

*May God be with you all until me meet again!!*

Thank you for joining our Mid-Week Bible Study and Prayer this week! We will meet again Wednesday, **January 13 at 6pm.**

With the Love of Christ,

Pastor Reid