

# Epiphany

## Evening Prayer



**St. Gabriel's Episcopal Church**

Mary Mazzoni, Lay Worship Leader

January 25, 2023

GREETING AND OPENING SENTENCES

*Celebrant* Light and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

*Celebrant* My soul waits for the Lord, more than those who watch for morning.

*People* **More than those who watch for morning.**

INVOCATION

Eternal Spirit, flow through our being and open our lips,  
**that our mouths may proclaim your praise.**

Let us worship the God of love.

**Alleluia, alleluia.**

*A candle is lit as everyone says the following prayer*

O GRACIOUS LIGHT

*Phos hilaron*

**O gracious light,  
pure brightness  
of the everliving Father in heaven,  
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!**

**Now as we come to the setting of the sun,  
and our eyes behold the vesper light,  
we sing your praises, O God:  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.**

**You are worthy at all times  
to be praised by happy voices,  
O Son of God, O Giver of Life,  
and to be glorified  
through all the worlds. Amen.**



PRAYER FOR THE SEASON OF EPIPHANY

May we each day open the window of our worlds, inviting the fresh Light of Epiphany to flood us with hope, to bring us fresh insight and to fill us with grateful joy.

May we see the world around us with new creation eyes,  
filled with potential and brimming with promise.

May our lives be a continuous unfolding into God's grace,  
revealing new vistas that expand our faith horizons. In  
Jesus' name we pray, and by his name we are saved.

**Amen.**

*Women of ELCA*

BIBLE READING

*Psalm 139:7-12*

Where can I go from your spirit?

Or where can I flee from your presence?

If I ascend to heaven, you are there;

if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

If I take the wings of the morning

and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.

If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and night wraps itself around me,"

even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

**God be in my head, and in my understanding;**

**God be in my eyes, and in my looking;**

**God be in my mouth, and in my speaking;**

**God be in my heart, and in my thinking;**

**God be at my end, and at my departing.**

EPIPHANY READING

*Dr. Howard Thurman*

When I was very young, my grandmother, sensing the  
meaning of the constant threat under which I was living,  
told me about the message of one of the slave ministers on  
her plantation...

On the rare occasions when he was able to hold services for his fellow slaves, the climactic moment always came in these exhilarating words: ‘You are not slaves; you are not condemned forever to do your master’s will – you are God’s children.’

When those words were uttered, a warm glow crept all through the very being of the slaves, and they felt the feeling of themselves run through them.

Even at this far distance I can relive the pulsing tremor of raw energy that was released in me as I responded to her words.

The sense of being permanently grounded in God gave to the people of that far-off time a way to experience themselves as human beings.

Howard Thurman. *The Luminous Darkness*. New York: Harper & Row; 1965.

*After the reading, a period of silence follows.*

### PRAYERS

**Eternal Spirit,**

**Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,**

**Source of all that is and that shall be,**

**Father and Mother of us all,**

**Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**The hallowing of your name echo through the  
universe!**

**The way of your justice be followed by the peoples  
of the world!**

**Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!**

**Your commonwealth of peace and freedom  
sustain our hope and come on earth.**

**With the bread we need for today, feed us.**

**In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive  
us.**

**In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.**

**From trials too great to endure, spare us.**

**From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love,  
now and for ever. Amen.**

That this evening may be holy, good, and peaceful,  
**We ask of you, O Lord.**

That your holy angels may lead us in paths of peace and goodwill,  
**We ask of you, O Lord.**

That we may be pardoned and forgiven for our sins and offenses,  
**We ask of you, O Lord.**



That there may be peace in the world,  
**We ask of you, O Lord.**

That those who suffer from grief, sickness, violence, addiction, abuse, or any other trouble may be delivered from their distress,  
**We ask of you, O Lord.**

That we may be bound together by your Holy Spirit in the communion of all your saints, entrusting one another and all our life to Christ,  
**We ask of you, O Lord.**

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. **Amen.**

CLOSING PRAYER

*New Zealand Prayer Book, p. 184*

Lord,  
it is night.

The night is for stillness.

Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.

What has been done has been done;  
what has not been done has not been done;  
let it be.

The night is dark.

Let our fears of the darkness of the world  
and of our own lives  
rest in you.

The night is quiet.

Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,  
all dear to us,  
and all who have no peace.



The night heralds the dawn.

Let us look expectantly to a new day,  
new joys,  
new possibilities.

In your name we pray.

**Amen.**

SONG OF SIMEON

*Nunc Dimittis – Luke 2:29-32*

**Lord, you now have set your servant free  
to go in peace as you have promised;**

**For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior,  
whom you have prepared for all the world to see:**

**A Light to enlighten the nations,  
and the glory of your people Israel.**

**Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy  
Spirit:**

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

**Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.**

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia.**

The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us. **Amen.**

*Passages used from the Book of Common Prayer (1979), pp. 127-135; and a New Zealand Prayer Book (1989), pp. 167-186.*

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