

Where Two or Three Are Gathered: Worship for Small Assemblies

Epiphany Year A

January 8- Feb.15, 2023

Epiphany: to manifest or be revealed

Worship Notes

We will steep ourselves in the wisdom & mind of Christ as we journey alongside Jesus through the Season of Epiphanytide, beginning with the Baptism of our Lord, on Jan.8 through to the Transfiguration of our Lord on Feb.15

Epiphanytide is a season of new beginnings, indeed surprising beginning. The Season after Epiphany is part of Ordinary Time that follows Christmas and precedes Lent (Ordinary Time then picks up again following Pentecost). The length of the season after Epiphany is dependent upon the date of Easter.

Key themes of the season are:

Baptismal Affirmation & Discipleship.....Walking Wet!

Identity, Discipleship, Journeying with Jesus, Wisdom, Healing, & Commitment

Visuals - Highlight the Baptismal font. Visuals could include a Baptismal river (blue cloth) flowing from the baptism font, walking stick, sandals, fish nets, prayer rocks to place along the river bed.

The liturgical color for Jan.8, Baptism of our Lord, and Feb. 19 Transfiguration is white
The Sundays in between (Ordinary time) are green.

Other worship notes –

- Consider using Thanksgiving for Baptism in lieu of Confession & Forgiveness (see Pg. 7&8)
Invitation to font during children's time, share in marking one another with sign of the cross

Music - Express key themes in music.

- Use a Seasonal Opening song such as:
Wash O God Your Sons and Daughters ELW 445
Come to the Water of Life ACS 955
I'm Going on a Journey ELW 446
- Or a Song during Thanksgiving for Baptism/Children's Time...
- Or introduce a new liturgy setting

Here are 3 excellent songs from Ben Johnston-Urey that could also be part of your Epiphany repertoire. We are grateful to Ben for sharing these resources. (Ben serves on the Worship & Arts Ministry Team for the Alberta Synod)

My Endless Love, Love Reflecting Light, Lamb of God

https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/1sle7Mpq6Thw8fL6u7FZ_3l6Ui_0MSRA

As **All Creation Sings** Hymnal is quite new to most congregations, you can check out most of the ACS hymns on YouTube, as the majority of them have been recorded either by the composer, or by a congregation or individual.

Also, periodically, if you really like the text from a hymn, but the tune is unfamiliar, and not easy for your congregation to learn, you can check the meter at the bottom of the page (ie: LM, or 7676D), and then referring to pg.1199-1203 ELW or pg. 284/285 ACS, you can choose another tune that will fit the hymn that you would like to sing.

See below for "Order for Holy Communion", and "Order for Service of the Word" (pg.6&7 below)

Also Thanksgiving for Baptism resources. (pg.7&8 below)

Prayers of the People – can choose from ELW pg.72-87, or ACS pg.46-55

Jan.8 - Baptism of our Lord

Theme: Baptismal Identity – both Jesus and us!

Kickoff new liturgy and seasonal elements

Lectionary – Isaiah 42:1-9, Psalm 29, Acts 10:34-43, **Gospel Matthew 3:13-17**

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. (ELW pg.22)

Hymn suggestions :

Baptized and Set Free ELW 453

Wash O God Your Sons and Daughters ELW 445

Come to the Water of Life ACS 955

Shall We Gather at the River 423 ELW

Christ When For Us You Were Baptized 304 ELW

I am the Light of the World 24 Songs for a Gospel People

Every Time I Feel the Spirit ACS 942

Jan.15, 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

Theme: What's in a Name? Baptism, Discipleship, Journey

Lectionary - Isaiah 49:1-7, Psalm 40:1-11, 1 Corinthians 1:1-9, **Gospel John 1:29-42**

Prayer of the Day - 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. (ELW pg.22)

Hymn suggestions:

Will You Come and Follow Me ELW 798
I'm Going on a Journey ELW 446
When Jesus Came to Jordan ELW 305
Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart ELW 800
My Endless Love (B. Johnston-Urey)
Come and See ACS 976
Born, Reborn ACS 956
I am the Light of the World 24 Songs for a Gospel People

Jan.22 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

Theme: Walking Wet, Together! Discipleship, Following Jesus, Walking in the Light

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

Prayer of the Day - 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. (ELW pg.23)

Hymn suggestions:

Love Reflecting Light (Ben Johnston-Urey)
Savior, Like Shepherd Lead Us ELW 789
We are Called ELW 720
Shine, Jesus, Shine ELW 671
I Come With Joy ELW 482
Christ, Be Our Light ELW 715
We are Marching in the Light ELW 866

Jan.29 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany

Theme - The Wisdom of Love & The Beatitudes

Lectionary - Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, **Gospel Matthew 5:1-12**

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. (ELW pg.23)

Hymn suggestions -

Blest are They ELW 728
Open Your Ears, O Faithful People ELW 519
Blessed is the One ACS 929
Rise Up, O Saints of God! ELW 669
The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve ELW 551
Build Us Up, Lord ELW 670

Feb.5 - 5th Sunday after Epiphany

Theme - The Mind of Christ & The Sermon on the Mount

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

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. (ELW pg.24)

Hymn suggestions

God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me ACS 1084
Bring Forth the Kingdom W&P 22
Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart ELW 800
Change My Heart, O God ELW 801
Be Thou My Vision ELW 793
This Little Light of Mine ELW 677
We are Marching in the Light ELW 866

Feb.12 - 6th Sunday after Epiphany

Theme - The Crossroads of Life & Ten Commandments

Lectionary - Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Psalm 119:1-8, 1 Corinthians 3:1-9

Gospel Matthew 5:21-37

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. (ELW pg.24)

Hymn suggestions -

Come, All You People ELW 819
God, We Gather as Your People ACS 1038
Take My Life, That I May Be ELW 583, 685
The King of Love My Shepherd Is ELW 502
Healer of our every Ill ELW 612
Oh, Jesus, I Have Promised ELW 810
Sing out, Earth & Skies W&P 126

Feb.19 - Transfiguration of our Lord, Last Sunday after Epiphany

Theme - God's Glory is Revealed in Jesus

- Consider using Burial of Alleluias to foreshadow Easter (see Resource below, pg.8)*"Farewell to Alleluia"*

Lectionary - Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 2, 2 Peter 1:16-21, **Gospel Matthew 17:1-9**

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. (ELW pg.25)

Hymn suggestions -

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling ELW 631
To Be Your Presence, Lord ELW 546
Dazzling Presence on the Mountain ACS 917
Beautiful Savior ELW 838
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light ELW 815
How Good, Lord, to Be Here ELW 315
Here On Jesus Christ I will Stand ACS 1024

Order for Holy Communion Service

The Holy Communion liturgy is for use when an Ordained Pastor or Authorized Lay Minister is present to preside

Call to Worship (optional)
Thanksgiving for Baptism (see below)
Gathering Hymn
Prayer of the Day
Word - First Reading, Psalm, Second Reading, Gospel
Sermon/Reflection
Hymn of the Day
Apostles' Creed
Prayers of Intercession
Share the Peace
Offering
Great Thanksgiving / Lord's Prayer
Distribution of Communion
Blessing
Sending Hymn
Dismissal (ELW p.222)

Order for Service of the Word

Call to Worship (optional)
Thanksgiving for Baptism (see below)
Gathering Hymn
Prayer of the Day
Word - First Reading, Psalm, Second Reading, Gospel
Sermon/Reflection
Hymn of the Day
Apostles' Creed
Prayers of Intercession
Share the Peace
Offering
Canticle of Thanksgiving - ELW #208 *Praise to You, O God of Mercy*
Thanksgiving for the Word (ELW p.220) OR
Thanksgiving for the Word (Psalm 25:1-2a, 4-5, 10)
 To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul.
 My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be put to shame.

Show me your ways, O LORD, and teach me your paths.

Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all the day long.

All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.

Lord's Prayer (ELW p.221)

Blessing Leader: Let us bless the Lord. All: Thanks be to God.

Sending Hymn

Dismissal

Thanksgiving for Baptism

In the Lutheran tradition, we often start worship with either Confession and Forgiveness or Thanksgiving for Baptism. I think that any time we can acknowledge our messiness and imperfections in church is good. It is such a relief to start worship knowing I'm in a room full of imperfect people who are also sinners and have also made mistakes. Publicly sharing that together is a great way to start our time with God. It is great to understand how messy we are, how the world hurts us, and that we need God in our lives. Enjoy this liturgy.

- Pastor Thom Johnson

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth,
our light and our salvation.

C: Amen.

P: People of God, in the baptismal waters we travel with Christ from death to life. Our past, our sin, our failure, our doubt, and our shame are drowned and gone here.

C: You, O God, wash us clean.

P: Our fear, our confusion, our self-righteousness, our despair -- ALL are washed away by grace.

C: You, O God, wash us clean.

P: Our pride, our hypocrisy, and other people's opinions of us no longer have the power to define us.

C: You, O God, give us new life.

P: The Spirit lives and moves through us now, a great and joyful mystery, so we may bring love and mercy into the world as the body of Christ.

C: You, O God, give us new life.

P: Rejoice that God has claimed us in this baptismal grace, not by our own doing or believing but by God's mercy alone.

C: You, O God, give us new life.

P: And so, as we begin worship, we give thanks to God for the gracious gift of baptism that joins us together in Christ by the Spirit's power. Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

We praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.
To you be given honor and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C: Amen.

- **Other Baptismal Affirmations can be found in ACS, pg.59/60 - Thanksgiving at the Font**

Farewell to Alleluia. (By Ben Johnston-Urey)

P I heard a great voice from heaven, saying: Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power be to the Lord our God.

C And again they said: Alleluia!

P From the Mount of Transfiguration the Lord God omnipotent reigns!

C Alleluia!

P They came down in the valley of life where there is a time for all things, a time to laugh, a time to cry, and a time to look at the cross. Jesus said, "If anyone wants to follow me, let one forget oneself, take up one's cross and follow me." Today the church buries its Alleluia until Easter morning when it rises with Christ at his glorious resurrection.

C Until that day when we celebrate Christ's resurrection with joy, we commit our Alleluia to the God who gave it.

P Let us pray. O God you give us reason to praise your name with Alleluia. As we enter a Lenten season to reflect upon our human nature and the way you have given yourself for us, we withhold our Alleluia until we celebrate Easter. We await to be people alive in you. **C Amen.**

P The blessings of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon us and give us peace. **C Amen!**

Worship Resources/Themes from Ben Johnston-Urey, used by Permission

Baptism Affirmation created by Pastor Thom Johnson, used by Permission

Worship outlines have been compiled by Gail Berg, Synod of Alberta & the Territories

