

Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Metcalfe  
EPIPHANY  
JANUARY 5, 2025  
Reverend Tom Hubschmid

Invitation to Worship

The Gathering of the Community

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

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: We acknowledge our presence on the ancestral lands of the  
Algonquin Anishinaabe nation.

All: **In a spirit of reconciliation, may we always seek to respect the history,  
spirituality, and culture of Indigenous Peoples and uphold our continuing  
responsibility as treaty people.**

Celebrant: Almighty God,

People: **to you all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from you no secrets are hidden.  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Celebrant: Glory to God in the highest

People: **and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly king,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.  
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,**

**you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Celebrant: Eternal God,  
who by a star  
led wise men to the worship of your Son.  
Guide by your light the nations of the earth,  
that the whole world may know your glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.

All: **Amen**

The Proclamation of The Word

Reader: The first reading is from Isaiah 60:1-6

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

For darkness shall cover the earth,  
and thick darkness the peoples;

but the Lord will arise upon you,  
and his glory will appear over you.

Nations shall come to your light,  
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Lift up your eyes and look around;  
they all gather together, they come to you;

your sons shall come from far away,  
and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.

Then you shall see and be radiant;  
your heart shall thrill and rejoice,  
because the abundance of the sea shall be brought to you,  
the wealth of the nations shall come to you.

A multitude of camels shall cover you,  
the young camels of Midian and Ephah;  
all those from Sheba shall come.

They shall bring gold and frankincense,  
and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Reader: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Give the king your justice, O God,

All: **and your righteousness to the king's son;**

Reader: That he may rule your people righteously

All: **and the poor with justice;**

Reader: That the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,

All: **and the little hills bring righteousness.**

Reader: He shall defend the needy among the people;

All: **he shall rescue the poor and crush the oppressor.**

Reader: He shall live as long as the sun and moon endure,

All: **from one generation to another.**

Reader: He shall come down like rain upon the mown field,

All: **like showers that water the earth.**

Reader: In his time shall the righteous flourish;

All: **there shall be abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.**

Reader: The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall pay tribute,

All: **and the kings of Arabia and Saba offer gifts.**

Reader: All kings shall bow down before him,

All: **and all the nations do him service.**

Reader: For he shall deliver the poor who cries out in distress,

All: **and the oppressed who has no helper.**

Reader: He shall have pity on the lowly and poor;

All: **he shall preserve the lives of the needy.**

Reader: He shall redeem their lives from oppression and violence,

All: **and dear shall their blood be in his sight.**

Reader: The second reading is Ephesians 3:1-12

This is the reason that I Paul am a prisoner for Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— for surely you have already heard of the commission of God's grace that was given to me for you, and how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I wrote above in a few words, a reading of which will enable you to perceive my understanding of the mystery of Christ. 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: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow-heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power.

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, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; 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.

Reader: This was in accordance with the eternal purpose that he has carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have access to God in boldness and confidence through faith in him.

The Word of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew 2:1-12

People: **Glory be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

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

Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. 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.' When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage.

Celebrant: Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The Gospel of Christ.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Homily - Epiphany: Seeing and Hearing God

God, who led the Wise men to Jesus, lead us as well, to discover something about you we never knew before and to come closer to your presence in our midst. Amen.

This lovely lady talked to me after church one day. It was in Hamilton, Ontario. She's this sweet person with a lot of sincerity, a little quiet, silver-haired, very likeable. I'd said something in my sermon about responding to God's voice. As she was leaving – bundled in her parka and scarf and mitts – she thanked me for the sermon with this facial expression you get to recognize as a preacher. It's hard to describe, but sometimes you see it. It's this mix of belief and hope with disappointment and worry. She stopped, sighed, and did this rare thing that I absolutely love when it happens. She asked the hard question that the sermon brought up for her. Although, it wasn't a question, exactly. "I've never heard God's voice," she said.

She was a believer of many years. Someone who prays. Someone who attends Bible studies and Christian book studies. Someone who went to church every Sunday. I'd been in one of those book studies, over Zoom, and I remember catching a glimpse of her book all underlined. I said, "D'you ever underline your books?"

"Yes, a lot."

"That'd be God talking," I said.

It's impossible not to have heard God's voice. We all have, and we've all even obeyed God's voice, we just don't always realize it's happening, and I'd wager that we don't realize it's happening most of the time. The flipside is true as well. We've all heard God's voice and disobeyed, without realizing it's happening. Why am I talking about this? It's Epiphany Sunday. An epiphany is sort of like a "light-bulb" moment, right? A moment of clarity or insight or discovery. The life of faith depends on epiphanies. You know the saying "death by a thousand cuts"? The idea that you give up not because of one big thing that happened but because of a zillion little things that you can't even remember. In the opposite way, faith is life by a thousand little epiphanies. But a big Epiphany is something like what we hear about in the Scriptures today. And I think we too often go through life waiting for a big dramatic epiphany, a "religious experience," you know, some special clouds-peeling-back-angels-singing revelation. Usually, we're not getting that. That said, the big epiphanies in the Bible teach us how to recognize the thousand little ones. They happen all the time. And it's the little epiphanies where God shows God's constant care and attention for our little human lives.

Did the Wise Men have a miraculous experience? Matthew says they observed a star rising. They had this system of reading the movements of moons and planets and stars. Historians who favour a literal interpretation, identify the star the Wise men saw as actually Jupiter and Saturn overlapping and so shining particularly bright. Here's what exciting: Jupiter, ancient astronomers believed, was the King's planet. Saturn, on the other hand, was sometimes thought of as the Jews' planet. Jupiter and Saturn overlapped three times in 7 BC, around the time Jesus was a boy. So, the King-planet overlaps with the Jewish planet – so it sounded to the Wise Men like the sky was saying "King of the Jews."

Now, was this God speaking? Did the Wise Men have a "religious experience"? Well, depends how you think about God speaking. All they say to Herod is "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews. For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." They were just doing their astronomer thing. They were high-cultured, very educated, very wealthy men from east of Israel. They came to pay homage to the new king that their weird little pseudo-science indicated had been born. What I want us to notice here is that, yes, God spoke to the Wise men. But they were also just looking at the night sky and reading it in the way they were taught, and then doing what they thought was the appropriate thing to do.

That kind of epiphany, on a much smaller scale, is happening all the time! Faith is life by a thousand little epiphanies, and you might not even fully realize their happening.

So don't go thinking that God never speaks to you. That's impossible. It's impossible.

Why? Because Hebrews 1 describes God creating everything through the Son, before and after and during his life as Jesus in creation. It says, "He sustains all things by his powerful word." John 1 describes Jesus just as the Word of God or the Voice of God – the very voice that Genesis depicts saying, "let there be light." This created life is God speaking. Our lives are God talking.

Things going wrong in life and the world is God's voice being distorted or disobeyed – for reasons and causes we don't understand.

But point is, usually God doesn't show up in the stories of our lives – or even the stories of the Bible – as one character among all the other characters. Because God's Voice is the foundation of every moment, God's Voice is that which makes the characters and the story of our lives possible.

So, what should we do?

Basically, start paying attention. God is always speaking. Sometimes God speaks in a special, dramatic, and miraculous way. The rest of the time, we're the ones who just need to learn how to listen and see.

That looks like being mindful of your life. It also looks like reading the Bible, listening to podcasts, reading books about God. It means talking about God and asking about God. It means going to church. It means learning to pray. It means taking moments in the day to be quiet and just pay attention. Notice how you feel. Notice what you think. Ask God about it. And then see what happens. Maybe you have a clarifying thought. Maybe you don't. Maybe you need to talk to a friend. Maybe you need to do some reading. Maybe you just need to do what you think best, with the tools you have, and just trust that it's right or eventually you'll get there.

I don't know how this works: but – somehow – our lives are swimming in Jesus Christ. And the point of it all is just that. Whatever we are supposed to see or hear from God is meant to help just be with God and in God, together.

The reason the Voice of God became the man Jesus, and did all the things that our Eucharistic Prayer talks about, is to help us get free from all the things that keep us from experiencing life that way. God became man, died the death of a sinner, and rose victorious over the powers of evil, to win us back to God. Jesus saves us so we can experience our lives more as what they really are: God talking.

Amen.

Silence for reflection

The Apostles' Creed

Celebrant: Let us confess the faith of our baptism, as we say,

People: **I believe in God,  
the Father Almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.  
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried.  
He descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again.  
He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again  
to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Reader: In joy and humility let us pray to the creator of the universe, saying, "Lord, grant us peace." By the good news of our salvation brought to Mary by the angel, hear us, O Lord.

All: **Lord, grant us peace.**

Reader: We pray for Shane, our Bishop; Anne, our Metropolitan and Acting Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada; as well as The Diocese of Jerusalem and Archbishop Hosam Naoum. Beyond our own tradition, we pray for The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and Bishop Susan Johnson and Bishop Carla Blakley. We also pray for The Parish of Huntley and The Reverend Dr. Mary- Cate Garden. By the mystery of the Word made flesh, hear us, O Lord.

All: **Lord, grant us peace.**

Reader: Jesus bears our griefs and sorrows and knows our pain. We pray for those on our parish prayer list: Kelly, Art, Marjorie, Louise, Liesa, Randy, Beth, Howard, Irene, Richard, Deb, Jeanette, Cheryl, Zachariah, and those known to you alone. By the birth in time of the timeless Son of God, hear us, O Lord.

All: **Lord, grant us peace.**

Reader: We pray for all who are downcast and rejected. May your light shine on them and may they find comfort in your love and acceptance. By the manifestation of the King of glory to the shepherds and magi, hear us, O Lord.

All: **Lord, grant us peace.**

Reader: By the submission of the maker of the world to Mary and Joseph of Nazareth, hear us, O Lord.

All: **Lord, grant us peace.**

Reader: We pray for all who are preparing for baptism and discovering faith in you. May your Spirit uphold them and encourage them with the gifts of understanding, peace, and love. By the baptism of the Son of God in the river Jordan, hear us, O Lord.

All: **Lord, grant us peace.**

Reader: We pray for all nations, especially those engaged in armed conflicts, particularly in Gaza and Israel, Ukraine and Russia, and the civil war in Yemen. Grant that the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; hear us, O Lord.

All: **Lord, grant us peace.**

Reader: We pray all these things, trusting in Jesus' power and name.

All: **Amen.**

Confession and Absolution

Celebrant: Dear friends in Christ,  
God is steadfast in love and infinite in mercy;  
he welcomes sinners  
and invites them to his table.  
Let us confess our sins,  
confident in God's forgiveness.

*Silence is kept.*

Most merciful God,

All: **we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

**For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us,  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your name. Amen.**

Celebrant: Almighty God have mercy upon you,  
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,  
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,  
and keep you in eternal life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Prayer over the Gifts

Celebrant: Gracious God,  
accept the offering of your Church,  
the hearts of your people  
joined in praise and thanksgiving,  
in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.

All: **Amen**

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Celebrant: Blessed are you, gracious God,  
creator of heaven and earth;  
you have revealed your eternal plan of salvation,  
and have shown your Son Jesus Christ  
to be the light of all peoples.

Therefore with angels and archangels  
we raise our voices in joyful praise  
to proclaim the glory of your name.

All: **Holy, holy, holy Lord,  
God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant: We give thanks to you, Lord our God,  
for the goodness and love you have made known to us in creation;  
in calling Israel to be your people;  
in your Word spoken through the prophets;  
and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus your Son.

For in these last days you sent him  
to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.

In him, you have delivered us from evil,  
and made us worthy to stand before you.

In him, you have brought us out of error into truth,  
out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death,  
a death he freely accepted,  
our Lord Jesus Christ took bread;  
and when he had given thanks to you,  
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples,  
and said, " Take, eat:  
this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me."  
After supper he took the cup of wine;  
and when he had given thanks,  
he gave it to them,  
and said, "Drink this, all of you:  
this is my blood of the new covenant,  
which is shed for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Whenever you drink it,  
do this for the remembrance of me."  
Therefore, Father, according to his command,  
**All: we remember his death,  
we proclaim his resurrection,  
we await his coming in glory;**  
Celebrant: and we offer our sacrifice  
of praise and thanksgiving  
to you, Lord of all;  
presenting to you, from your creation,  
this bread and this wine.  
We pray you, gracious God,  
to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts,  
that they may be the sacrament  
of the body of Christ  
and his blood of the new covenant.  
Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice,  
that we, made acceptable in him,  
may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit.  
In the fullness of time,  
reconcile all things in Christ,  
and make them new,  
and bring us to that city of light  
where you dwell with all your sons and daughters;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
the firstborn of all creation,  
the head of the Church,

and the author of our salvation;  
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory are yours, almighty Father,  
now and for ever.

All: **Amen.**

Celebrant: And now, as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People: **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.**

Celebrant: We break the bread of life,  
and that life is the light of the world.

All: **God here among us,  
light in the midst of us,  
bring us to light and life.**

Celebrant: **The gifts of God for the People of God.**

All: **Thanks be to God.**

Prayer After Communion

Celebrant: God of all the nations of the earth,  
guide us with your light.  
Help us to recognize Christ as he comes to us  
in this eucharist and in our neighbours.  
May we welcome him with love,  
for he is Lord now and for ever.

All: **Amen**

Celebrant: Glory to God,

All: **whose power, working in us,  
can do infinitely more**

**than we can ask or imagine.  
Glory to God from generation to generation,  
in the Church and in Christ Jesus,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Celebrant: May all who come to our church this year rejoice to find Christ living among us; and may we seek and serve, in everyone we meet, that same Jesus whom the Magi greeted as the Lord of all people forever and ever.

All: **Amen**

Celebrant: Go forth into all the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

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