

Epiphany Vespers

January 6, 2022 3:30 p.m.



Watch our Chapel Service on CHANNEL 105

Order of Worship

How Brightly Beams the Morning Star

Lisa D.
Rhonda R.

Words of Welcome and Introduction

Lighting of the Candles

Confession

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid:

Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Forgiveness

In the mercy of Almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The Coventry Carol*Sing We Now of Christmas*

Lullay, Thou little tiny Child,
By, by, lully, lullay.
Lullay, Thou little tiny Child.
By, by, lully lullay.

O sisters too, how may we do,
For to preserve this day,
This poor Youngling for whom we sing,
By, by, lully, lullay?

Herod, the king, in his raging,
Charged he hath this day,
His men of might, in his own sight,
All children young to slay.

Then woe is me, poor Child, for Thee,
And ever mourn and say,
For Thy parting nor say nor sing,
By, by, lully, lullay.

Text: Robert Croo; **Music:** Coventry Carol, arr. Sir John Stainer.

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

Response: *And also with you.*

Canticle of Praise

ELW 289

Angels, from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;
Once you sang creation's story,
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain:

**Come and worship,
Come and worship,
Worship Christ,
The newborn king.**

Sages, leave your contemplations,
Brighter visions beam afar;
Seek the great desire of nations,
You have seen his natal star. **Refrain:**

All creation, join in praising God,
The Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising
To the eternal Three in One. **Refrain:**

Text: James Montgomery, alt., sts. 1-3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, st. 4; **Music:** Henry T. Smart.



Prayer of the Day

Almighty and ever-living God, you revealed the incarnation of your Son by the brilliant shining of a star. Shine the light of your justice always in our hearts and over all lands, and accept our lives as the treasure we offer in your praise and for your service, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

First Reading – Isaiah 60:1-6

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.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Response: *Thanks be to God!*

Second Reading – Ephesians 3:1-12

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—for surely you have already heard of the commission of God’s grace that was given me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. In 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: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of 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. Although 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, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so 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. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

Word of God, Word of Life.

Response: *Thanks be to God!*

Gospel Acclamation*Personent Hodie*Lisa D.
Rhonda R.**Gospel – Matthew 2:1-12**

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men 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 wise men 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.

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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.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Response:

Personent Hodie

Lisa D.
Rhonda R.



Meditation

Home by Another Way

Pr. Mandsager

In the Bleak Midwinter

ELW 294

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter, long ago.

Heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
 Heav'n and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
 In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
 The Lord God almighty, Jesus Christ.

What can I give him, poor as I am?
 If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;
 If I were a wise man I would do my part;
 Yet what I can I give him—give my heart.

Text: Christina Georgina Rossetti; **Music:** Gustav Holst.

Prayers of the Church

The Church of England

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

Response: And also with you.

Offertory

*What Star Is This,
 That Beams So Bright*

Lisa D.
 Rhonda R.

The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray.

**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.**

The Magi's Blessing—20 + C + M + B + 22

One tradition of Epiphany invokes the Magi's blessing upon the household. We typically read a brief, responsive liturgy visit and then "chalk the door" with a series of marks. The markings include letters, numbers, and crosses in a pattern:



The numbers correspond to the calendar year (20 and 22, for instance, for the year 2022); the crosses stand for Christ; and the letters have a two-fold significance: C, M, and B are the initials for the traditional names of the Magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar), but they are also an abbreviation of the Latin blessing *Christus mansionem benedicat*, which means, "May Christ bless this house."

**Liturgy of the Magi's Blessing
for
Northfield Retirement Community
and
All Who Dwell Herein**

Peace be with these households and all who dwell here, and peace to all who enter here. In keeping the feast of Epiphany, we celebrate the Magi's search for the infant king, the Christ child's appearing to the world, and the peace and hospitality shared between the Magi and the Holy Family.

May this home in the coming year be a place where Christ is pleased to dwell. May all our homes share the peace and hospitality of Christ which is revealed in the fragile flesh of an infant. **Amen.**

We Three Kings of Orient Are

WOV 646

We three kings of Orient are;
 Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
 Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
 Following yonder star.

Refrain:

**Oh, star of wonder, star of night,
 Star with royal beauty bright;
 Westward leading, still proceeding,
 Guide us to thy perfect light!**

Born a king on Bethlehem's plain,
 Gold I bring to crown him again;
 King forever, ceasing never,
 Over us all to reign. **Refrain:**

Frankincense to offer have I;
 Incense owns a deity nigh;
 Prayer and praising, gladly raising,
 Worshiping God Most High. **Refrain:**

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

Glorious now behold him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice;
Heav'n sings al – le – lu – ia:
Al – le – lu – ia the earth replies. **Refrain:**

Text: John Henry Hopkins, Jr., alt.; **Music:** John Henry Hopkins, Jr.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Live in love, as Christ loved us.

Response: Thanks be to God.

Postlude *As with Gladness Men of Old* Rhonda R.
 Did the Guiding Star Behold

One King's Epiphany

I shall miss the stars.

Not that I shall stop looking
as they pattern their wild will each night
across an inchoate sky, but I must see them with a
different awe.

If I trace their flames' ascending and descending –
relationships and correspondences –
then I deny what they have just revealed.

The sum of their oppositions, juxtapositions, led me to the
end of all sums:

a long journey, cold, dark and uncertain,
toward the ultimate equation.

How can I understand? If I turn back from this,
compelled to seek all answers in the stars,
then this – Who – they have led me to
is not the One they said: they will have lied.

No stars are liars!

My life on their truth!

If they had lied about this

I could never trust their power again.

But I believe they showed the truth,
truth breathing,
truth Whom I have touched with my own hands,
worshipped with my gifts.
If I have bowed, made
obeisance to this final arithmetic,
I cannot ask the future from the stars without betraying
the One whom they have led me to.

It will be hard not ask, just once again,
see by mathematical forecast where he will grow,
where go, what kingdom conquer, what crown wear.
But would it not be going beyond truth
(the obscene reduction ad absurdum)
to lose my faith in truth once, and once for all
revealed in the full dayspring of the sun?

I cannot go back to night.
O Truth, O small and unexpected thing,
You have taken so much from me.
How can I bear wisdom's pain?
But I have been shown: and I have seen.

Yes. I shall miss the stars.

~ Madeleine L'Engle



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