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**~AT HOME WORSHIP~**

**Theme: Epiphany - No Going Back**

**Sunday 2nd January 2022**

**Call to worship**

Arise, shine for your light has come!
As the magi followed the star to a new place,
a place where dreams became reality,
let us follow our Lord and saviour
to a place of renewed hope.
Not looking back, but always moving forward,
let us seek and find the king. **Amen.**

**Hymn/Song: We three kings of Orient are**

[Anne Murray - We Three Kings [with lyrics] - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BaheOgdGKJQ)

We three kings of Orient are

Bearing gifts we traverse afar

Field and fountain, moor and mountain

Following yonder star

O Star of wonder, star of night

Star with royal beauty bright

Westward leading, still proceeding

Guide us to thy Perfect Light

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain

Gold I bring to crown Him again

King forever, ceasing never

Over us all to reign

O Star of wonder, star of night

Star with royal beauty bright

Westward leading, still proceeding

Guide us to Thy perfect light

Frankincense to offer have I

Incense owns a Deity nigh

Prayer and praising, all men raising

Worship Him, God most high

O Star of wonder, star of night

Star with royal beauty bright

Westward leading, still proceeding

Guide us to Thy perfect light

**A Prayer of Thanks**

By a heavenly sign you called them, those seekers
who crossed sands and rivers and rocky places to find you.
We praise you for the example of their perseverance
in their pilgrimage to prove the truth of their observations.
So, Lord, we thank you for calling us to the pilgrimage
of this New Year; for the journey we must make through it,
no turning back, and for the inner journeys into our faith
and spirituality and the epiphanies they will bring.
We set forth in faith. **Amen.**

**Saying Sorry**

*Christ the light of the world has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts.*

*In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins.*

Lord of grace and truth,

we confess our unworthiness

to stand in your presence as your children.

We have sinned:

**forgive and heal us.**

The Virgin Mary accepted your call

to be the mother of Jesus.

Forgive our disobedience to your will.

We have sinned:

**forgive and heal us.**

Your Son our Saviour

was born in poverty in a manger.

Forgive our greed and rejection of your ways.

We have sinned:

**forgive and heal us.**

The shepherds left their flocks

to go to Bethlehem.

Forgive our self-interest and lack of vision.

We have sinned:

**forgive and heal us.**

The wise men followed the star

to find Jesus the King.

Forgive our reluctance to seek you.

We have sinned:

**forgive and heal us**

**Assurance of Forgiveness**

May God who loved the world so much

that he sent his Son to be our Saviour

forgive *us our* sins

and make *us* holy to serve him in the world,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Prayer for the Day**

Almighty God,

In the birth of your Son

You have poured on us the new light of your incarnate Word,

And shown us the fullness of your love:

Help us to walk in his light and dwell in his love

That we my know the fullness of his joy;

Who is alive and reigns with you,

In the unity of the Holy Spirit,

One God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

**Reflective Song: Song of the Wise Men**

*Join in the Chorus*

[Song of the Wise Men (Older Video Version) - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uc9QuO7qb8c)

**BIBLE READING**

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**MATTHEW 2:1-12 (NIV) The Magi Visit the Messiah**

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 2 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.”

3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 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. 5 “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

6 “‘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.’”

7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 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.”

9 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. 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11 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, frankincense and myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

****REFLECTION TIME**

*Thought for the Day taken from the Roots publication*

*Children may choose to use the Activity Sheet*

There’s a centuries-old saying – ‘It is solved as we walk.’ What a great phrase. Walking and journeying together. It is when journeying together that new hope, new possibilities, can emerge. We are not trying to solve everything on our own; it is a shared experience. Jesus, Scripture tells us, wants to walk besides us in the darkness and sadness of our lives and bring us out of the wreckage with new, or renewed, hope. Jesus (God, if you prefer) wants to be the person who journeys with us. Walking with Jesus doesn’t mean we will never journey through dark times, just that it is not something we have to do alone.

The journey the magi made wouldn’t have been an easy one. There were probably times when the way ahead seemed long and dark, perhaps never-ending, even hopeless. There are many experiences in life – such as loss, pain, or suffering, of any kind – that can make us feel like that. And in those times, it is good to have someone with us on our journey, someone to share the load, the burden of it all. The magi had each other. We may have friends and family, but knowing that Jesus walks with us is reassuring too. It can give us the strength to keep going. The wise men followed the star; its light encouraged them to keep journeying on. We follow Jesus; he does the same for us (and much more)!

In the book The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho (HarperCollins, 1992), a young shepherd boy, Santiago, sets out on a journey to find his treasure. He meets many people along the way who help him in his quest. As he walks with each of them, the next part of the puzzle, the jigsaw, is solved and he is able to move on to the next step. Without the help of his companions, he would probably not have completed his quest. We all need people to share the journey of life with us, in good times and not so good, in the joy and the laughter, as well as in the pain and the sorrow.

Let’s be still and quiet for a moment and think about those who have shared our life journey with us, people who have helped us on our way: some for maybe the whole of our lives; some perhaps fleetingly; most somewhere in between. Let’s also remember that Jesus is always with us, the ultimate companion for the road ahead. As we quoted at the beginning, ‘It is solved as we walk.’ And as we walk with Jesus, fresh hope will emerge from the times of darkness.

**Family Song**

[Children's Song for Christmas | Let's Follow the Star! - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NCv9S8Nt3jE)

**Affirming our Faith**

**We believe in God the Father,**

**from whom every family**

**in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,**

**who lives in our hearts through faith,**

**and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,**

**who strengthens us**

**with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God;**

**Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

**Amen.**

**Let us pray**

We picture Mary and Joseph, huddled in a dirty, draughty stable for shelter, and we pray for all who are homeless.

We think of baby Jesus, laid in a feeding trough for cattle, and we pray for all children born into poverty.

We tremble at Herod’s wrath, and we pray for all families living in danger; especially we imagine the fear in their hearts as Mary and Joseph fled their homeland, and we pray for all refugees forced to do likewise today.

May we see in every exiled mother the troubled face of Mary,

in every refugee father the careworn countenance of Joseph,

and in every impoverished child the helpless, vulnerable innocence of the baby Jesus.

**Amen.**

**Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father in heaven,**

**hallowed be your name,**

**Your kingdom come,**

**Your will be done**

**on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread**

**Forgive us our sins**

**as we forgive those who sin against us**

**Lead us not into temptation**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,**

**and the glory are yours**

**Now and for ever.**

**Amen.**

**Worship Song: Great are you Lord – you give life, you are love**

[Great Are You Lord w/ Lyrics (All Sons & Daughters) - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vQLMnPYoR9k)

**Sending Out Prayer**

God of hope, Jesus our companion, Holy Spirit our strength,
travel with us as we journey onwards
into paths known and unknown, familiar and unfamiliar,
through times of darkness and into your marvellous light,
always knowing that you are by our side. **Amen.**

**Dismissal**

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,

and the love of God,

and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,

be with us all, evermore. **Amen**



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