

Epiphany Sunday

January 9, 2022

Mark 2:4 Adaptive Worship Service



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Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! The feast of Epiphany (“manifestation”) concludes the Christmas season with a celebration of God’s glory revealed in the person of Jesus Christ. In Ephesians, that glory is proclaimed for all nations & people. Like the light of the star that guided the magi to Jesus, the light of Christ reveals who we are: children of God who are claimed & washed in the waters of baptism. We are sent out to be beacons of the light of Christ, sharing the good news of God’s love to all people.

There are a few things to know about this service: you are not required to stand at any point though you can move around anytime you want or need, prayer slips are available for your prayers to be included in Prayer Time, and Holy Communion is served with gluten-free bread and grape juice.

GATHERING SONG

All Are Welcome

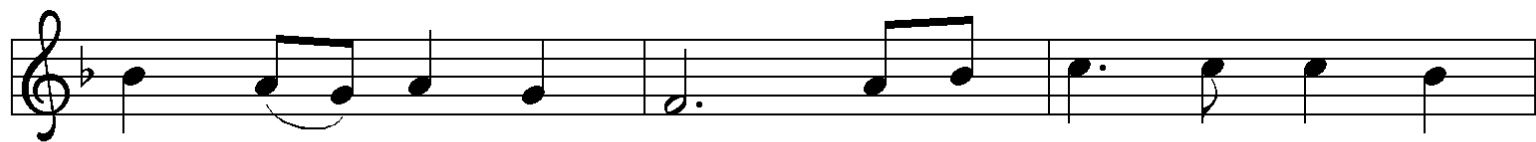
Verses 1 & 3



1 Let us build a house where love can dwell and all can safe - ly



live, a place where saints and chil - dren tell how



hearts learn to for - give. Built of hopes and dreams and



vi - sions, rock of faith and vault of grace; here the love of



Christ shall end di - vi - sions: All are wel - come,



all are wel - come, all are wel - come in this place.

3 Let us build a house where love is found
in water, wine and wheat:
a banquet hall on holy ground
where peace and justice meet.
Here the love of God, through Jesus,
is revealed in time and space;
as we share in Christ the feast that frees us:
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen

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GREETING

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

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray. O God, on this day you revealed your Son to the nations by the leading of a star. Lead us now by faith to know your presence in our lives, and bring us at last to the full vision of your glory, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING Ephesians 3:1-12

Introduction to the Lesson: What had been hidden from previous generations is now made known through the gospel ministry of Paul and others. In Christ both Jews and Gentiles participate in the richness of God's promised salvation.

Reader: For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles, pray to God. 2 Surely you have heard that God in his grace has given me this work to do for your good. 3 God revealed his secret plan and made it known to me. (I have written briefly about this, 4 and if you will read what I have written, you can learn about my understanding of the secret of Christ.) 5 In past times human beings were not told this secret, but God has revealed it now by the Spirit to his holy apostles and prophets. 6 The secret is that by means of the gospel the Gentiles have a part with the Jews in God's blessings; they are members of the same body and share in the promise that God made through Christ Jesus.

7 I was made a servant of the gospel by God's special gift, which he gave me through the working of his power. 8 I am less than the least of all God's people; yet God gave me this privilege of taking to the Gentiles the Good News about the infinite riches of Christ, 9 and of making all people see how God's secret plan is to be put into effect. God, who is the Creator of all things, kept his secret hidden through all the past ages, 10 in order that at the present time, by means of the church, the angelic rulers and powers in the heavenly world might learn of his wisdom in all its different forms. 11 God did this according to his eternal purpose, which he achieved through Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 In union with Christ and through our faith in him we have the boldness to go into God's presence with all confidence.

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord. **Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

Introduction to the Gospel: God's promise shines bright in the night as magi follow a star to honor a new king. Strangers from a faraway land, they welcome the long-awaited messiah of Israel.

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to Matthew in the 2nd chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Pastor: Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea, during the time when Herod was king. Soon afterward, some men who studied the stars came from the East to Jerusalem 2 and asked, "Where is the baby born to be the king of the Jews? We saw his star when it came up in the east, and we have come to worship him."

3 When King Herod heard about this, he was very upset, and so was everyone else in Jerusalem. 4 He called together all the chief priests and the teachers of the Law and asked them, "Where will the Messiah be born?"

5 "In the town of Bethlehem in Judea," they answered. "For this is what the prophet wrote:

6 'Bethlehem in the land of Judah,

you are by no means the least of the leading cities of Judah;
for from you will come a leader who will guide my people Israel.'"

7 So Herod called the visitors from the East to a secret meeting and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 Then he sent them to Bethlehem with these instructions: "Go and make a careful search for the child; and when you find him, let me know, so that I too may go and worship him."

9-10 And so they left, and on their way they saw the same star they had seen in the East. When they saw it, how happy they were, what joy was theirs! It went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 11 They went into the house, and when

they saw the child with his mother Mary, they knelt down and worshiped him. They brought out their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and presented them to him.

12 Then they returned to their country by another road, since God had warned them in a dream not to go back to Herod.

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord. **Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

Light for All

One of the most moving aspects of many Christmas Eve church services comes near the conclusion of worship, when the lights are turned off and the church is plunged into darkness, heightening the lateness of the hour. After a momentary pause, a single candle is lit. The nave is still dark. We cannot see the faces of the people around us—yet the difference in emotion, between full darkness and the light of just one candle, is striking. What relief, what hopefulness sweeps over us with only a single light piercing the dark.

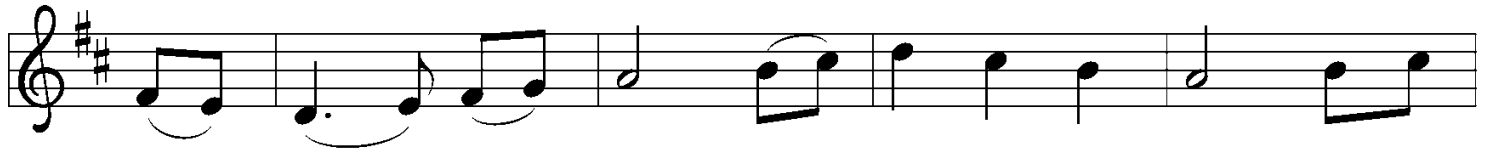
The light grows brighter gradually, unevenly, as we help light one another's candles. This tradition brings to life the messages of today's readings: The light of Christ has come not to a select few, but to everyone. Shining over all the earth, Christ's light brightens the darkness for rich and poor alike, for the influential and the powerless, for people who gather for worship each week and for those who show up only once or twice in a year, or not at all. Everyone gets a candle; everyone receives the light.

And what does this light signify? The magi, following the light of the star, bow down and worship the child Jesus, bringing gifts that signify the roles Jesus will fulfill: gold for a king, incense for a priest, and myrrh, used to anoint the dead, because he has come to die and rise for us. Once the magi have been in the presence of the light of the world, they are transformed. They go home by another way, frustrating the aims of unjust King Herod.

Isaiah reminds us that the glory of the Lord disperses the darkness. Like the magi in our gospel reading, we are transformed by the light of Christ to do the work of justice and righteousness, not for a select few, but for all. Guided by the light, we are freed to work to bring about God's kingdom wherever we are, and for whomever we encounter.

HYMN OF THE DAY

The First Noel 1-3



1 The first No - el the an - gel did say was to
2 They look - ed up and saw . . . a star shin - ing
3 And by the light of that . . . same star three . .

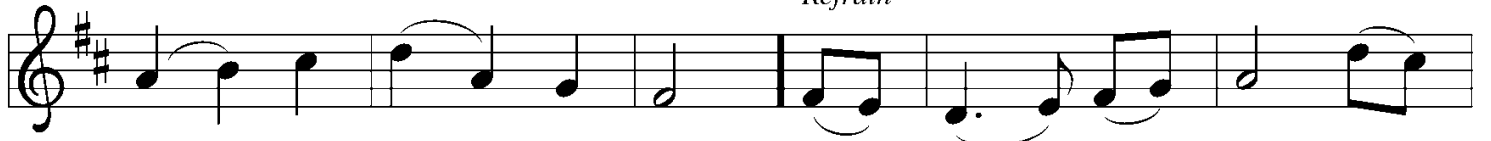


cer - tain poor shep - herds in fields as they lay; in fields where
in . . . the east . . be - yond . . them far; and to the
wise . . men came . . from coun - try far; to seek for a



they lay, keep - ing their sheep, on a cold win - ter's
earth it gave . . . great light, and . . so it con -
king was their . . . in - tent, and to fol - low the

Refrain



night that was so deep.
tin-ued both day and night.
star wher - ev - er it went. No - el, No - el, No -



el, No - el! Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

Text: English traditional

Music: THE FIRST NOWELL, English traditional

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each part of the prayers ends with the words:
and we respond:

“Lord, in your mercy,”

“Hear our prayer.”

OFFERING

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

BLESSING

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy. The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

The Doxology

Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and shared in the Lord's Supper, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Go in Peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior.

Congregation: Thanks be to God!

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