

Service for the Feast of the Epiphany



St Laurence Church, Downton

3 January 2021

Preparation

Call to Worship

Arise, shine; for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

The Lord will be your everlasting light
and your God will be your glory.

Isaiah 60

As we rejoice in the gift of this new day,
so may the light of your presence, O God,
set our hearts on fire with love for you;
now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Team Rector introduces the service

Hymn: *We three kings*

(St Martin's Voices)

We three kings of Orient are;
bearing gifts we traverse afar
field and fountain, moor and mountain,
following yonder star:

O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

Melchior

Born a king on Bethlehem plain,
gold I bring, to crown him again-
King for ever, ceasing never,
over us all to reign:

O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

Caspar

Frankincense to offer have I;
incense owns a deity nigh:
prayer and praising, all men raising,
worship him, God most high:
O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

Balthazar

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
breathes a life of gathering gloom;
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
sealed in the stone-cold tomb:
O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

Glorious now, behold him arise,
King and God, and sacrifice!
heaven sings alleluia,
alleluia the earth replies:
O star of wonder, star of night,
star with royal beauty bright,
westward leading, still proceeding,
guide us to thy perfect light.

John Henry Hopkins (1820-1891)

Gathering:

Lord of yesterday, today and tomorrow,
we gather here on this first Sunday of the New Year,
in a mixture of hope, anticipation,
fear, excitement, and expectation.
We do not know what the year holds for us.
there are things we are afraid of:
worries about health and family, job security and finances.

There is much to look forward to –
weddings or anniversaries or baptisms,
holidays to enjoy, friends to laugh with.

Lord God,
the coming year is full of uncertainty and hope.
Whatever the year holds for us, though,
we trust you, and we place every day of this year in your care
knowing that, as in the past, you are with us,
caring for us with constant love.

And so Lord, we place ourselves into your keeping
and dedicate our lives to your service
through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour. **Amen.**

Ian Elston

Confession:

God, you share with us words of hope, words of Good News.
But sometimes we are unable to hear them
because the source is too familiar.
You call us to share the Good News with those around us.
But sometimes we are unable to share,
because the people know us too well.
You encourage us to send messengers to other places
where they will be heard better.
But we can be jealous,
wanting the Good News to be for us, not them.

In the multitude of ways we can and have subverted
your message of freedom and healing,
in all the ways we have kept the Jubilee year from happening,
we have left the path of true wisdom
and call upon your Grace to lead us back on track. **Amen.**

This is the time of God's favour,
God's grace continues to proclaim
release to the captives, sight to the blind,
Good News to the poor and freedom to the oppressed.

We live as loved, forgiven and free people
through the grace of God!

Hallelujah! Amen.

Worship Offerings

The Liturgy of the Word

Readings:

Ephesians 3:1-12

Matthew 2:1-12

After each reading:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Music: *The Wise Men and The Star*

(Bob Chilcott and the Oxford Choir)

Prayers

We are led in a time of prayer

This response is used:

Lord of glory,

Hear our prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is said:

Believing the promises of God,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**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, the power, and the glory
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Conclusion

The Collect

O God, who by the leading of a star
manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:
mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith,
may at last behold your glory face to face;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Blessing:

May God the Father,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star
to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead you also in your pilgrimage to find the Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

May Christ, who sends us to the nations,
give us the power of his Spirit. **Amen.**

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia!
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!