

Home Worship: Epiphany

We gather in the name of the Father, the Son (+) and the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

Gathering Hymn: *We Three Kings*

1. We Three Kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain,
Moor and mountain,
Following yonder Star.

3. Frankincense to offer have I,
Incense owns a Deity nigh:
Prayer and praising
All men raising,
Worship Him God on High.
Refrain

Refrain:

O Star of Wonder, Star of Night,
Star with Royal Beauty bright,
Westward leading,
Still proceeding,
Guide us to Thy perfect Light.

4. Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom;—
Sorrowing, sighing,
Bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.
Refrain

2. Born a King on Bethlehem plain,
Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King for ever,
Ceasing never
Over us all to reign.
Refrain

5. Glorious now behold Him arise,
King, and God, and Sacrifice;
Heav'n sings Hallelujah:
Hallelujah the earth replies.
Refrain

Prayer of the day: God of the stars, whose guidance is always available to those who look up and listen, speak to us now. We are troubled by many things. Break into our thoughts to reveal great joy at the heart of life, that we may worship wholeheartedly, offer you our best, and lead others to the discoveries of faith. Amen.

2nd chapter of Matthew

Gospel: Matthew 2: 1-12

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 our Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Response to the Sermon: Have a conversation with your family about the reading or, if you're alone, write in a journal or take a minute to be quiet and reflect. The questions below might be a helpful place to start.

- *Epiphany means to manifest, to make known. Jesus is made known to the world through the wisemen. Jesus is made known to us by the nature of the gifts they brought. How is God calling you to make Christ known both in word and deed?*
- *Epiphany is known as the season of light because the wisemen were drawn by the Bethlehem star. How does the light of Christ shine in the darkness of your life? What spiritual practice might open your heart more fully to the light?*

Prayers of the Church:

Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

God of wanderers, you sent the magi from afar to witness the mystery and majesty of your birth. Send us into the world with your will in our hearts and on our lips. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You created heaven and earth. Through your Spirit send your all-encompassing love over the cosmos. Bless the stars that guide our way and the night sky that invites the earth into slumber. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You sent the magi to follow the star into an uncertain future. May all leaders and peoples seek your face, especially when paths are not clear, conflicts rage, tyrants oppress, and fear abounds. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

You sent the holy family to seek safety in a new land. Protect all who make similar journeys. Send your guiding Spirit to asylum seekers, refugees, and all who journey toward safety. Receive our prayers for all in need especially those on the prayer list at Solomon and those in our hearts and minds. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Your glory is shown to the saints. We give thanks for those whose earthly journey has ended especially Paul and Alan and now dwell with you forever. Give us signs of your continual presence until that day when we arise in you. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit with all those in worship today we pray the prayer Our Savior taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

Thanksgiving for the Word:

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God, **we give you thanks and praise.**

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. **Amen.**

Benediction:

The holiday is over, but the work of Christmas is just beginning. Guide us, loving God, as we follow in the footsteps of the one whose birth we celebrate. Grant us the grace to order our lives so that others might know that we have knelt in Bethlehem and worshiped the newborn king. Let us remember to follow the star instead of the crowd. If we lose our way, help us to remember, O God, the angel songs and the gift born to us that we might have life and have it abundantly.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Sending Song: *The First Noel*

1. The first Noel the angel did say
Was to certain poor shepherds
in fields as they lay;
In fields as they lay, keeping their
sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so
deep.

Refrain:

Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

2. They looked up and saw a star
Shining in the east beyond them far,
And to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night.

Refrain:

3. And by the light of that same star
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a king was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.

Refrain:

4. This star drew nigh to the northwest,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay
Right over the place where Jesus lay.

Refrain:

5. Then entered in those wise men three
Full reverently upon their knee,
and offered there in his presence
Their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.

Refrain: