

Sunday January 9, 2022
Epiphanies: Rippling into Wider Circles

Prelude

Words of Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Leader: May this holy season of Epiphany be for each of us
a time of moving beyond what is “reasonable”
and toward the star of wonder.

People: **May we be moving beyond grasping tight to what we have
to unclenching our hands and letting go,
following the Light where it leads.**

Leader: Teach us Living Lord how to be moving beyond competition toward
cooperation, seeing that all humans are sisters and brothers.

People: **By the power of your love may we be moving beyond the anxiety of
small concerns towards the joys of justice and peace.**

Leader: May the transforming acceptance of Mary and Joseph,
the imagination of the shepherds,
and the persistence of the wise men
guide us as we seek the Truth.

People: **May we always be moving toward the Divine promise.
always aware God can be hidden in the frailest among us,
always open to the unexpected flash of Grace,
to the showing forth of that Love that embraces us all.**

Opening Epiphany Prayer **Unison**

Beloved Jesus,
may I have the faith and insight of the Wise Men,
who, when faced with an ancient hope of a foreign people
and the appearance of a remarkable star,
grasped the connection, and went and followed that star.

I stand now at the border of a new year,
which is to me like an unknown country.
I don't know what I will experience as I traverse it;
I don't know what obstacles will lie across my path.

Lead me, like the Wise Men, on a quest
of faithfulness and worship,
of hopefulness and giving,
and always unto Yourself. Amen.

Hymn #584: I Am the Light of the World
(Please see separate attachment for the score)

Hymn Leader: The GCC Choir

- 1) When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the sages and the shepherds have found their way home,
The work of Christmas is begun:

Refrain: "I am the light of the world!
You people come and follow me!"
If you follow and love you'll learn the mystery
Of what you were meant to do and be.

- 2) To find the lost and lonely one,
To heal the broken soul with love,
To feed the hungry children with warmth and good food,
To feel the earth below, the sky above!
- 3) To free the prisoner from all chains,
To make the powerful care,
To re-build the nations with strength of good will,
To see all God's children everywhere!
- 4) To bring hope to every task you do,
To dance at a baby's new birth,
To make music in an old person's heart,
And to sing to the colors of the earth!

Prayer of Confession **Unison**

When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone, when the sages and the shepherds have found their way home, the work of Christmas is begun. Our calling? To find the lost and lonely, to heal stressed broken souls with love, to feed the hungry, to free prisoners from all chains, to dance at a baby's birth, to bring hope, to make music in the hearts of others, and to sing the song of life! This is our calling. This Epiphany Sunday may we reflect on opportunities for sharing these gifts of God – opportunities embraced and some forsaken. None of us are perfect.

We turn to you God asking for you to show us how we can be the forgiven hopeful people striving by the grace of our Living Christ to learn, change, grow, embrace, cherish, love, and uphold all that is holy in life. Amen.

Moments for Reflection and Silence

Assurance of Pardon

The song of the angels is being sung through each of us. The stars in God's heaven can still guide us. The examples of the sages can still touch us. We can all live into God's vision for our lives. Listen, sense, feel, and respond to this song enticing you to be whole. Amen.

Passing of the Peace

Pastor: The Peace of Christ be with you
People: **And also with you!**

Reading

Liisa Granfors-Hunt

Isaiah 60:1-4 (NIV)

¹“Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.
²See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the LORD rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.
³Nations will come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.
⁴“Lift up your eyes and look about you:
All assemble and come to you;
your sons come from afar,
and your daughters are carried on the hip.
⁵Then you will look and be radiant,
your heart will throb and swell with joy;
the wealth on the seas will be brought to you,
to you the riches of the nations will come.

Special Music

The GCC Choir

Gospel Reading

Matthew 2:1-12 (NIV)

The Magi Visit the Messiah

2 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.”

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Musical Interlude

Sermon: Epiphanies: Rippling into Wider Circles

Music for Meditation

Prayers of the People

Hymn #119 My Soul Gives Glory to My God (verses 1, 3 and 5)

**1) My soul gives glory to my God. My heart pours out its praise.
God lifted up my lowliness in many marvelous ways.**

**3) From age to age, to all who fear, such mercy love imparts,
dispensing justice far and near, dismissing selfish hearts.**

**5) Praise God, whose loving covenant supports those in distress,
remembering past promises with present faithfulness.**

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer Unison

Offering Invitation

Three wise ones from afar came to pay homage to the newborn babe guided by a star shining in the heavens. Today, here and now, may we present our gifts to our messiah whose light shines brightly in our lives.

Offering and Dedication Unison

Child of God offspring of the holy ONE who has created and fashioned each of us in God's own image, accept these our gifts of gratitude for this life and its opportunities to answer your call, to hear your song, and to see your star of guiding light. Amen.

Benediction Unison

We feel the stirrings of love as we see the lost and lonely. We feel your creative power to heal stressed and broken souls among us. We see and care that there are those who are hungry among us. We will be your children of light with others hopeful that the dance, the music, and the song of life can be shared. By your grace we move expectantly into this coming week.