

Epiphany Sunday, January 3, 2021

Greeting: God is good **all the time**. All the time **God is good**.

Question of the Day: Jesus was baptized at what age? a) infant b) youth c) adult

Call to Worship

God has sent light to dispel our fears.

The glory of God has risen upon us.

The gospel of Christ reveals God's grace.

We share in the promise of Jesus Christ.

The radiance of God's truth has come.

Boldly and confidently, we approach our God.

Prayer of Invocation

**O God, nations shall come to your light and rulers to the brightness of your dawn.
By the compelling radiance of your Spirit, draw us near, reveal your truth,
and teach us faithful obedience to your holy Word. Amen.**

Hymn "Star Child"

Psalm 72:1-14 NRSV

Give the king your justice, O God, and your righteousness to a king's son.

May he judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice.

May the mountains yield prosperity for the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

May he defend the cause of the poor of the people,
give deliverance to the needy, and crush the oppressor.

May he live while the sun endures, and as long as the moon,
throughout all generations.

May he be like rain that falls on the mown grass,
like showers that water the earth.

In his days may righteousness flourish and peace abound,
until the moon is no more.

May he have dominion from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

May his foes bow down before him, and his enemies lick the dust.

May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles render him tribute,
may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts.

May all kings fall down before him, all nations give him service.

For he delivers the needy when they call,
the poor and those who have no helper.

He has pity on the weak and the needy,
and saves the lives of the needy.

From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.

Isaiah 60:1-6 NRSV

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

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

Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
Lift 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.
Then 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.
A 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.

Matthew 2:1-12 NRSV

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "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." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

*'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.'*"

Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then 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." When 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. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

Response: *The Word of God, for the people of God! Thanks be to God!*

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Unison Prayer

Honored God, before whom the treasures of the magi are pale tokens of devotion, we are strangely moved by their ambitious journey and unhesitating response. Help us to value whatever we have to give you and rise to the challenge of giving our best to honor Christ. Speak to us that we might be led along the road you want us to travel. Remove from us both pretense and timidity, that we may draw others to follow the star. Amen.

Answer to the Question of the Day

Time of Offering *Thank you to everyone for your faithful generosity.*

Offering Prayer

Holy God, the magi brought gifts to Christ at his nativity and offered their lives in worship. With thankful hearts we offer ourselves and our gifts to you. Amen.

Reading and Reflection on, *When It Snowed That Night*, by Norma Farber Rev. Joyce Rich

Holy Communion *Have your bread and cup ready.*

Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you . . .

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven

we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you . . . as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and upon these gifts of bread and cup . . .

All honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

The Lord's Prayer

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. Amen.

Sharing of the Elements *Use the bread and cup that you have prepared.*

The bread which we break is a sharing in the body of Christ.

The cup over which we give thanks is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

Prayer After Receiving

Loving God, the riches you entrust to us cannot satisfy those who hoard them for their own purposes. We cannot receive what we are unwilling to share. Help us to invite others to taste and know the gift of Christ. Amen.

Commission and Blessing

Arise, shine, for your light has come.

Take that light into the world and spread it around.

Our hearts thrill and rejoice in our Savior.

You are commissioned and empowered to serve.

Look for the star that will lead you day by day.

In boldness and confidence we will make our witness.

Amen. **And Amen.**

Hymn "Go, Tell It on the Mountain"

Announcements

Readings For Next Week: Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Mark 1:1-8

*Liturgical resources drawn from: **Led by Love: Worship Resources for Year B**, Lavon Bayler © 1996 United Church Press; **Feasting on the Word: Liturgies for Year B, Volume I**, Kimberly Bracken Long, editor © 2014 Westminster John Knox Press; **Simply Wait: Cultivating Stillness in the Season of Advent**, Pamela C. Hawkins © 2007 Pamela C. Hawkins; **The United Methodist Book of Worship** © 1992 The United Methodist Publishing House; and **When It Snowed That Night**, text © 1993 by Thomas Farber, illustrations © 1993 by Petra Mathers.*