

Sunday Worship at Home  
17<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
Epiphany 2



In preparation for this service  
you may wish to have a  
candle to light later on.

WE PREPARE

Come and see the beauty of God  
life like the sudden gold of sunlight at dawn,  
truth that breaks through as lightning flashes,  
kindness like the rain after dryness  
and caring springing up in unlikely places  
in the centre of cities.

Come and see the holy God.  
Let us worship that God

HYMN

**All heaven declares**  
the glory of the risen Lord;  
who can compare  
with the beauty of the Lord?  
For ever He will be  
the Lamb upon the throne;  
I gladly bow the knee,  
and worship Him alone.

I will proclaim  
the glory of the risen Lord,  
who once was slain  
to reconcile man to God.  
For ever You will be  
the Lamb upon the throne;  
I gladly bow the knee,  
and worship You alone.

We say, 'Sorry'...

God of all eternity,  
as we seek your face, show us who we are.  
Visit us deeply in the life-places which we refuse to name.  
Speak to us in the silences, O God,  
where our words of guilt and regret lie unspoken  
and listen in the spaces where our souls whisper in longing  
for different ways of being.  
Forgive us O God.  
Lay your hands on our lives in grace, Jesus Christ.  
As we stand before your holiness  
we know we will never be who we would like to be.  
Our faith is too small and our faithfulness too brief,  
our courage fails us and our care for others comes and goes.

We are often slow to point to you if it costs us something or if it seems meaningless to do so.

Forgive us O God.

Lay your hands on our lives in grace, Jesus Christ, for we come in hope to you. Amen.

...and receive the assurance of God's pardon

Father God,  
we thank you that we don't have to earn your forgiveness.  
It is not based on how worthy we are.  
We are forgiven through Christ Jesus.  
It is by grace that our sins are forgiven. Amen.

We give thanks to God...

We thank you God,  
for the life which is offered to us in your word.  
We thank you for its layers of meaning and truth  
which we can see in fresh ways as the years pass,  
or as different experiences turn the pages of life for us  
and bring new gifts of understanding.

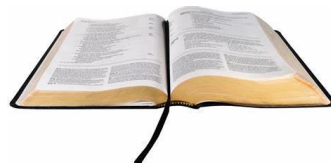
We thank you also for your Word which comes to us today. Amen.

Psalm 139; 1 - 6, 11 - 18

<sup>1</sup>You have searched me, LORD,  
and you know me.

<sup>2</sup>You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

## GOD'S WORD



<sup>3</sup>You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.

<sup>4</sup>Before a word is on my tongue  
you, LORD, know it completely.

<sup>5</sup>You hem me in behind and before,  
and you lay your hand upon me.

<sup>6</sup>Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.

<sup>11</sup>If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me  
and the light become night around me,"

<sup>12</sup>even the darkness will not be dark to you;  
the night will shine like the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

<sup>13</sup>For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

<sup>14</sup>I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;  
your works are wonderful,  
I know that full well.

<sup>15</sup>My frame was not hidden from you  
when I was made in the secret place,  
when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

<sup>16</sup>Your eyes saw my unformed body;  
all the days ordained for me were written in your book  
before one of them came to be.

<sup>17</sup>How precious to me are your thoughts,<sup>[a]</sup> God!  
How vast is the sum of them!

<sup>18</sup>Were I to count them,  
they would outnumber the grains of sand—  
when I awake, I am still with you.

## John 1: 43 - 51

<sup>43</sup> Jesus decided to leave for Galilee. Finding Philip, he said to him, "Follow me."

<sup>44</sup> Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida. <sup>45</sup> Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

<sup>46</sup> "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked.

"Come and see," said Philip.

<sup>47</sup> When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching, he said of him, "Here truly is an Israelite in whom there is no deceit."

<sup>48</sup> "How do you know me?" Nathanael asked.

Jesus answered, "I saw you while you were still under the fig tree before Philip called you."



<sup>49</sup> Then Nathanael declared, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God; you are the king of Israel."

<sup>50</sup> Jesus said, "You believe because I told you I saw you under the fig tree. You will see greater things than that." <sup>51</sup> He then added, "Very truly I tell you, you will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending on' the Son of Man."

## Reflection

Sitting beneath the canopy of the fig tree, Nathanael sighs. His time of peaceful meditation under the leafy roof of this tree, where it is customary to spend time with God, has got him nowhere, again. Amongst his prayers may well have been one asking for the coming of God's promised Chosen One.

As if in answer to Nathanael's sighful prayer, Philip arrives under the tree, with a startling announcement. He believes he has found the long-promised Messiah in Jesus of Nazareth. Well, Philip is not ready to be persuaded by a man from Nazareth, his contemptuous reply, based upon small village rivalry, makes that very clear, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip doesn't argue, he wisely replies, "Come and see." And Nathanael goes with him. It had been just the same for Simon Peter when his brother Andrew told him, "We have found the Messiah! Come and see!" When Jesus found Philip and said, "Follow me," he did; and now Philip is inviting Nathanael to 'Come and see'.

John, the writer of this Gospel, is amassing evidence of who Jesus is, including the evidence of John the Baptist, "Look the Lamb of God."

This group of Galilean fishermen is to become part of the core of believers, called by Jesus. Jesus chooses these ordinary fishermen, known to each other, to become world-changers. No-one from the established church is chosen.

Nathanael adds to John's accumulated evidence when he asks Jesus, "How do you know me?" How could Jesus possibly have known Nathanael and seen him seated beneath the distant fig tree?

And when Jesus gives his answer, Nathanael proclaims, “Rabbi (Teacher) you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel!”

These fishermen, grounded in the teachings and prophecies of the Old Testament, meet with Jesus and everything falls into place,

Jesus is

The Lamb of God  
The Messiah, the Christ  
The one Moses wrote about in the Law  
Teacher  
The Son of God  
The King of Israel

But there’s more to come says Jesus:

“I tell you the truth (*you had better believe it*)  
you shall see heaven open and the angels of God  
ascending and descending on the Son of Man!”

Jesus called those fishermen, he calls us; Jesus knows us and still forgives us; he looks upon us as perfect, he accepts us; there are no exclusion clauses, he adopts us as his own.

Jesus will open up to us the glory of heaven and be for us the mediator between us and God as the angels traverse the stairway to heaven.

And we don’t have to be fishermen, Jesus loves us as we are.



Come and see what we have seen..

Let us ponder things which we have seen  
which remind us of the beauty and goodness of God  
[and light our candle in celebration]

**HYMN**

**Jesus is the name we honour;**

Jesus is the name we praise.

Majestic name above all other names,  
the highest heaven and earth proclaim that Jesus is our God.

*We will glorify,  
we will lift Him high,  
we will give Him honour and praise.*

*We will glorify . . .*

Jesus is the name we worship;

Jesus is the name we trust.

He is the King above all other kings,  
let all creation stand and sing that Jesus is our God.

*We will glorify . . .*

Jesus is the Father’s splendour;

Jesus is the Father’s joy.

He will return to reign in majesty,  
and every eye at last will see that Jesus is our God.

*We will glorify . . .*

**We declare our faith in God...**

We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on 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.

## WE PRAY TOGETHER

O God, who waits for our prayers  
and reaches out towards our hopes each day,  
we pray for the world...

*...we bring to God our concerns for the world*

Close the distances between us and the people for whom we pray.  
Give to us your energy for good  
and a new courage to your prophetic truth, O God.  
Show us your activities in the world,  
so that we may be encouraged.  
Give us new faith when nothing seems to change  
and the strength to go on.

O God, we pray for your Church....

*...we bring to God our concerns for the Church*

Light a flame for the warming of our witness  
and the lighting of our pilgrim way, O God,  
that those who long to touch your life  
will find it here among us.

Give us an open door for those who live in loneliness,  
and gentle hearts for those who fear our judgements.

O God, we pray for those in need...

*...we bring to God those we know who struggle at this time*

Give a sense of your presence,  
hope and reassurance, to all in need, O God.  
Gently touch those in physical, emotional or spiritual pain,  
breathe peace over those who feel alone or fear, are lost or worried.  
Grant those who grieve comfort, strength and courage.

O God, we pray for ourselves...

*we bring to God ourselves*

Be with us, wherever we are in our faith O God;  
in our vulnerability or our emptiness,  
in our strength or our fullness.  
Be with us, whether our needs are known or not  
and give to us a deeper caring for each other.

There is never a time when we do not need you, O God,  
come, gracious Jesus, come.



And we draw together all our  
prayers...  
Our Father...

## OUR SERVICE DRAWS TO A CLOSE

### HYMN

#### **Will you come and follow me**

If I but call your name?

Will you go where you don't know

And never be the same?

Will you let my love be shown,

Will you let my name be known,

Will you let my life be grown

In you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind

If I but call your name?

Will you care for cruel and kind

And never be the same?

Will you risk the hostile stare

Should your life attract or scare?

Will you let me answer prayer

In you and you in me?

Will you love the you inside

If I but call your name?

Will you quell the fear inside

And never be the same?

Will you use the faith you've found

To reshape the world around,

Through my sight and touch and sound

In you and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true

When you but call my name.

Let me turn and follow you

And never be the same.

In your company I'll go  
Where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow  
In you and you in me.

May we go in peace.

May we call to all the people, 'Come and see our God,  
the God of love and compassion.'

And may our eyes see the signs of the wonder of God,  
our ears hear the sounds of the Spirit calling us on  
and our feet be placed in the footprints of the Christ. Amen.



---

*Material for this service is drawn from:  
Liturgies for Daily Life - Dorothy McRae-McMahon  
New Patterns for Worship - Church House Publishing  
rootsontheweb.com  
Hymns taken from missionpraise.com  
ccl# 999402*

*Service compiled and reflection written by Sue Wilcox*