

LARGE PRINT

Worship Celebration

Epiphany & Baptism of the Lord Sunday

January 7, 2024 + 9 AM



“Visit of the Three Wise Men”, 1973, JESUS MAFA

JESUS MAFA is a response to the New Testament readings from the Lectionary by a Christian community in Cameroon, Africa. Each of the readings was selected and adapted to dramatic interpretation by the community members. Photographs of their interpretations were made, and these were then transcribed to paintings.

We Gather as God's Children

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Voluntary III, Moderato

William Boyce

+ Opening Prayer

*O God of light and peace,
whose glory, shining in the child of Bethlehem,
still draws the nations to yourself:
dispel the darkness that shrouds our path,
that we may come
to kneel before Christ in true worship,
offer him our hearts and souls,
and return from his presence to live as he has taught. Amen.*

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+ Hymn

Morning Has Broken

UMH 145

We Grow in God's Word

Leader: With disciples of every time and place,
let us listen for the word of God among us.

People: *Our ears and hearts are open.*

First Lesson - Matthew 2.1-12 (NRSVUE)

2 In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, magi from the east came to Jerusalem, ² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star in the east and have come to pay him homage."

³When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him, ⁴and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ '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.' "

⁷Then Herod secretly called for the magi and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. ⁸Then 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." ⁹When they had heard the king, they set out, and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen in the east, until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Second Lesson - Mark 1.4-11 (NRSVUE)

⁴so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove upon him. ¹¹And a voice came from the heavens, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

Sermon - *An Epiphany of Peace in Time of War* Rev. Carrie Antczak

Choir Anthem *Come, Let Us Join*
Isaac Watts, Jospeh M. Martin

Prayers of the People

**Opportunities for Ministry
and Invitation to Give Our Tithes and Offerings**

Offertory Anthem *Voluntary VIII* William Boyce

The Great Thanksgiving (*credit: Rev. Michelle Bodle*)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

One: Let us open our hearts to the love of God.

We open our hearts to God.

Jesus invites all who believe in his reign of justice and love to gather around this table and be fed in body and spirit for strength on the journey. As we prepare to share in this holy meal together, may we confess before God and one another our need for grace.

Confession

God of Peace, we know that we have tarnished your vision for this world. You have called us to a way of love - loving you and loving our neighbor - but we have strayed, seeking our own version of justice instead of the one you have for us. We have fought with one another, we have not worked for peace, we have not done that which you require of us. Help us, O God, to seek instead your way of justice and loving kindness, as you usher us into your presence. Amen.

Words of Assurance

In the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ you are forgiven.

Sharing of the Peace

Let us greet one another with signs of restoration and forgiveness.

You have told us, O God, what is good and right.

*You gave us a vision of a peaceable Kingdom /
in the garden of Eden,*

where man and women were united to serve you.

You have told us, O God, what is good and right.

*Instructing your people through the prophets
to be united with one another, seeking peace.*

You have told us, O God, what is good and right.

*Showing us a different way of living in community
through Jesus Christ.*

Loving God, you have invited us time and time again to do what is good and right in your sight. To live the way that you intended us to live, in a community of peace and wholeness. You have given us every opportunity to return to you and embrace your vision.

***We witness now to you now, joining our voices together
and remembering your reign
of peace and love and justice.***

When we rejected your version of the peaceable Kingdom, instead following our own wants and desires you sent us Jesus Christ, who modeled for us through his actions and words a new path of justice and peace. Yet, we rejected him as well.

But Jesus still embraces us, as we share in this holy meal, remembering how on the night he gave himself for us in love he took bread, broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said “Eat this and remember me.”

After the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples and said, “Drink this, and remember me.”

So today, we gather together around the bread and the cup and remember - remember the acts of power and loving kindness expressed through our Lord, Jesus Christ as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died.

Christ has risen.

Christ will come again.

Holy God, pour out your Spirit on us and on these gifts of the bread and the cup. May they strengthen us to do what you require:

***to walk humbly with you, to love others,
and to seek justice in the face of oppression,
so we might be your people,
proclaiming to others your Kingdom.***

The Lord's Prayer

Sharing the Bread & Cup

Hymn *Spirit of the Living God* UMH 393

Hymn *Let There Be Peace on Earth* UMH 431

Prayer following Communion

*Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us.*

*Grant that we may go into the world
in the strength of your Spirit,
to give ourselves for others,
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

We Go Out to Serve in God's Name

+ Hymn *Wade in the Water* TFWS 2107

+ Benediction *(A Franciscan Blessing)*

May God bless us with discomfort,
at easy answers, half-truths, and superficial relationships
so that we may live deep within your heart.

*May God bless us with anger
at injustice, oppression, and exploitation of people,
so that we may work for justice, freedom and peace.*

May God bless us with tears,
to shed for those who suffer pain, rejection, hunger, and war,
so that we may reach out your hand
to comfort them and turn their pain to joy.

***And may God bless us with enough foolishness
to believe that we make a difference in the world,
so that we can do what others claim cannot be done,
to bring justice and kindness
to all our children and the poor. Amen.***

Postlude

Postlude-Allegro

Domenico Zipoli
arr. Carlo Rossini

***Our service of worship is ended.
Our worship through service now begins.***

Morning Prayer:

Bright Morning Star, your light has come,
and the birth of Jesus has overwhelmed us with joy.
Like the magi of long ago, may we be drawn to you
and offer you such gifts as we are able. Amen.

Evening Prayer:

Radiant Morning Star, you are both guidance and mystery,
Visit our rest with disturbing dreams,
and our journeys with strange companions.
Grace us with the hospitality to open our hearts and homes
to visitors filled with unfamiliar wisdom
bearing profound and unusual gifts. Amen.