**Epiphany Worship**

**CALL TO WORSHIP** ~ written by Cheryl Lawrie

We gather:

a community of faith in God’s world.

We gather to celebrate

that no darkness can extinguish light,

to remember

that love will always be more powerful than death,

and to trust that

peace will always be stronger than violence.

We gather,

people of faith in the light of God’s world.

Welcome to worship.

**HYMN** We Three Kings *#254*

1 We three kings of Orient are;

bearing gifts we traverse afar,

field and fountain, moor and mountain,

following yonder star.

Refrain:

O star of wonder, star of light,

star with royal beauty bright,

westward leading, still proceeding,

guide us to thy perfect light.

2 Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,

gold I bring to crown him again,

King forever, ceasing never,

over us all to reign. [Refrain]

3 Frankincense to offer have I;

incense owns a Deity nigh;

prayer and praising, voices raising,

worshiping God on high. [Refrain]

4 Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume

breathes a life of gathering gloom;

sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,

sealed in the stone-cold tomb. [Refrain]

5 Glorious now behold him arise;

King and God and sacrifice:

Alleluia, Alleluia,

sounds through the earth and skies. [Refrain]

Author: John H. Hopkins, Jr. (1857)

**SCRIPTURE** Psalm 72 (NET)

11 All kings will bow down to God;

all nations will serve the Lord.

12 For God will rescue those in need when they cry out for help, and the oppressed who have no defender.

13 God will take pity on the poor and those in need; the lives of the broken God will save.

14 From harm and violence God will defend them;

God will value their lives.

The Word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

**HYMN** *Fill My Cup, Lord #641*

Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it up, Lord.

Come and quench this thirsting of my soul.

Bread of Heaven, feed me till I want no more;

fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole.

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Words: Richard Blanchard (1959)

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FOR EPIPHANY— Bruce Prewer**

Let us long for, and pray for, the light of God in Christ Jesus to drive back the darkness of human error, misery and evil.

Where people are lost and jaded in consumerism,

where addiction to alcohol, other drugs, and gambling is causing ruin,

**we pray for the hope of epiphany.**

Where dictators rule without mercy or wisdom,

where democracies are manipulated by the rich and powerful,

**we pray for the justice of epiphany.**

Where youth see no prospect in the future,

where the long-term unemployed exist without hope,

**we pray for the light of epiphany.**

Where the church dodges its evangelical mission,

where the church evades its social and political responsibility,

**we pray for the truth of epiphany.**

Where the ill face death fearfully,

where people without purpose face life despairingly,

**we pray for the love of epiphany.**

Most holy Friend, to you all souls are precious; please take from our eyes the scales of prejudice or indifference, that we may increasingly share your awareness of the neglected and abused people, and do all we can to make your love real. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen!**

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**SPECIAL MUSIC** “I Wonder as I Wander”

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE**— Bruce Prewer,

The coming of Christ was not, and is not, widely welcomed. Wherever there is Epiphany there will also be darkness:

the darkness of old superstitions which refuse to fade away easily;

the darkness of pride in the half truths that have masqueraded as wisdom;

the darkness of entrenched evil that hates the light and tries to dispose of it;

the darkness of apathy that cannot be bothered.

Let us make our confession together,

**Most holy and most loving God,**

**we admit to you and to each other,**

**that we are creatures who either through foolishness or willfulness**

**often choose darkness instead of light.**

**Here and now we surrender to you our fears and proud opinions,**

**our short-sighted folly and our pompous wisdom,**

**our deep seated sins and our apathy towards change and renewal.**

**Please forgive the darkness and pain we have inflicted on others,**

**and restore the light-starved hopes and ideals within our own souls.**

**Trusting your grace, we earnestly pray: “Create in us a clean heart, O God,**

**and renew a right spirit within us.”**

**Through Christ Jesus our Saviour. Amen!**

**ASSURANCE**

My friends, Epiphany is good news!

The Light comes to save us.

Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners.

In his name I declare to you:

Yours sins are forgiven!

Thanks be to God!

**INVITATION TO THE TABLE AT EPIPHANY~ Moira Laidlaw**

We give you thanks, O God, for making your love evident since the very beginning of time when you spoke the word which replaced the darkness of chaos with life-giving light. A light which has nurtured generations of people, and plants and creatures, great and small. A light which also revealed the fear and powerlessness caused by corrupt and evil actions. And so you spoke the Word which would once and for all dispel the darkness of chaotic lives. Through your love for the world the Word became flesh and lived among us full of grace and truth. The angels caroled glory to you in the highest heavens and peace to all people on earth, and we join with them and with all people to praise your holy name:

**Holy Lord, God of endless love,**

**heaven and earth are surely full of your glory.**

**The angels sang of it—we have been lavished with it.**

**Blessed is he who was born that we might have life.**

**Glory to God and on earth peace to all people.**

Holy God, as the travelers with their treasures were overwhelmed with joy on finding Jesus, so we also are overwhelmed on finding out the depth of his love for us. For Jesus showed just how beloved we are to him, by loving us and giving himself for us. On that night when he gave himself up for us, as he sat at the table and broke bread with his friends, he said: 'Take and eat; this is my body which is broken for you. Remember me each time you do this.' After they had eaten, he took the cup, and said: 'Remember me as you drink from this, for it is my life, poured out for you—the beginning of a new relationship with God.’

Send the power of your Holy Spirit upon these gifts of bread and wine, O God, that we may experience the presence of the Word-made-flesh—Jesus Christ. Breathe your Spirit in us that we may be one body with him—living out his ministry in the world today and every day. This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen

**SHARING OF THE BREAD AND CUP**

**RESPONSE TO GIFTS OF GRACE**

Now with our hearts united together, we share the prayer Jesus taught saying: **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.**

**SCRIPTURE** Isaiah 60:1-6 (NRSV)

“Arise, shine, for your light has come,

 and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.

2 See, darkness covers the earth

 and thick darkness is over the peoples,

but the Lord rises upon you

 and his glory appears over you.

3 Nations 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.

5 Then 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.

6 Herds of camels will cover your land,

 young camels of Midian and Ephah.

And all from Sheba will come,

 bearing gold and incense

 and proclaiming the praise of the Lord.

The Word of God for the People of God.

**Thanks be to God.**

**MESSAGE***Full Service Camel Stop*

 Rev. David W. Brown

**HYMN** *In the Bleak Midwinter #221*

1. 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.

3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there,

cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;

but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,

worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

4. 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.

Author: Christina G. Rossetti (1872)

Composer: Gustav Holst (1906))

**BENEDICTION**

We have celebrated together

that Jesus Christ came not only for Christians,

but to be known by every person,

every country, every culture on earth.

For He is the Savior of all.

May we come to know Him better

and then make Him known to others,

especially by the way we live.

And may almighty God bless you,

the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.