



January 14, 2023
Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

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Sunday Morning Meditation

May the Epiphany bring you the wisdom of the wise men, the inner child of baby Jesus, and the light of God to lead your way.

– Unknown

Greenfield Charge United Church of Christ

January 14, 2023

**Joint Service
Epiphany of the Lord**

Greenfield 10:00am

Community News

Prayer List and Prayers of the People

Prelude/Lighting of the Candles

** Call to Worship*

Christ's light is shining,
calling us to respond with joy.

Christ's light is shining,
calling us to worship and praise.

** Invocation*

God of glory and grace, shine upon our worship with your presence. Shine in our hearts with your love. Shine in our lives with your grace, that we may arise with confidence and go forth to bring your justice and love to all. Amen.

** Opening Hymn* *“As With Gladness Men of Old”* **CH #290**

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, grant us the grace to behold your glory and offer us the assurance that your loving light will not burn us. Grant us the confidence that we too can shine your light in our world. Remove the lampshades of fear and shame that hide our light. Dust off the cobwebs of doubt and despair that shadow our light. Shine in and through us, that your light may brighten our world. Amen.

Words of Grace

Here is the mystery: Grace is ours, no matter what.

God's love is ours, no matter what.

Grace and love save us and shine in us.

They allow us to shine as the light of the world with the Light of the World. Amen.

Epistle Reading

Ephesians 3:1-12 NRSV

Paul's Ministry to the Gentiles

3 This is the reason that I, Paul, am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you gentiles, ² for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given me for you ³ and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴ a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. ⁵ 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: ⁶ that is, the gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ 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 ⁹ and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have access in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

* *The Reading of the Holy Gospel*

Matthew 2:1-12 NRSV

Gloria Tibi (Glory be to Thee, O Lord.)

TH #497

The Visit of the Magi

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage." ³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ '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.’ ”

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸ 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.” ⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ 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. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

* *Gloria Patri*

Children's Message / Congregation Conversation

* *Meditation Hymn*

“What Child Is This”

CH #281

Today's Message

The Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Statement

Offertory (MH)

* Doxology

TH # 551

* Offertory Prayer

Glorious God, bring glory to these gifts and to the offering we share with you and your church. Bring the light of your justice and righteousness to the dark corners of our world. Bring the glory of your love and compassion to heal our broken communities. Amen.



Invitation to Communion

Matthew 2

Follow the star to the table of grace.

Here we find gifts beyond price.

Follow the star to the table of blessing.

Here we find strength for the journey.

Follow the star to the table of peace.

Here we find rest and refreshment.

Follow the star to the table of Christ.

Here we find light and love.

* *Communion Hymn* “*Let Us Break Bread Together*” CH #460

Holy Communion Litany

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give him our thanks and praise.

Responsive Communion Praise

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

In ancient days, you created us in your image to shine like the sun as reflections of your glory.

When we hid from your glory, and the brilliance of your light within us dimmed, you led us out of the garden and into the four corners of the earth.

From ancient times, through all the ages, you have saved us from the forces of darkness, and have guided us with the light of your love.

From bondage of slavery, you led us out of Egypt with a pillar of fire, and even now, your holy fire of love leads us still.

And so, with your people on earth, and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you and blessed is the Light of the World, Christ Jesus, whom kings from the Orient worshiped after following his natal star to a household of love. Jesus shone with a light too wonderful for the forces of darkness to endure. His ministry and teachings stand, even today, as beacons of justice and righteousness in a world darkened by oppression and hate. Through Jesus' humble beginnings, you invite us to live simply, that others may simply live.

Though Christ's patient love and unending grace, your light shines on us with forgiveness and your grace blesses us with deliverance, that as your redeemed children, we might shine your light in the world as signs of hope and love.

On the night when Jesus faced the darkness, he offered signs of light as he took the bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over and Jesus prepared to face his darkest fears, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, and gave it to his disciples, even those who would betray and reject him, saying: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my life poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

With joy and gratitude, we break this bread, remembering the many times Jesus was revealed to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. In remembrance, we will take and eat this bread.

With faith and hope, we take this cup, remembering Jesus' gifts of grace and forgiveness, poured out for his disciples of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In remembrance, we will take and drink of this cup.

And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts, and your signs of light and life in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and

thanksgiving, as signs of light and life, in union with Christ's offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen

Christ will come again.

**The Lord's Prayer*

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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer of Consecration

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us,

that we may be your light in the world.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine,

that we may be filled with your glory and grace.

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ,

one with one another, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at your heavenly banquet.

Through your Son, Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,

All honor and glory is yours,

Almighty God, now and forevermore. Amen.

Giving the Bread and Cup

Pew Communion

Prayer

This has been no ordinary meal. We have been fed and nourished with the light of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We go from here, refreshed and eager, to share that light with others. In the name of our Lord, we pray. Amen.



* *Closing Hymn*

“We Three Kings”

CH #288

* *Benediction*

Go forth to shine with light of Christ’s love.

Go forth to shine with the glory of Christ’s grace.

Go forth to shine with the justice and peace of Christ’s life.

* *Three-Fold Amen*

TH # 558

* *Postlude/Extinguishing of the Candle*

Epiphany of the Lord: by Mary Scifes - The Abingdon Worship Annual 2024