

Wednesday, January 6, 2021

Epiphany

ELW Service of the Word



Introduction to the day

The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Isaiah and Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations and people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed and washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
who was in the beginning,
who makes a dwelling among us,
who covers us with justice and mercy. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of goodness and lovingkindness,
**we confess that we have sinned against you
and our neighbors.**

**We have turned away from your invitation to new life.
We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden.
In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins,
those we know and those known only to you,
for the sake of the one who came to live among us,
Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Hear the good news of peace and salvation!
God forgives us all our sins,
not through our own work,
but through ✝ Jesus Christ, made known to all people.
With all who come to the manger,
rejoice in this amazing gift of grace. **Amen.**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Glory to God in the highest; and peace to God's people on earth.

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us; you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Isaiah 60:1-6

¹Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

²For darkness shall cover the earth,
and thick darkness the peoples;
but the LORD will arise upon you,
and his glory will appear over you.

³Nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴Lift up your eyes and look around;
they all gather together, they come to you;
your sons shall come from far away,
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

⁵Then you shall see and be radiant;
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

⁶A multitude of camels shall cover you,
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense,
and shall proclaim the praise of the LORD.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

¹Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to the king's son;

²**that he may rule your people righteously and the poor with justice;**

³that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴**Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵May he live as long as the sun and moon endure, from one generation to another.

⁶**Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁰**May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles pay tribute,
and the kings of Sheba and Seba offer gifts.**

¹¹May all kings bow down before him, and all the nations do him service.

¹²**For the king delivers the poor who cry out in distress,
the oppressed, and those who have no helper.**

¹³He has compassion on the lowly and poor, and preserves the lives of the needy.

¹⁴**From oppression and violence he redeems their lives,
and precious is their blood in his sight.**

SECOND READING: Ephesians 3:1-12

¹This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—²for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you, ³and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

***Alleluia.* We have observed his star at its rising, and have come to worship him.**

***Alleluia.* (Matt. 2:2)**

GOSPEL: Matthew 2:1-12

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” ³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶“And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage.” ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.
The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

NICENE CREED

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need. *A brief silence.*

Glorious God, fill your church with joy. Let your faithful people live as beacons of your redemption. Give wisdom and courage to your church that it may speak with boldness and confidence, even when words of mercy are met with scorn. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Show us your faithfulness in the rising and setting of the sun. Place wonder into the hearts of those who search the skies and explore the heavens. Curb waste and pollution, that all might have clean air to breathe. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Bring all nations and rulers to the splendor of your dawn. Raise up advocates who champion the cause of exploited and vulnerable people. Inspire leaders to be generous with abundance, that all people might live in stability and freedom. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Come quickly with your healing power to all who seek love, support, and restoration. Dispel fears and shadows. Restore broken relationships and mend broken hearts. Bring relief to those who are sick or struggling (*especially*). Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Send traveling mercies upon all who journey home by other roads. Guard refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers (*especially*). Protect families fleeing conflict in their homelands or abuse in their homes. Tend to those who have no place to lay their heads. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

According to the boundless riches of Christ, you draw all your saints, from the least to the greatest, to your heavenly places. As you created all things, make all things new again in the splendor of your glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

THANKSGIVING

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

We praise you, O God, for your creating Word!
You set the foundations of the world and gave breath to every living thing.
There is no Rock like you. Blessed be God, forevermore;
our hearts sing of your mercy and might!

We praise you, O God, for your liberating Word!
In your steadfast love you led the people whom you redeemed,
you guided them by your strength to the land of promise.
You have lifted up the lowly. Blessed be God, forevermore;
our hearts sing of your mercy and might!

We praise you, O God, for your life-giving Word!
Your Word became flesh and lived among us,
full of grace and truth.
You have looked with favor on the lowliness of your servants.
Blessed be God, forevermore;
our hearts sing of your mercy and might!

Blessed be God, from this time on and forevermore,
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
With Miriam, Hannah, and Mary,
we give you thanks and praise for your
creating, liberating, and life-giving Word!
Send us forth in the power of your Spirit
to sing of your greatness and serve all people,
following Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen. (*Exodus 15; 1 Samuel 2; Psalm 113; Luke 1; John 1*)

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

Almighty God,
who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary,
proclaimed joy through the angels,
sent the shepherds with good news,
and led the magi by a star,
bless you this day ✝ through the Word made flesh. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.
Thanks be to God.

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