

Sunday Worship at Home, 2nd January 2022, Celebration of Epiphany.



Opening Prayers:

God in Christ has revealed his glory. **Come let us worship.**

From the rising of the sun to its setting **the Lord's name is greatly to be praised.**

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord. **O praise the name of the Lord!**

Amen.

A Prayer of Confession:

The grace of God has dawned upon the world through our Saviour Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself for us to purify a people as his own.

Come, let us return to the Lord and say.

Lord our God, in our sin we have avoided your call. Our love for you is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes away early. Have mercy on us; deliver us from judgement; bind up our wounds and revive us; in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the God of all healing and forgiveness draw us to himself and cleanse us from all our sins, that we may behold the glory of his Son, the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

The Collect

Oh 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.. **Amen**

Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

¹ Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.

² 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.

³ Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴ 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.

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.

Reflection on the reading:

The birth of a child, any child, is a marvellous thing. Life affirming and life changing, it is always a time of great wonder and joy for their family. In these days of email and social media, it has become normal to publicly announce the impending arrival months in advance. It has also become fashionable to make the announcement in ever more creative (and expensive) ways, and simultaneously to great numbers of family, friends, work colleague and casual acquaintances. But however far in advance, however spectacular the announcement may be, it pales into insignificance against the backdrop of God's announcement to the world of the birth of his Son, Jesus. In the bible I have chosen to share with you today we have one of the announcements by the prophet Isaiah 700 years in advance. In the Gospel reading set for today it we are told that 700 years after these words were written foreign kings were indeed drawn to his light, bearing gifts of gold and frankincense, as they responded not to a post on facebook or announcement on TV, but to a sign that written in the heavens, in the rising of a star. Isaiah tells us his light shall come to a people in darkness. Once again, we begin a new year under the shadow of the pandemic. But we begin the year in hopeful expectation that this year will be better than last. Whatever COVID may throw at us and however our scientists, healthcare professionals and governments may respond, we can also hold on to the much more ancient promise that Jesus is our ultimate hope and light and rock in a dark and challenging world. **Amen**

The Creed

**We believe in God the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

Be still and pray: At the start of this new year, pray for the church, the needs of the world and our local community. Particularly pray for: Areas of the world affected by War, natural disasters and man-made disasters; for peace to prevail in areas of rising international tension. and for our own nation and other nations dealing with rising COVID infection rates and the combination of the delta and new omicron variants; for healing and peace for those who are ill; for the souls of those who have recently died, and comfort for those who are mourning their loss; and pray for yourselves that 2022 may be a year of greater hope, joy and light for us all. ***Finish with The Lord's Prayer:***

Conclusion

God our Father, you have made known to us again the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts.

To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

Reverend Eddie