



Washington Street Baptist Church  
256 Washington St.  
Lynn, MA 01902

# Tower Talk

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Rev. James R. Smith  
*Interim Minister*

Marquis Lockhart  
*Youth Minister*

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*Office Administrator*

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## Eagerly Desire the Greater Gifts

This Sunday, January 6, is Epiphany, the day the church celebrates the arrival of Magi from the east bringing gifts to the Son of God (Matthew 2:1–12).

Neither their names, their number (three), their physical descriptions nor the date of the Magi's arrival appears in the Bible. Three was probably chosen because of the three gifts mentioned in the Bible. They may have come from Mesopotamia, Persia or even Arabia. They may have arrived as much as two years after Jesus' birth based on Herod's order to kill all the male children in Bethlehem two years old and under (Matthew 2:16).

Those details are interesting and worth studying, but the point of Matthew's birth narrative is that learned gentiles came from the east having seen a unique star in the heavens and having heard of the promise of a Jewish king. We'll explore The Epiphany further on Sunday, but today I would like to challenge you to have a personal epiphany. An epiphany is a sudden and striking realization of something we may already know or have heard that suddenly becomes real to us.

I attended Sunday School, youth group and church regularly as a child and was baptized as an adolescent. I believed in Jesus and held the Bible to be God's inspired word. One evening, when I was 15, at an evangelistic rally, the church youth advisor asked me if I wanted to accept Jesus as my savior. To my surprise, and his, I said "Yes." That was an epiphany for me. I had a sudden and striking realization that God loved me and had forgiven me of my sins and I wanted to know and experience more.

My prayer for the Washington Street Baptist Church in 2019 is that we as individuals and as a congregation have an epiphany, a sudden and striking realization that God is in our midst and offers spiritual strength and gifts to those who seek Him. It is not enough to come to church, we need to be the church, the body of Christ empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit.

In this new year, let us seek to reviving of the enthusiasm we had as new believers. Charles Finney once said, "A revival is nothing else than a new beginning of obedience to God."

**1 Corinthians 12:28–31** And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way.

James R Smith, Interim Pastor  
Washington Street Baptist Church, Lynn MA  
Photos to accompany this text can be seen at [jrsmithblog.wordpress.com](http://jrsmithblog.wordpress.com)



Greek Byzantine Icon,  
Pentecost

Kalampaka, Greece

## NEXT TWO WEEKS AT WSBC

### **Friday, January 4, 2019**

7:00 Prayer Meeting

### **Sunday, Jan. 6**

10:45 AM Worship Service

12:15 PM CoffeeTime Fellowship

12:30 PM International Choir Practice

### **Monday, Jan. 7**

6:30 PM Diaconate Meeting

### **Tuesday, Jan. 8**

6:00 PM Trustee Meeting

6:00 PM Search Committee Meeting

### **Wednesday, Jan. 9**

7:00 PM *Live Out Loud* Youth Group

### **Friday, Jan. 11**

7:00 PM Prayer Meeting

### **Sunday, Jan. 13**

10:45 AM Worship Service

12:15 PM CoffeeTime Fellowship

12:30 PM Choir Practice

### **Tuesday, Jan. 15**

6:00 PM Search Committee Meeting

### **Thursday, Jan. 17**

7:00-9:00 PM Judson Executive Board

## WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

Dec. 30, 2018    Worship:    59

## CHURCH SERVERS

Jan. 6, 2019

**Nursery:** *Evonne Malcolm & Tai Nofi*

**BLAST:** *Elise Panias*

**Worship Assistant:** *Nick Nofi*

**CoffeeTime Hostess:** *Ebua Magdalene*

## MOVE TO FELLOWSHIP HALL

Winter is upon us, as are winter heating bills! So join us for worship, starting this Sunday, in the Magee Fellowship Hall behind the sanctuary. It will be nice to be closer together for worship, too!

## BLAST RETURNS

Now that school is back in session, BLAST (Bible Learning Adventure Station) is, too! Praise God for the growing number of children we've seen attending regularly! And if you would like to volunteer, please speak to Elise Panias, the head of Christian Education department. They would really appreciate the extra help!



## ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

With the coming of the new year comes the time to reflect upon 2018. One way to do that is to write the annual report for your department at church. As the annual church meeting approaches in February, annual reports are due from the heads of each department by the end of January. Since this is my first time compiling all the reports, it would help me out to have all the reports in on time. Thank you kindly!

## HOUSING NEED

*Nicole Graham*, a former worshiper here at church, is moving back to the North Shore to attend Gordon College and is looking for housing close to school. If you know of anyone looking to rent out a room, please contact her at [niccig11@aol.com](mailto:niccig11@aol.com).

## SERMONS UP ONLINE

If you ever miss a sermon or want to have another listen, all of our sermons this fall are up on our website. You can find them at [lynnwsbc.org](http://lynnwsbc.org) under the page "Sermons." We've also added the Christmas Vespers pageant as well as the Christmas Cantata.

## PRAYER MEETING UPDATE

This past Friday we met to pray for God's kingdom to come in our church and city. Please join us this week in praying for our neighbors on **Market and Union Streets**.

*Note: if you can't make it in person Friday evenings, you can call in at (605) 475-4070 with the access code 138890#.*

## OFFERING ENVELOPES

### AVAILABLE

Pick up your offering envelopes for the new year. They are available in the back of the fellowship hall. If you would like a box of envelopes for the new year, please sign up at the table in the back and we will prepare one for you.

## KIDS CLUB

We had a great turn out at our Christmas dinner a couple weeks ago! But now we are off until February, when our staff from North Shore Community College can rejoin us. Please pray that this may be a fruitful month of planning and training for us.

*Laura Johnson*

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### Mission Statement

We are a family of faith, bound by God's love, following our Lord Jesus Christ as we worship and grow together. Called to join God in God's saving mission to the world and relying upon God's empowering Spirit, we go forth to serve and build the Beloved Community in Jesus' name.

### Contact Information

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Youth Minister: Marquis Lockhart  
Office Administrator: Laura Johnson  
Organist and Choir Director: Joseph Gurkan  
Sexton: Rick Penn