

Where Two or Three are Gathered: Worship for Small Assemblies

Epiphany and Time after Epiphany Year A – January 12 – February 23, 2020

Planning Notes for Leaders

Beginning with an account of Jesus' Baptism and concluding with Transfiguration, the season of Epiphany invites worshippers to enter into an overview of Jesus' life and ministry. In the time after Epiphany, we see glimpses of the divine breaking into our midst in the testimony of John the Baptist, the call of the disciples, the sending out of Jesus' followers and finally, the divine revelation of Jesus' true identity as Son of God. Just like the disciples, the worshipping assembly is called to gather and learn, to grow and deepen in faith, and is finally sent out into the world to share the Good News with the world that surrounds us and of which we are an integral part.

The season of Epiphany is quite long this year with Easter falling late in 2020. This might be a good opportunity for worship leaders to consider a sermon series, or a sequence of teachings or conversations with the gathered assembly. One option for such a series would be to make use of the abundant light images present in the readings: "I will give you as a light to the nations" (Isa. 49:6 on January 19); "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isa. 9:2, Matt. 4:16, and Psalm 27 on January 26); "A light to reveal you to the nations" (Luke 2:32 and other images of light in the liturgy for the Presentation of Our Lord on February 2); "You are the light of the world" and "Let your light shine" (Matt. 5:14-16 on February 9).¹ Alternately, the narrative nature of the weekly Gospel readings would offer an opportunity to map out a timeline of Jesus' ministry in a matter of weeks while exploring the way in which these themes show up in the context of the congregation's mission and outreach. Another option would be to utilize the readings from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. Readings from this particular epistle are spread out over a five-week period in this season and would provide a good background against which to examine the questions and realities that your congregation wrestles with today.

Liturgical Colours and Worship Space

- For the first (Jan. 12) and last (Feb. 23) Sunday in Epiphany the liturgical colour is WHITE. If choosing to celebrate Presentation of Our Lord on Feb. 2nd, the colour for this Sunday is also WHITE.
- For the Sundays in between (Jan. 19, 26; Feb. 2, 9, 16) the liturgical colour is GREEN.

¹ Sundays and Seasons, resources for time after Epiphany: sundaysandseasons.com

- Ideally, the baptismal font will be placed front and centre of the worship space during Epiphany to remind the assembly of the way in which we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, named God's beloved children and sent out to proclaim the Good News of the Gospel to all who are in need of healing.
- While the worship space may seem bare and simplistic after it has been stripped of Christmas decorations, the season of Epiphany provides an opportunity for a couple of different thematic considerations. The emphasis on light in our lectionary readings can be reflected in the worship space by ensuring that winter's darkness is contrasted by an abundance of natural light, candles, and other lights. Also, the emphasis that the bookend Sundays of the season place on incarnation can be reflected in the worship space by placing branches or budding plants near the altar. "Attending thoughtfully to this season of incarnation can breathe fresh life into a worship space as we launch a new liturgical year. It is a new birth and life waiting to happen!"²

Liturgy and Song

- The time after Epiphany is a perfect opportunity for the assembly to learn a new liturgical setting. Components of the liturgy you have chosen can be incorporated piece by piece during the seven weeks. Similarly, new hymns can be introduced to the assembly and repeated as necessary throughout the season.
- Consider incorporating a Thanksgiving for Baptism instead of Confession and Forgiveness on the first and last Sunday of the season.

Note about Worship Orders

- Full worship orders are provided only for the first Sunday in the time after Epiphany. The rubric will remain the same throughout the season, and all changes in worship components will be noted on instructions for each individual Sunday following.
- For Sunday, February 2nd two different worship options are offered. The first option follows the usual lectionary texts for the fourth Sunday after Epiphany (Lectionary 4, Year A). The second option offers readings and materials for celebrating Presentation of Our Lord, which happens to fall on a Sunday this year.
- If printing bulletins or creating a presentation for screens or projectors, please be sure to credit the authors and sources of additional resources listed in this document. This information can be found in the provided footnotes.
- May God's joy and peace accompany you in your ministry throughout this season of Epiphany!

² Sundaysandseasons.com

January 12, 2020 – Baptism of Our Lord
First Sunday after Epiphany – Lectionary 1

Colour: White

Lectionary:

Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- *Crashing waters at creation* ELW 455
- *Oh, love, how deep* ELW 322
- *Baptized and set free* ELW 453

Hymn of the day:

- *Christ, when for us you were baptized* ELW 304
- *When Jesus came to Jordan* ELW 305
- *This is the Spirit's entry now* ELW 448

Offering hymn:

- *By your hand you feed your people* ELW 469 v. 1,3
- *O Morning star, how fair and bright!* ELW 308

Communion hymn:

- *Spirit of gentleness* ELW 396

Sending hymn:

- *Songs of thankfulness and praise* ELW 310
- *In Christ called to baptize* ELW 575

Additional music

- *Song over the waters* from “Worship and Praise” is a rather beautiful and well-suited hymn for this particular Sunday (W&P 127). It could be used as a sung prayer of intercession with a cantor singing the leader part, or incorporated into the worship service as hymn of the day.

Order for Holy Communion

Gathering

Welcome

Thanksgiving for baptism: ELW p. 97. Consider inviting the assembly to gather around the font and invite a child or youth to pour water into the font as the prayer or thanksgiving is being spoken.

Gathering hymn

Greeting

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

And also with you.

Kyrie: ELW 155 (or use one from a liturgical setting from ELW)

Canticle of praise: ELW 164 (or use a liturgical setting from ELW)

Prayer of the day:

O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Word

First Reading

Psalm: read responsively and, if possible, incorporate a sung refrain

Second reading

Gospel acclamation: ELW 174 (or use one from a liturgical setting)

Gospel reading

Sermon

Hymn of the day

Apostles' creed: ELW p. 127

Prayers of intercession:

Called together through water and the Word, we boldly pray for the church, the world, and all who long to hear God's voice.

Renewing God, thank you for the gift of baptism. Give your church boldness to proclaim your promises. Tear down obstacles of injustice so that your word of hope reaches the ends of the earth. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Almighty God, we rejoice in the glory of your creation: the beauty of rivers and streams, glaciers and oceans, lakes and ponds. Bring restoration to your earth, and free us from overuse and abuse of water, air, and land. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of peace, we give thanks for order in the midst of chaos, though we long for greater justice in our world. Raise up wise and compassionate servant leaders so that all experience your reign of peace. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Holy God, thank you for the powerful healing we witness through doctors and nurses, medication, therapy, and holistic means. Break through clouds of pain and anguish with your voice of comfort. Proclaim hope to all who grieve, and send healing to all who are sick (*especially all those we name in our hearts or out loud*). Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of courage, we rejoice in this community of hope. Strengthen all who are preparing for baptism and renew the faith of sponsors, mentors, parents, grandparents, friends, and all who guide the newly baptized in this life of joy. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of hope, unleash your Spirit to increase our trust in you. We give thanks for the lives of the saints who inspire us with lives of baptismal witness. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

We place our prayers before you, God, united in your Spirit; through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.³

Sharing of Peace

³ Sundaysandseasons.com

Meal

Offering: the offering hymn can be sung while the offering is being collected

Offering prayer:

God of wonder,
you formed us in our mother's womb,
and from mother earth you bring forth this bread and wine.
We place them on your table,
together with our lives and all that you have made.
Open the heavens to us and pour out your Spirit.
We wait for your mercy;
we long for your peace;
we hunger and thirst for Jesus Christ,
our banquet of life.
Amen.⁴

Great Thanksgiving: Use a liturgical setting from ELW that is appropriate for your context

Preface for Epiphany:

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all nations;
in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son;
and in the miracle of water turned to wine he revealed your glory.
And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth
and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, Holy, Holy: (Continue with liturgical setting of your choosing)

Thanksgiving at the table (Advent through Epiphany)

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

⁴ Sundaysandseasons.com

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.
Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.

With this bread and cup
we remember your Word dwelling among us,
full of grace and truth.
We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection.
We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit.
Come among us.
Bless this meal.
May your Word take flesh in us.
Awaken your people.
Fill us with your light.
Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours,
Holy One of Israel,
Word of God incarnate,
Power of the Most High,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Lord's prayer

Lamb of God: (Continue with liturgical setting of your choosing)

Invitation to communion:

Come to the table of mercy and joy for all is now ready!

Prayer after communion:

Faithful God,
you have kept your promise to us in this meal,
nourishing us with the gift of salvation.
Now send your servants forth in peace,
that we may testify to your goodness
and share the hope that is ours
in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Amen.

Blessing:

May Christ, the wisdom and power of God,
and the source of our life together,
keep you united in mind and purpose.
And the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with you always. **Amen.**⁵

Sending hymn

Dismissal

Go in peace. Let your light shine.
Thanks be to God!

⁵ Sundaysandseasons.com

Service of the Word

*All components of worship are the same as with the Service for Holy Communion until the meal section. When communion is omitted, *Thanksgiving for the Word* takes its place and can be found on p. 220 in ELW.

Gathering and Word

*See Order for Holy Communion

Meal

Offering: the offering hymn can be sung while the offering is being collected

Offering prayer:

God of mercy and grace,
the eyes of all wait upon you,
and you open your hand in blessing.
Fill us with good things at your table,
that we may come to the help of all in need,
through Jesus Christ, our redeemer and Lord. Amen.

Canticle of Thanksgiving: ELW p. 219

Thanksgiving for the Word: ELW p. 220

Let us pray.

Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,
we give you thanks and praise.

By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God,
we give you thanks and praise.

Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,
we give you thanks and praise.

Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Amen.

Lord's prayer

Blessing:

May Christ, the wisdom and power of God,
and the source of our life together,
keep you united in mind and purpose.
And the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the + Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with you always. **Amen.**⁶

Sending hymn

Dismissal

Go in peace. Let your light shine.
Thanks be to God!

⁶ Sundaysandseasons.com

January 19, 2020
Second Sunday after Epiphany – Lectionary 2

Colour: Green

Lectionary:

Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- I want to walk as a child of the light ELW 815
- Drawn to the light ELW 593

Hymn of the day:

- Here I am, Lord ELW 574
- Lamb of God ELW 336

Offering:

- To God our thanks we give ELW 682
- Take, oh, take me as I am ELW 814

Communion:

- Blessing, Honor, and Glory ELW 433
- Bread of life from heaven ELW 474

Sending:

- We are marching in the light ELW 866
- Praise to you, O God of Mercy ELW 208

Resources for Worship

Call to worship (Optional): Can be used in place of Confession and Forgiveness and is followed by the gathering hymn

O God, you called us by name to come,
and we respond with delight and gladness
**In joyful obedience,
we come to worship our God.**

Rising out of the depths of despair,
we gratefully gather for worship.

**In joyful hope,
we come to worship our loving God.**

Our God had given us a new song
of praise to sing to our Awesome God!

**In joyful trust,
we come to worship our God. Amen.⁷**

OR

Confession and forgiveness: To be used in place of the Thanksgiving for Baptism found
in the order of worship for Jan. 12th

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
the eternal voice from heaven,
the anointed and beloved one,
the Spirit moving over the waters.

Amen.

As we approach the mystery of God, let us come in confession,
trusting the love of Christ crucified and risen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God who searches us and knows us,
**you have shown us what is good,
but we have looked to other lights to find our way.
We have not been just in our dealings with others.
We have chosen revenge over mercy.
We have promoted ourselves
Instead of walking humbly with you.
With what shall we come before you?
Forgive us our sin,
and show us your salvation
in the face of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Beloved of God,
you have not received the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit that is from God,
poured out for you in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.
Receive the promise of baptism:
You are God's child; + your sins are forgiven.
Rejoice and be glad, for yours is the reign of heaven.
Amen.⁸

⁷ © 2011 Joan Stott – 'The Timeless Psalms' RCL Psalms Year A. Used with permission.

Prayer of the day:

Let us pray,
Holy God, our strength and our redeemer, by your Spirit hold us forever, that
through your grace we may worship you and faithfully serve you, follow you and
joyfully find you, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of intercession:

Let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need:

You command us, Heavenly Father, through your prophet Isaiah to listen and
pay attention, for we are far away from you. The sharp tongues of the prophets
do not let us have a glib faith. Your Son, our Savior, has been sent as our light in
a dark world. Let us walk:

In the light of the Lord.

Father God, you listen to us like you listened to the Psalmists when we sing our
songs, cry our laments, and put our trust in your gracious mercy. Help us delight
in your will. Put your law and your help in our hearts, that we may rejoice in your
steadfast love. Let us walk:

In the light of the Lord.

We thank you, Lord Jesus Christ, that you have called us to be saints together.
As we grow in our faith in your Body, the church, fill us with your spiritual gifts
that we may not be lacking in zeal or courage. Let us walk:

In the light of the Lord.

Lamb of God, John the Baptist proclaimed that you take away the sin of the
world. Take away our sin, our selfishness, that we may be your people in a world
that needs you more than it can admit. Help us take no offense in the fact that we
need you too. Let us walk:

In the light of the Lord.

Open our ears, Holy Spirit, that we may hear your call through the Scriptures, the
preaching of your word, the singing of your inspired hymns, and the praying of
our prayers. When we hear you call, may we walk with you as readily as Andrew
and Peter. Let us walk:

In the light of the Lord.

We bring before you those whom we know need healing, hope, and heavenly
help. We pray especially for those whom we name in our hearts or aloud....
touch them, and us with your presence. Let us walk:

In the light of the Lord.

⁸ Sundaysandseasons.com

We place our prayers before you, God, united in your Spirit; through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.⁹

⁹ Adapted for use from a prayer written by Richard Bansemer and shared on www.lutheranforum.org

January 26, 2020
Third Sunday after Epiphany – Lectionary 3

Colour: Green

Lectionary:

Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1,4-9
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- Let us go now to the banquet ELW 523
- Dearest Jesus, at your word ELW 520

Hymn of the day:

- Will you come and follow me ELW 798
- You have come down to the lakeshore ELW 817

Offering:

- God extends an invitation ELW 486
- Lord of light ELW 688 v.1

Communion:

- Eat this bread, drink this cup ELW 492
- Come to me, all pilgrims thirsty ELW 777

Sending hymn:

- Go, my children, with my blessing ELW 543
- On our way rejoicing ELW 537

Resources for worship

Call to worship (optional): to be used in place of Confession and Forgiveness. Followed by Gathering hymn.

You call us,
Wanderer of seashores and sidewalks,
inviting us to sail out of our smug harbors
into the uncharted waters of faith
to wander off from our predictable paths to follow You

into the unpredictable footsteps of the kingdom;
to leave the comfort of our homes and accompany You
into the uncomfortable neighborhoods we usually avoid.

As we wait, in our simple, sometimes crazy,
constantly uncertain lives,
speak to us, Spirit of Grace:
of that hope which is our anchor;
of that peace which is our rock;
of that grace which is our refuge.¹⁰

OR

Confession and forgiveness:

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the eternal voice from heaven,
the anointed and beloved one,
the Spirit moving over the waters.

Amen.

As we approach the mystery of God, let us come in confession,
trusting the love of Christ crucified and risen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God who searches us and knows us,
you have shown us what is good,
but we have looked to other lights to find our way.
We have not been just in our dealings with others.
We have chosen revenge over mercy.
We have promoted ourselves
Instead of walking humbly with you.
With what shall we come before you?
Forgive us our sin,
and show us your salvation
in the face of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Beloved of God,
you have not received the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit that is from God,
poured out for you in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.
Receive the promise of baptism:
You are God's child; ☩ your sins are forgiven.
Rejoice and be glad, for yours is the reign of heaven.
Amen.¹¹

¹⁰ Adapted from a prayer written by Rev. Bob Gibson for the London Conference of the United Church of Canada.
Found on re-worship.blogspot.com. Resources available to be used for non-commercial purposes only.

Prayer of the day:

Let us pray,
Lord God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us.
Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that
come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of intercession:

Called together through water and the Word, we boldly pray for the church, the
world, and all who long to hear God's voice.

Holy One, your voice calls us to follow. Thank you for raising up missionaries in
every generation and for all who create communities of grace today. Open our
hearts to serve you near and far. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Maker of all, we rejoice in the beauty and abundance of the earth. Unite us in our
shared calling to be stewards of creation, to reduce waste, and to simplify our
lives for your sake. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Ruler of all, thank you for those who serve as elected leaders in our governing
bodies. Gather wise and courageous voices together, that your mercy and justice
would dawn upon all people and nations. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Healer of all, thank you for sanctuary and safety. Uplift all who live where fear
reigns and evil divides. Give refugees and all who seek safety a path toward
hope and new life. Grant healing and wholeness to all who are sick, lonely, or
grieving (*especially those we name in our hearts or out loud*). Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of courage, thank you for faithful teachers of your Word in this and every
place. Inspire our faith formation efforts with all generations as you call us to
follow you. Bless our children, youth, and adults who engage in learning. Let us
walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Risen Lord, we marvel at the meaning of your resurrection. Give us faith to place
all hope in you as we give thanks for the faithful departed. May their witness help
us follow your call. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

¹¹ Sundaysandseasons.com

We place our prayers before you, God, united in your Spirit; through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.¹²

¹² Sundaysandseasons.com

February 2, 2020 – Option 1
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany – Lectionary 4

Colour: Green

Lectionary:

Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15
1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Matthew 5:1-12

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- We are called ELW 720
- Light shone in darkness ELW 307

Hymn of the day:

- Blessed are they ELW 728
- When the poor ones ELW 725

Offering:

- We come to the hungry feast ELW 479
- We are an offering ELW 692

Communion:

- Come, let us eat ELW 491
- Eat this bread, drink this cup 492

Sending hymn:

- Let justice flow like streams ELW 717
- Soul, adorn yourself with gladness ELW 489

Resources for Worship

Call to worship:

O God, you are the gathering one
who calls us into community
with each other
to love and work,
to support and heal.

You are the gathering one
who calls us into community
with all people;
to bring justice and hope,
freedom and truth.

You are the gathering one
who calls us into community
with the whole creation;
to live in harmony,
to cherish and renew.

Let us worship the God
who makes us one!¹³

OR

Confession and Forgiveness:

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the eternal voice from heaven,
the anointed and beloved one,
the Spirit moving over the waters.
Amen.

As we approach the mystery of God, let us come in confession,
trusting the love of Christ crucified and risen.
Silence is kept for reflection.

God who searches us and knows us,
you have shown us what is good,
but we have looked to other lights to find our way.
We have not been just in our dealings with others.
We have chosen revenge over mercy.
We have promoted ourselves
Instead of walking humbly with you.
With what shall we come before you?
Forgive us our sin,
and show us your salvation
in the face of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

Beloved of God,
you have not received the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit that is from God,
poured out for you in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.
Receive the promise of baptism:

¹³ Posted on the Monthly Prayers page of <http://www.christianaid.org.uk/>

You are God's child; † your sins are forgiven.
Rejoice and be glad, for yours is the reign of heaven.
Amen.¹⁴

Prayer of the day:

Holy God, you confound the world's wisdom in giving your kingdom to the lowly and the pure in heart. Give us such a hunger and thirst for justice, and perseverance in striving for peace, that in our words and deeds the world may see the life of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of intercession:

Trusting that God hears us, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

God of liberation, you set your people free to serve others. Embolden your church, that we seek justice for the oppressed, share generously your lovingkindness, and live humbly together. Unite us as one people under the foolishness of the cross. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of the universe, your care is evident everywhere—from the foundations of the earth to the summit of the tallest mountains. Reconcile all of creation to itself and repair the environmental destruction caused by human carelessness and greed. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of the nations, you desire peace and justice among all people. Deliver us from systems of fear that seek to divide us. Guide our local and national leaders (*especially...*). May their decisions empower and serve the needs of the poor and the disenfranchised. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of the oppressed, you raise up the lowly and comfort those in despair. We lift up to you all who are victims of exploitation, discrimination, and greed. We pray for those who are suffering in any way this day (*especially those we name in our hearts or out loud*). Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of life, we give you thanks for all those who have died in the faith (*especially*). Thank you for the examples of our ancestors and the saints who have gone before us. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

¹⁴ Sundaysandseasons.com

Confident that you are able to accomplish more than we even dare to ask, we bring these prayers before you, believing in your saving grace revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.¹⁵

Blessing:

May the holy wisdom of God
Guard your ways and guide your paths
May the living truth of God
Enlighten your hearts and open your minds
And may the living Spirit of God
Give you life, and life to the full!
Amen!¹⁶

¹⁵ Sundaysandseasons.com

¹⁶ From Literature & Liturgy <https://jesusscribbles.wordpress.com/>

February 2, 2020 – Option 2
Presentation of Our Lord

Colour: White

Lectionary:

Malachi 3:1-4
Psalm 84
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- I want to walk as a child of the light ELW 815
- Christ, whose glory fills the skies ELW 553

Hymn of the day:

- In his temple now behold him ELW 417

Offering:

- O morning star, how fair and bright! ELW 308
- For the fruit of all creation ELW 679

Communion:

- Draw us in the Spirit's tether ELW 470
- Let us break bread together ELW 471

Sending:

- In peace and joy I now depart ELW 440
- O Lord, now let your servant ELW 313

Resources for Worship

Introduction:

The Presentation of Our Lord is referred to in some corners of the church as Candlemas because of an ancient tradition of blessing all the candles to be used in the church in the coming year at the mass celebrated on that day. It was a way of underscoring the truth of Simeon's confession that this baby Jesus was "a light for revelation to the Gentiles" and a light for glory to Israel. Let the light of every candle in church be a little

epiphany of the love of God for all people in the person of God's son, Jesus, the light of the world.¹⁷

Confession and Forgiveness:

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the eternal voice from heaven,
the anointed and beloved one,
the Spirit moving over the waters.

Amen.

As we approach the mystery of God, let us come in confession,
trusting the love of Christ crucified and risen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God who searches us and knows us,
**you have shown us what is good,
but we have looked to other lights to find our way.
We have not been just in our dealings with others.
We have chosen revenge over mercy.
We have promoted ourselves
Instead of walking humbly with you.
With what shall we come before you?
Forgive us our sin,
and show us your salvation
in the face of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Beloved of God,
you have not received the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit that is from God,
poured out for you in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.
Receive the promise of baptism:
You are God's child; ☩ your sins are forgiven.
Rejoice and be glad, for yours is the reign of heaven.

Amen.¹⁸

Prayer of the day:

Almighty and ever-living God, your only-begotten Son was presented this day in the temple. May we be presented to you with clean and pure hearts by the same Jesus Christ, our great high priest, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

¹⁷ Sundaysandseasons.com

¹⁸ Sundaysandseasons.com

Prayers of Intercession:

Called together through water and the Word, we boldly pray for the church, the world, and all who long to hear God's voice.

Almighty God, you grant wisdom to our elders in every land and generation. Give senior citizens boldness to share the faith and a spirit of curiosity and joy to continue learning as your disciples. Let us walk

In the light of the Lord.

Everlasting God, you provide beauty and warmth in sun, moon, stars, and fire, and you give us abundant gifts of water, land, and air. Break our patterns of overusing resources across the world so that all experience your beautiful creation. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Creating God, thank you for your daily presence in our community and throughout the world. Inspire leaders with your strength and wisdom, that all communities may be safe places for children, adults, seniors, infants, and youth. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Incarnate God, thank you for being born among us and experiencing human pain and sorrow. Bring wholeness to all who live with chronic illness, and rest your Spirit on those who are near death. Strengthen the sick (*especially those we name in our hearts or out loud*). Bless those who care for them. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Merciful God, you encourage us through strong communities of faith. Open our hearts and minds to new people and ideas. Bless our vibrant traditions that bring life and hope. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of hope, thank you for the saints who have gone before us (*especially*). Keep us faithful in service to you until we are one with all the faithful departed. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

We place our prayers before you, God, united in your Spirit; through your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.¹⁹

¹⁹ Sundaysandseasons.com

Blessing:

The God of glory dwell in you richly,
name you beloved,
and shine brightly on your path;
and the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

February 9, 2020
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany – Lectionary 5

Colour: Green

Lectionary:

Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)
Psalm 112:1-9 (10)
1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)
Matthew 5:13-20

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- Gather us in ELW 532
- Let streams of living justice ELW 710

Hymn of the day:

- Christ, be our light ELW 715
- This little light of mine ELW 677

Offering:

- Praise and thanksgiving ELW 689 v. 3,4
- To God our thanks we give ELW 682

Communion:

- Break now the bread of life ELW 515
- Lord, whose love in humble service ELW 712

Sending:

- Go, make disciples ELW 540
- Sent forth by God's blessing ELW 547

Resources for Worship

Call to worship:

We are called to bring a new understanding of God:
that God so loves the world.

We are the salt of the earth.

We are called to bring a new hope in God:
that God gives us new life.

We are the light of the world.

We are called to follow
the commandments and the law.

**The Law of God is to love God
and to love one another.**

Come, let us be the salt of the earth,
the light of the world.

**Come, let us love one another
with the love of God.**

**Let us join together in our love of God
to worship and follow Jesus.²⁰**

OR

Confession and Forgiveness:

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the eternal voice from heaven,
the anointed and beloved one,
the Spirit moving over the waters.

Amen.

As we approach the mystery of God, let us come in confession,
trusting the love of Christ crucified and risen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God who searches us and knows us,
**you have shown us what is good,
but we have looked to other lights to find our way.
We have not been just in our dealings with others.
We have chosen revenge over mercy.
We have promoted ourselves
Instead of walking humbly with you.
With what shall we come before you?
Forgive us our sin,
and show us your salvation
in the face of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Beloved of God,
you have not received the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit that is from God,
poured out for you in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.
Receive the promise of baptism:
You are God's child; ☩ your sins are forgiven.
Rejoice and be glad, for yours is the reign of heaven.
Amen.²¹

²⁰ Written by Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell <http://rev-o-lution.org/>

Prayer of the day:

Lord God, with endless mercy you receive the prayers of all who call upon you. By your Spirit show us the things we ought to do, and give us the grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Blessing:

The Spirit of God is upon you and has anointed you.
You are the salt of the earth and you bring light to the world.

You are not too young or too old,
you are not too rich or too needy
to bring good news to the impoverished,
to give a hand to the broken-hearted,
and to live out freedom and pardon
through the gifts you have been given.

So remember to pack peace in your toolbox,
hope in your briefcase,
love in your lunch box,
and may integrity, honesty, and joy be your clothing of choice.

Do not be frightened, for you are never alone.
The God in whose image you are made
will walk with you and guide you
today, tomorrow, and every day.²²

²¹ Sundaysandseasons.com

²² Copyright: Connie Epp. Used by permission.

February 16' 2020
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany – Lectionary 6

Colour: Green

Lectionary:

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 *or* Sirach 15:15-20 (alternate first reading)
Psalm 119:1-8
1 Corinthians 3:1-9
Matthew 5:21-37

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- All are welcome ELW 641
- What is this place ELW 524

Hymn of the day:

- The people walk ELW 706
- Light dawns on a weary world ELW 726

Offering:

- Let us talents and tongues employ ELW 674
- Take my life, that I may be ELW 583

Communion:

- Will you let me be your servant ELW 659
- Blessed assurance ELW 638

Sending:

- Spread, oh, spread, almighty Word ELW 663
- The Lord now sends us forth ELW 538

Resources for Worship

Confession and Forgiveness:

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,
the eternal voice from heaven,
the anointed and beloved one,
the Spirit moving over the waters.

Amen.

As we approach the mystery of God, let us come in confession,
trusting the love of Christ crucified and risen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God who searches us and knows us,
**you have shown us what is good,
but we have looked to other lights to find our way.
We have not been just in our dealings with others.
We have chosen revenge over mercy.
We have promoted ourselves
Instead of walking humbly with you.
With what shall we come before you?
Forgive us our sin,
and show us your salvation
in the face of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.**

Beloved of God,
you have not received the spirit of the world,
but the Spirit that is from God,
poured out for you in the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.
Receive the promise of baptism:
You are God's child; † your sins are forgiven.
Rejoice and be glad, for yours is the reign of heaven.
Amen.²³

Prayer of the day:

O God, the strength of all who hope in you, because we are weak mortals we
accomplish nothing good without you. Help us to see and understand the things
we ought to do, and give us grace and power to do them, through Jesus Christ,
our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Prayers of intercession:

Trusting that God hears us, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in
need.

Shepherding God, you protect and guide us with your word. Lead your church
into ever closer relationship with you, that we might better know your commands,
hold fast to your decrees, and live in your law. Let us walk,
In the light of the Lord.

²³ Sundaysandseasons.com

God of the cosmos, heaven and earth bear witness to the splendor of all you have created. Bless the ground, trees, waterways, and skies with abundant life. Restore synergy between humankind and the natural world, that we may live in harmony with the world you have made. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of peace, you show solidarity with all who suffer. Bring an end to violence, war, discrimination, and all other forms of deadly hate, that we may experience your love through the power of justice. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of hope, you provide bountifully for all people. Use our lives to alleviate global injustice and eliminate poverty, that all benefit from the abundant gifts you pour out for your people. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of growth, you nurture this community. Cultivate in us a spirit of service to one another, and bless us in the ministry we share (*ministries of the congregation may be named*). Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of our ancestors, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah and Rachel, we give you thanks for our forebears in the faith who now rest in your eternal grace and love (*especially*). Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Confident that you are able to accomplish more than we even dare to ask, we bring these prayers before you, believing in your saving grace revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.²⁴

Blessing:

God has placed before you
life and death,
blessings and curses.
Therefore choose life,
follow God's way.
Go now, and be a people of reconciliation and integrity.
Let your "yes" be "yes"
and your "no" "no".

And in all the paths you walk
may God hold you steady and close.
May Christ Jesus bless you and every place you enter.

²⁴ Sundaysandseasons.com

And may the Spirit give you length of days and fullness of life.
Amen.²⁵

²⁵ Written by Nathan Nettleton, 2006 <http://www.laughingbird.net/>

February 23, 2020 – Transfiguration of Our Lord
Last Sunday after Epiphany

Colour: White

Lectionary:

Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 2 or Psalm 99 (alternate)
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9

Hymn suggestions:

Gathering hymn:

- Arise, your light has come ELW 314
- The trumpets sound, the angels sing ELW 531

Hymn of the day:

- How good, Lord, to be here ELW 315
- Oh, wondrous image, vision fair ELW 316

Offering:

- Come, let us eat ELW 491
- God, whose giving knows no ending ELW 678

Communion:

- Beautiful Savior ELW 838
- Taste and see ELW 493

Sending:

- Alleluia, songs of gladness ELW 318
- Immortal, invisible, God only wise ELW 834

Resources for Worship

Thanksgiving for baptism: ELW p. 97. Consider inviting the assembly to gather around the font and invite a child or youth to pour water into the font as the prayer of thanksgiving is being spoken.

OR

Call to worship:

Beyond our busyness,
Above the cold winter floor
there is a glory rising born of heaven
and reaching out to each one of us

**a light that shines through the clouds
an invitation seeking all of who we are
that transfigures the world**

that transforms darkness into hope
that brings life from a cross
where old life ends and new life is born

**In glory Jesus meets us here
raising us from depths of valley to the height of the mountain
carrying the weight of our humanity
to the heights of heavens glory.**

Let us worship from the mountain and hear again
“This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”²⁶

Prayer of the day:

O God, in the transfiguration of your Son you confirmed the mysteries of the faith by the witness of Moses and Elijah, and in the voice from the bright cloud declaring Jesus your beloved Son, you foreshadowed our adoption as your children. Make us heirs with Christ of your glory, and bring us to enjoy its fullness, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Prayers of intercession:

Trusting that God hears us, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

Holy God, your loving power is at work among us. Rouse and embolden your church, that we too might be transfigured, set alight in the world for the sake of the gospel. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

²⁶ Written by Rev. Rob Smith, Spirit of Life Presbyterian Church, Apple Valley, MN re-worship.blogspot.com

Awesome God, you speak and the earth trembles. You display your majesty in the mountains and your mystery in the clouds. Grant that we discover your magnificence in all of your created world. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Ruler of nations, your reign extends across all human borders. Guide world leaders in justice and righteousness, that they may work for equity for all people and protect the world that you have made. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Gracious God, you are a refuge for all who are neglected and abused. Bring freedom to those who are oppressed and give comfort to those experiencing pain of any kind (*especially those we name in our hearts or out loud*). Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

God of Moses and Elijah, you made your dwelling place at the top of a mountain with Jesus and his disciples. Dwell also in this congregation, that all who enter this community might be transformed by your dazzling brilliance. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Everlasting God, you offer eternal life to all your children. Thank you for the witness of those who lived and died in the faith. Let us walk,

In the light of the Lord.

Confident that you are able to accomplish more than we even dare to ask, we bring these prayers before you, believing in your saving grace revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessing:

Go now, and speak of what you have seen of God's glory.
Do not cling to the holy moments
when heaven overshadows you,
but as the Lord lives, listen to Christ and follow him
from the places of revelation
to the places of mission.

And may God shine the light of glory into your hearts.
May Christ be with you and never leave you.
And may the Spirit renew the image of God within you.²⁷

²⁷ Written by Nathan Nettleton, 2006 <http://www.laughingbird.net/>