

The Feast of Epiphany

January 6th

Our Celebration of Christ Being Worshipped by the Gentiles

Read aloud Matthew 2:1-12

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"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 be the shepherd of my people Israel."

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

The promise of redemption had been given time and again to God's people. He chose to work through the nation of Israel in order to bless all the nations of the world. Read God's promise given to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3.

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and *all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*"

Rejoice in God's goodness in keeping His promises. Sing "Rejoice, the Lord is King" together.

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| 1. Rejoice the Lord is King:
Your Lord and King adore!
Rejoice, give thanks, and sing,
and triumph evermore. <i>Refrain</i> | 3. His kingdom cannot fail,
He rules o'er earth and heaven;
the keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus giv'n. <i>Refrain</i> | 5. Rejoice in glorious hope!
Our Lord, the Judge, shall come,
And take His servants up
To their eternal home. <i>Refrain</i> |
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Refrain

Lift up your heart, lift up your voice! Rejoice, again I say, rejoice!

Closing prayer to be read in unison:

God of light, who guided the Magi to Your infant Son to worship and adore You, shine upon us this day. Open our eyes to see You as You truly are that we may worship You in Spirit and truth. Shine through us so that we may also be a blessing to others around us with the light of the gospel.



CHRIST *the*
REDEEMER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Taking Gathered Worship Home

Family and Individual Devotions

Week of December 31, 2006

Meditations in Deuteronomy

Christmastide

The Twelve Days of Christmas

This season of Christmastide runs from Christmas Day until Epiphany on January 6th. Probably most known by way of a certain song with a partridge, this season is a great opportunity for us to worship our Lord and Savior who was born a man to set men free. Please use the following prayers, Scripture, and discussions to enter into this time of celebration for our Messiah who has come and is coming again.

The Shema

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

Christmastide Litany

Each day this week read through the following litany and then read and discuss the passage for the specific day below.

Responsive Reading

Leader: How does the holy conception & birth of Christ benefit you?
Family: He is our mediator; with His innocence and perfect holiness He removes from God's sight my sin—mine since I was conceived.
Leader: Why is Jesus called God's only Son when we are also His children?
Family: Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God. We are adopted children of God—adopted by grace through Christ.

Sing

Read aloud the history of the Christmas carol "Silent Night! Holy Night!" and sing it together as a family.

Read Scripture and Discuss it

Read the passage for each particular day below.

Pray

Glorious God, we praise You for giving us the light of the world. Lord Christ, You are the living Word and we do believe in Your name. It is through Your name that we are made children of God, co-heirs with You, and we worship and adore You. Teach us to live as becomes Your children. Amen.

Seventh Day of Christmas 12/31

Read Deuteronomy 6:1-25 and consider what it means for God's

people to be careful to obey Him. How is it related to our love?

Recite the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9) and listen intently to the Lord who is One.

Pray for Christ's peace to actively reign in our hearts and lives.

Serve someone according to the riches with which God has blessed you.

Eighth DOC, 1/1

Read Deuteronomy 7:1-11 and consider what it means to be treasured by God.

Pray for understanding and obedience to the Word in our congregation, community, and world.

Meditate on verse 6 and the privilege of our calling.

Ninth DOC, 1/2

Read Deuteronomy 10:12-22. What does it mean to fear the Lord? How is it related to love?

Recite the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9) and discuss how Christ fulfills it.

Pray for CTR to be a blessing to the city of Portland.

Tenth DOC, 1/3

Read Deuteronomy 11:13-21. How should we obey?

Meditate on the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9).

Pray for the light of Christ to shine throughout Portland. Pray for God to open the eyes of your neighbors, coworkers, friends, and family members.

Eleventh DOC, 1/4

Read Deuteronomy 18:14-22 and discuss how Christ has fulfilled this prophesy.

Recite the Shema (Deut. 6:4-9) and discuss how Christ fulfills it.

Pray for CTR to be a community of faith that loves God and keeps His law.

Ask the Lord to incline our hearts to love righteousness and our feet to walk in His paths. Ask Him to give us boldness in proclaiming His goodness and might in Portland, New England, and the world.

Twelfth DOC, 1/5

Come to the prayer meeting **this morning at 6:30.**

Read Deuteronomy 26:16-19. How are love and obedience intertwined?

Pray for your neighbors, co-workers, and family members who are still strangers to Christ that they will be overcome by His grace.

"Silent Night! Holy Night!"

History

Mohr, Joseph/Gruber, Franz
Possibly the world's favorite Christmas carols, this song is thought to be translated into more than 300 languages and even has its own webpage (<http://silentnight.web.za/>). The legend of this hymn has added to its enduring appeal. According to the story, it was hurriedly written on Christmas Eve 1818 by a parish priest and organist in Oberdorf, Austria, for two men and a guitarist to perform after it was discovered that mice had eaten away at the organ wires making it unusable. While it may not have been composed at the eleventh hour on Christmas Eve, it is quite true that it was first performed in a service on December 31st of 1818 and was indeed originally composed for two male voices and guitar. The text's author, Joseph Mohr (1792-1848) and his organist, Franz Gruber (1787-1863), who supplied the music, arranged for its first performance beside a crib in a side chapel of the church of St. Nicholas, Oberdorf. Though the church was moved from that location, a 'Silent Night Chapel' now stands on its former site.

Words

1. Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.

3. Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at thy birth.

2. Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heav'n afar,
Heavenly hosts sing: Alleluia,
Christ, the Saviour, is born!
Christ, the Saviour, is born!

4. Silent night! Holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
With the angels let us sing
Alleluias to our King
Christ the Savior, is born!