



Order of Worship

First Sunday after Epiphany
Baptism of the Lord
January 8, 2023

Call to worship *(Based on Psalm 29, Isaiah 42, Amos 5, John 1)*

Leader: We know that the voice of the Lord is powerful.

People: We know that the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.

Leader: We believe that the servant of the Lord will not break a bruised reed.

People: We believe that the servant of the Lord will not quench a dim flame.

Leader: Both these things are true:

People: Our God's righteousness is a mighty stream,

Leader: And our Savior is like a lamb.

People: **Through the Holy Spirit, we hold space for all aspects of God.**

ALL: Today we worship an unknowable God, who loves us and calls us by name, who came to meet us in the person of Jesus Christ.

Call to confession *(Based on Isaiah 42:1-9)*

Those who know God and love God are called to righteousness. We are called, through God, to open the eyes of the blind and establish justice on earth. Yet, we turn time and time again away from this calling. Let us confess our sins to God, our loving and merciful redeemer.

Prayer of confession

Creator God, in our baptisms, you marked us with your love, inviting us into covenant with you. As we grow older, you reveal more and more of yourself to us. We see and experience the brokenness of the world; we know that we are called to embody your love. But the task sometimes feels too big. It's easier to ignore the pain of others. It's easier to choose blindness. Forgive us for forgetting our baptism, for forgetting that our lives are meant for something bigger.

Assurance of pardon *(Based on Isaiah 63:7-9)*

Leader: Even when we fail, even when we are not perfect, God still claims us. God still calls us by name. God still places God's Spirit upon us.

People: We are known and loved and forgiven. Amen.





Prayer for illumination

Almighty God, in this season of Epiphany you invite us to seek Christ's revelation. In the reading of this Scripture today, give us the eyes to see and ears to hear who Christ is — in the Bible and in the world around us. May this knowledge change us. Amen.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith (*Book of Common Worship*)

Through baptism we enter the covenant God has established. Within this covenant God gives us new life, guards us from evil, and nurtures us in love. In embracing that covenant, we choose whom we will serve, by turning from evil and turning to Jesus Christ.

Litany for the Baptism of the Lord (*Book of Common Worship*)

O Christ, by your epiphany your light shines upon us, giving us the fullness of salvation. Help us show your light to all we meet today.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ of glory, you humbled yourself to be baptized, showing us the way of humility. Strengthen us to serve you in humility all the days of our life.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, by your baptism you cleansed us from our sin, making us children of your Father. Give the grace of being a child of God to all who seek you.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, by your baptism you sanctified creation and opened the door of repentance to all who are baptized. Make us servants of your gospel in the world.

Lord, have mercy.

O Christ, by your baptism you revealed to us the glorious Trinity when the voice from heaven proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son," and the Holy Spirit descended upon you like a dove. Renew a heart of worship within all the baptized.

Lord, have mercy.

Call for the offering

One way that we can live into our baptism is to share our resources with others and invest in the church, God's chosen vehicle for action in this world. Let us give freely in faith that whatever we give will be blessed by God to be a blessing to others.

Prayer of dedication

Heavenly Parent, we offer you these gifts. Please bless them, just as you bless those who gave them and those who will receive them. May the sharing of this money remind us of the connection that holds us all together and the beloved community you call us to form.





Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Almighty God, there is so much hate in the world, it can throw us off balance. We pray for those who are fleeing home because they have no other option. We pray for those who do not feel safe. We pray for those who are spending yet another holiday season away from their family. We pray for those whose hearts are hardened by fear and anger. Center us, God, amongst the fear, violence, and hate. Help us to stay grounded in you.

Lord, you are the creator and lover of justice. We pray for President Biden, for Governor, *[insert name]*, for Mayor *[insert name]*, and *[list other state and local government officials here]*. Please guide our political leaders. Surround them with wise people. Help them to cut through bureaucracy and power struggles to help those on the margins of society.

Unifying God, we pray for the universal church. We pray for our Anglican siblings, who are fighting over LGBTQIA rights. We pray for our Methodist siblings, who are navigating a fracturing body. We pray for the PC(USA) with our own divisions. Christ, help us, the church, to find you. May religion and tradition not distract us from the movement of your Spirit.

All-knowing God, you care about the smallest details. In Christ, you saw the bleeding woman, nobody else would see. *(Luke 8)*. You touched a leper *(Matthew 8)*. We know that you see us here in this room *(Matthew 18)*. We know that you care about our lives. And so, with faith in your compassion, we pray for our church members. *(Insert your church's prayer requests here.)*

The season of Epiphany reminds us how you are constantly revealing yourself to us, God. The realization of Christ never ends. With that in mind, we give you thanks silently or aloud for the ways that we have experienced you just today. *(Allow time for congregational members to say the ways they've experienced Christ today).*

Christ, you are alive. You are present.
You are working in the world.
And it is in your name that we pray
together the way you taught us,
"Our Father..."

Charge and benediction

Beloveds, remember your baptism. Go from here with the confidence that God sees you, that God calls you, that God delights in you. In you, God is well pleased. In this confidence, let us open hearts to the Spirit that we may work together, with the Holy Spirit, to bring compassionate justice in every aspect of our lives. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Rose Schrott Taylor and provided for free distribution.

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