

The Order of Service for Home Worship

THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD



Hymn 1: As With Gladness Men of Old.

1. As with gladness men of old did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light, leading onward beaming bright;
So, most gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to thee.
2. As with joyful steps they sped, to that lowly manger-bed,
There to bend the knee before Him whom heaven and earth adore,
So may we with willing feet ever seek thy mercy-seat.
3. As their precious gifts they laid, at thy manger roughly made,
So may we with holy joy, pure, and free from sin's alloy,
All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to thee our heavenly King.
4. Holy Jesu, every day keep us in the narrow way;
And, when earthly things are past, bring our ransomed souls at last
Where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glory hide.
5. In the heavenly country bright need they no created light,
Thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;
There for ever may we sing alleluias to our King.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Father of glory, holy and eternal, look upon us now in power and mercy. May your strength overcome our weakness, your radiance transform our blindness, and your Spirit draw us to that love shown and offered to us by your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

As we come into the presence of our heavenly Father let us seek his forgiveness of our sins that we may know his peace in our hearts.

Lord Jesus, mighty God and Prince of Peace.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, Son of God and Son of Mary.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, Word made flesh and splendour of the Father. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**Alleluia, alleluia, glory be to God on high;
Alleluia, to the Saviour who has gained the victory;
Alleluia to the Spirit, fount of love and sanctity;
Alleluia, Alleluia, to the Triune Majesty.**

Collect:

Gracious God, who by the leading of a star manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth: mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith, may at last behold your glory face to face; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

A reading from the book of the prophet 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 72. 10-15 Response: May all nations be blessed in him

The kings of Tarshish and 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. (R)

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. (R)

From oppression and violence he redeems their life;
and precious is their blood in his sight.
Long may he live! May gold of Sheba be given to him.
May prayer be made for him continually
and blessings invoked for him all day long. (R)

A reading from Paul's letter to the 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 to me for you, 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 to 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Hail, Christ the light of the world! Listen to him.
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Listen to the Gospel of Christ according to St. Matthew. 2. 1-12
Glory to you, O Lord.

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. 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.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Meditation: O Star of wonder, star of night, star of royal beauty bright,
Westward leading still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light.

These are words most of us have sung for many years since we were children. Stars are wondrous, a starry night revealing the vastness of cosmos awe inspiring. The carol tells the story of the visit of the Magi. The visit we celebrate today. After a long, dangerous and eventful journey the Magi arrive in Bethlehem. The Shepherds have gone back to their fields and the Holy Family, still in Bethlehem, now staying in a house. Three strangers arrive – they have followed a star which led them first to Jerusalem where they encountered Herod – a meeting that would have consequences for Holy Family who would be forced to flee to Egypt for safety as Herod ordered all young boys be killed in Bethlehem. Now the star led them to Bethlehem and to the Holy Family. As carol tells us the Magi presented gifts: Gold for a King, Frankincense: for God and Myrrh a symbol of sacrifice. All these gifts tell us something important about identity of this baby. He is the Son of God, the Messiah. This visit of the Magi is an incredibly important visit for us. For the Magi were the first

gentiles to visit Jesus, the first gentiles to kneel and worship the new-born Christ, the first gentiles to be received by Jesus, revealing to us that Jesus is for everyone – Jew and Gentile. This visit reveals that we have a place with Jesus, he came for us to tell us we are loved by God and that we are important to him, that he shares our lives and walks with us. The Magi placed faith and trust in a new star that appeared in the sky. They followed that star, a long and difficult journey. They were determined, resolute. All that mattered was following the star. As Christians – disciples of Christ – we place our trust and faith in another star – Jesus the Light of the World. We live in the light of his love, walk in his light, live as he teaches us, follow where he has gone before. Although the journey may be long and difficult at times Light of star did not disappoint or fail the Magi and the Light of the world Jesus will not disappoint or fail us. As light of star brought Magi to Jesus to worship him so the Light of world Jesus will bring us to share his eternal glory when we take our place at his side in heaven where we will worship him in the company of Mary and Joseph, the angels and shepherds, the Magi and of all the saints for ever. Amen.

In the power of the Holy Spirit and in union with Christ let us bring our prayers for the Church and for the world to our heavenly Father.

We pray for the Church throughout the world, for the leaders of the Church among them Andrew our Archbishop and Mary our Bishop. We pray for the clergy and people of our diocese and for our own churches; that the Church may be a beacon of light leading people to Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for the people of the world, for the victims of violence and oppression, for all suffering the effects of natural disaster and for those suffering from famine or drought; May the light which is Christ shine on the darkest places of the world transforming them with his love. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for our own community, for our families, friends and neighbours. We give thanks for all who serve the needs of the vulnerable; may Christ be the star who leads us through life. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who are in need, for those who are sick, for those who are bereaved, for the lonely and isolated and for all in any kind of need. We hold in our hearts before God those known to us who are in need at this time and all whose names are recorded in our parish intercession books; may they be strengthened by the Holy Spirit and consoled with the love of Christ. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray for all who have died. We remember before God our own departed loved ones and we pray for the recently departed and those whose anniversary of death

falls at this time. May they share the eternal glory of heaven in the company of all the saints. Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We bring all our prayers to our heavenly Father as we pray together:

**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,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Peace:

Our Saviour Christ is the Prince of peace; of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end.

The peace of the Lord be with you and with all those whom you love.

And also with you.

Let us pray:

God our Father, whose Word has come among us in the Holy Child of Bethlehem: may the light of faith illumine our hearts and shine in our words and deeds; through him who is Christ the Lord. Amen.

The Blessing:

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

Christ, who by taking our flesh, gathered into one all things earthly and heavenly, fill you with all joy and peace and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn 2: O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness

- 1. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness;
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
With Gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,
Kneel and adore him the Lord is his name.**
- 2. Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness:
High on his heart he will bear it for thee,
Comfort thy sorrows, and answer my prayerfulness,
Guiding my steps as may best for thee be.**
- 3. Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
Of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:
Truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
These are the offerings to lay on his shrine.**
- 4. These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
He will accept for the name that is dear;
Mornings for joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
Trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.**

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