

ST. JOHN'S WORSHIP

Sunday, February 14, 2021

St. John's Baptist Church | Charlotte, NC

Epiphany

Introduction

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Greeting and Prayer of Submission

Rev. Lee Gray

Hymn

God, How Can We Comprehend?

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

ST. GEORGE'S WINSOR

God, how can we comprehend — though we've seen them times before —
Lines of people without end fleeing from some senseless war?
They seek safety anywhere, hoping for a welcome hand!
Can we know the pain they bear? Can we ever understand?
Lord, your loving knows no bounds; you have conquered death for all.
May we hear beyond our towns to our distant neighbors' call.
Spirit, may our love increase; may we reach to all your earth,
Till each person lives in peace; till your world sees each one's worth.

Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures

Exodus 1:8-14

Anna Cushman, reader

Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. He said to his people, "Look, the Israelite people are more numerous and more powerful than we. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, or they will increase and, in the event of war, join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to oppress them with forced labor. They built supply cities, Pithom and Rameses, for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread, so that the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. The Egyptians became ruthless in imposing tasks on the Israelites and made their lives bitter with hard service in mortar and brick and in every kind of field labor. They were ruthless in all the tasks that they imposed on them.

This is the written word of God for the people of God; thanks be to God.

Time for Reflection



Reading from the Gospel

Matthew 2:13-15

Phil Vavra, reader

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet, "Out of Egypt I have called my son."

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Song of Response

Gentle Joseph Heard a Warning

by Carl P. Daw, Jr.

HOLY MANNA

Gentle Joseph heard a warning from an angel in the night;
valiant Mary, maiden mother, roused from sleep, prepared for flight:
thus the Christ-child's family lived out what the prophet had foretold,
that he might be called from Egypt as God's people were of old.

The Church at Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Rev. Allison Benfield & Kevin Gray

O Lord, hear our prayer, O Lord, hear our prayer when we call answer us, O Lord hear our prayer, O Lord hear our prayer, come and change our hearts.

Hear us, Lord, as we raise our voices; in you we take refuge. Preserve those whose life is threatened by enemies and who are the target of bitter words or evil schemes. Remember those who are vulnerable and exposed, those who are victims of natural disaster, war, and persecution, those suffering anguish and sorrow. Bring them to safety; in you we take refuge. Give shelter to those seeking a hiding place, to those torn from their homes, those who are separated from loved ones, those who are lost or have run away. Bring them to safety; in you we take refuge. You look with mercy and love on all refugees. Help us to welcome the stranger, befriend the lonely, and show compassion. Allow your Spirit to move in us and teach us to seek justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with you, telling of all your works. Let us rejoice and give praise; in you we take refuge.

Prayer by Melissa Haupt, 2011, © Creative Commons Attribution

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Time for Reflection

Our circle is just right. It's good the way it is. The borders should be closed. The rules should be maintained. The limits should be clear. The sanctions should be plain. But God cares about such things, and has picked some crayons from a box, and with a child-like sense of right is drawing something new. The Holy Artist calls to us, "Come look at this!" This circle brings folks in

- John Thornburg

Hymn

The Children Come

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

FINLANDIA

God, let each one know justice, peace and welcome —
And may your gift of mercy start with me.
For unto such as these belongs your kingdom,
And in each child, it is your face we see.
May we, your church, respond in truth and action,
And with you, Lord, say, "Let them come to me."

Message

The God Who Prefers the Vulnerable

Rev. Dennis W. Foust, PhD



Hymn

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Commissioning the Scattered Church

Dr. Foust

Postlude

O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing

arr. Anna Laura Page

J. Noel Lance

Click here to find resources on immigration from OurBridge for Kids for both adults and children.

