

JANUARY 6, 2024
EPIPHANY OF
OUR LORD



Christians are fellow heirs, members of the same body.

EPIPHANY BIBLE READINGS

Take time to read and reflect on these Bible passages as part of your Epiphany observances.

Saturday	Isaiah 60:1-6	Crowds coming to Jerusalem
	Ephesians 3:1-12	Paul's mission to the Gentiles
	Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14	Prayer to guide the king
	Matthew 2:1-12	The visit of the wise men

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR EPIPHANY

In former generations this mystery was not made known to humankind, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: that is, the Gentiles have become fellow heirs, members of the same body, and sharers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Ephesians 3:5-6 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for Epiphany:

God of the nations, unite your church through your rule of justice and mercy so that all may see your grace through Jesus Christ born in Bethlehem. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, may this gift of food remind us of your daily care for us and all those in need through Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem to be our Savior. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the light of Christ shine brightly in your life.



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HYMN FOR EPIPHANY

We All Are One in Mission



EPIPHANY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Give examples of times or places when unity is important.
- How is the unity of the church consistent with God's mission of reconciliation in Christ?

DEVOTIONS



Read: Ephesians 3:1-12.

The wise men from the east are a central part of Epiphany. They represent the world far from the Jewish and biblical center of Israel and Jerusalem. They do not know the God of Israel. They follow the stars, not the Scriptures. Epiphany reminds us that the good news of Jesus is to reach all the world. Ephesians truly grasps this message. The unity of Jews and Gentiles reveals what Jesus' saving work is about. Ephesians sees the unity of the church as the very example of the gospel. Gentiles are now "*fellow heirs, members of the same body*" (v. 6). God's epiphany or self-revelation is centered on Jesus who has come for all to know and to receive the "*gift of God's grace*" (v. 7). Unity was a very real challenge to the New Testament church. Tensions existed between communities of Jewish and Gentile Christians. The church today is to hear and respond to that same message of one body in Christ. All Christians share equally in God's mission.

Discuss: How do you think honoring all believers as equal recipients of God's grace contributes to the mission of the church?

Pray: **Loving God, your message of grace and peace shines brightly for all. Give us faith to boldly be part of the one body and mission of the church through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE



Jesus calls us to serve our neighbor in love. Based on the Bible Readings and theme for Epiphany, how can you reach out to those different from you with care and support?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



For centuries Epiphany Day was the second most important church festival, even more important than Christmas. The church celebrates the time when Jesus was made known to the wider world through the visit of the wise men (Magi). Epiphany is also associated with the blessing of homes as a place to welcome friends and strangers. The Magi followed a star that led them to Jesus. In remembrance of this journey, light a candle during your devotional time to symbolize Jesus as the light of the world and to remind you of the star the Magi followed to the Christ child.

Say this blessing: **Lord Jesus, light this room and our lives with your presence. Amen.**



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