

# Epiphany Prayer Time

## 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021

*We offer this liturgy for a time of personal prayer,  
hoping it will be a time of enrichment and encouragement in challenging times.  
May God's peace and blessing be upon you today and each day to come.*



Today, we look with hopeful expectation to find the star which signals your arrival.  
Today, we seek your deeper presence in our lives and in the silence...  
Today, we bring before you our wounds and weariness of last year's journey.  
Today, we come humbled before you to receive the glory of your presence.

### Prayer

Loving God, you made your light shine in our hearts.  
Help us to show our gratitude by walking in the path it illuminates,  
and shedding that light on those around us, to the glory of your name.  
Receive our praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### Gospel Reading: Matthew 2.1 – 12 (NIV UK)

**2** After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, 'Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.'

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> 'In Bethlehem in Judea,' they replied, 'for this is what the prophet has written: <sup>6</sup> "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."'

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.'

<sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.



<sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

*Adoration of the Magi, 1500,  
Andrea Mantegna*

To be in the presence of God demanded a response, an offering – of themselves and of their gifts...

### For prayerful pondering:

- Name and give thanks for a moment of wonder.
- Resolve to offer your gift this year in a particular way.
- Name some aspect of darkness and pray for light.
- Name a companion on the journey and give thanks for their support.

**Prayers of Intercession:** *A time to offer prayers of concern, for local, national or world issues, for thanks or for whatever is on your heart....*

Lord of Light, today we have remembered the journey of the magi – how, inspired by what they took to be a sign, they travelled in search of a new-born king, a king who would change not simply their lives, or the life of his people but the life of the world. May your light shine through the darkness. Today and for ever. Amen.

*Time for silent reflection (use the picture), after a period of 2 / 3 mins silence conclude ....*

Living God, we pray for all who seek today,  
all those who are looking for a sense of purpose in their lives,  
all who are searching for spiritual fulfilment,  
all who long to find you for themselves.  
You have promised through Your Son, Jesus Christ, that those who seek shall find.  
Help them to keep looking, in Jesus' name. Amen.

### Closing prayer (by Mary Palmer\*)

Jesus, may we not hoard, but freely give,  
the gold of our hearts, the myrrh of our grief,  
the frankincense of our dreams, to you. Amen.