



A SERVICE OF
READINGS
AND MUSIC

FOR THE
EPIPHANY

Wednesday 6 January 2021
The Feast of the Epiphany

Order of Service

Organ Music

Chorale Prelude on 'Stuttgart'

Flor Peeters

played by Benjamin Morris

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Welcome to this service of carols and readings for Epiphany. In this service we give thanks for the light of Christ, which shines for all humanity; we remember the wise men from distant lands, who, led by a star, came to bear witness to the light of Christ; and we pray for the world which Christ came to save.

Let us pray.

Blessed are you, gracious God,
in the darkness of the world,
your light shines for all.
In the face of Jesus Christ,
the radiance of your glory is revealed.
A Saviour is born,
a son is given to us,
the Word becomes flesh.
With Mary and Joseph we give you thanks,
with the angels we give you praise,
with the shepherds we rejoice,
and with the Magi we offer our worship.
Christ is the King of glory,
the only Son of the eternal Father.
Blessed be God forever.

Hymn

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him, the Lord is his name!

Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,
high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy prayerfulness,
guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
of the poor wealth thou wouldst reckon as thine:
truth in its beauty, and love in its tenderness,
these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

These, though we bring them in trembling and fearfulness,
he will accept for the name that is dear;
mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
trust for our trembling and hope for our fear.

O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness!
Bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
with gold of obedience, and incense of lowliness,
kneel and adore him, the Lord is his name!

Words J S B Monsell (1811–75)

Tune WAS LEBET, melody from the Rheinhardt MS 1754

First Reading

I will give you as light to the nations.

“I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” Thus says the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel and his Holy One, to one deeply despised, abhorred by the nations, the slave of rulers, “Kings shall see and stand up, princes, and they shall prostrate themselves, because of the Lord, who is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, who has chosen you.” Thus says the Lord: In a time of favour I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages; saying to the prisoners, “Come out,” to those who are in darkness, “Show yourselves.” They shall feed along the ways, on all the bare heights shall be their pasture; they shall not hunger or thirst, neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them down, for he who has pity on them will lead them, and by springs of water will guide them. And I will turn all my mountains into a road, and my highways shall be raised up. Lo, these shall come from far away, and lo, these from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Syene. Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth; break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones.

ISAIAH 49.6b–13

Carol

All this time, this song is best: ‘Verbum caro factum est.’

This night there is a Child y-born,
That sprang out of Jesse’s thorn;
We must sing and say therefor:
All this time...

Jesus is the childe’s name
And Mary mild is his dame,
All our sorrow is turned to game:
All this time...

It fell upon high midnight,
The starres shone both fair and bright,
The angels sang with all their might:
All this time...

Now kneel we down on our knee,
And pray we to the Trinity,
Our help, our succour for to be.
All this time...

Words Sixteenth century ♦ *Music* William Walton (1902–83)

Second Reading

The temple of the Lamb.

I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. People will bring into it the glory and the honour of the nations. But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

REVELATION 21.22–21.5

Anthem

Lord, when the wise men came from far,
Led to thy cradle by a star,
Then did the shepherds too rejoice,
Instructed by Thy Angel's voice:
Blest were the wise men in their skill
And shepherds in their harmless will.

Wise men in tracing Nature's laws
Ascend unto the highest Cause;
Shepherds with humble fearfulness
Walk safely, though their Light be Life:
Though wise men better know the way
It seems no honest heart can stray.

There is no merit in the wise
But Love, (the shepherds' sacrifice)
Wise men, all ways of knowledge past,
To the shepherds' wonder come at last:
To know can only wonder breed,
And not to know is wonder's seed.

When, then, our sorrows we apply,
To our own wants and poverty,
When we look up in all distress
And our own misery confess,
Sending both thanks and prayers above—
Then, though we do not know, we love.
Lord, when the wise men came from far.

Words Sidney Godolphin (1610–1643) ♦ *Music* Philip Moore (*b.* 1943)

Third Reading

The Magi follow the star.

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: ‘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.’” Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. Then 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.” When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. On 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. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

MATTHEW 2.1–12

Carol

Here is the little door,
lift up the latch, O lift!
We need not wander more
but enter with our gift;
our gift of finest gold,
gold that was never bought nor sold;
myrrh to be strewn about his bed;
incense in clouds about his head;
all for the Child that stirs not in his sleep,
but holy slumber holds with ass and sheep.

Bend low about his bed,
for each he has a gift;
See how his eyes awake,
lift up your hands, O lift!
For gold, he gives a keen-edged sword
(defend with it thy little Lord!)
For incense, smoke of battle red,
myrrh for the honoured happy dead;
gifts for his children, terrible and sweet,
touched by such tiny hands and O such tiny feet.

Words Frances Chesterton (1875–1938) ♦ *Music* Herbert Howells (1892–1983)

Prayers

Let us worship the Saviour with joy
and make our prayer to our heavenly Father.
The magi came from the east to worship your Son:
Father, grant to Christians everywhere
the spirit of adoration ...

Lord of glory,
hear our prayer.

The infant Christ received gifts of gold, incense and myrrh:
Father, accept the offering of our hearts and minds
[at the beginning of this year] ...

Lord of glory,
hear our prayer.

The kingdoms of this world have become
the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ:
Father, grant an abundance of peace to your world ...

Lord of glory,
hear our prayer.

The Holy Family lived in exile and in the shadow of death:
Father, look in mercy on all who are poor and powerless,
and all who suffer ...

Lord of glory,
hear our prayer.

Your Son shared the life of his home and family at Nazareth:
Father, protect in your love our neighbours,
our families and this community of which we are a part ...

Lord of glory,
hear our prayer.

Father, we rejoice in our fellowship
with the shepherds, the angels, the magi,
the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph
and all the faithful departed.
In your unfailing love for us and for all people,
hear and answer our prayers through your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

The Three Kings

The first king was very young,
 O balow, balow la lay,
With doleful ballads on his tongue,
 O balow, balow la lay,
He came bearing a branch of myrrh
Than which no gall is bitterer,
 O balow, balow la lay,
Gifts for a baby King, O.

The second king was a man in prime,
 O balow, balow la lay,
The solemn priest of a solemn time,
 O balow, balow la lay,
With eyes downcast and reverent feet
He brought his incense sad and sweet,
 O balow, balow la lay,
Gifts for a baby King, O.

The third king was very old,
 O balow, balow la lay,
Both his hands were full of gold,
 O balow, balow la lay,
Many a gaud and glittering toy,
Baubles brave for a baby boy,
 O balow, balow la lay,
Gifts for a baby King, O.

Words Dorothy Sayers (1893–1957) ♦ *Music* Jonathan Dove (b. 1959)

Blessing

May God the Father,
who led the wise men by the shining of a star
to find the Christ, the Light from light,
lead you also in your pilgrimage to find the Lord.

May God, who has delivered us from the dominion of darkness,
give us a place with the saints in light
in the kingdom of his beloved Son.

May the light of the glorious gospel of Christ
shine in your hearts and fill your lives
with his joy and peace.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Voluntary

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern

played by Benjamin Morris

Marcel Dupré

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