

## Order of Worship Epiphany of the Lord

---

*NOTE: Epiphany, celebrating the arrival of the magi in Bethlehem, is a Feast Day celebrated each year on January 6. Therefore, in certain cultures it is known and celebrated as Three Kings Day with joyous family celebrations including the giving of gifts. Epiphany marks the end of the Christmas season and becomes a season in itself extending to the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent.*

*The distinctiveness of Epiphany sometimes gets obscured by the secular calendar. Therefore, many church traditions, if January 6 is not a Sunday, suggest that Epiphany be celebrated on the Sunday before January 6, and that the lectionary readings for Epiphany be used instead of those appointed for that Sunday.*

---

*This liturgy is shaped according to the ancient and ecumenical liturgical ordo and the Scripture readings assigned in the Revised Common Lectionary:*

*Isaiah 60: 1-6*

*Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14*

*Ephesians 3: 1-12*

*Matthew 2: 1-12*

*The basic structure of this service is the ordo (Gathering, Penitence, Word, Eucharist, Sending) shared by most liturgical traditions. Where there are denominationally-specific expressions, they are referenced:*

*Roman Catholic - Missal, Propers of the Mass for Epiphany of the Lord*

*Presbyterian - Book of Common Worship (2018),*

*Epiphany of the Lord, pp. 203-210*

*Lutheran - Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Any of 10 settings of Holy*

*Communion, pp. 94 ff. Propers for Christmas Eve, p. 21*

*Episcopal - Book of Common Prayer, Order for Eucharist, Rites I (pp. 319 ff)*

*and II (pp. 355 ff) Preface for Epiphany, p. 378*

*Methodist - United Methodist Book of Worship (1992),*

*Service of Word and Table I, p. 33 ff and The Great Thanksgiving, p. 58-59*

---

### Gathering

#### Prelude(s)

and or **Introit**, Hymn, or Anthem

*Roman Catholic: Mass for Christmas Eve. Entrance Antiphon,  
followed by Gloria and Collect*

*Episcopal: Opening sentence(s) follow by Collect, Book of Common Prayer,  
p. 162 (Rite I); p. 214 (Rite II)*

*Presbyterian: Opening sentences followed by Prayer of the Day,  
Book of Common Order, pp. 203-204;*

*and Litany for Epiphany of the Lord, p. 204*

*Lutheran: According to any of the ten settings of Holy Communion in  
Evangelical Lutheran Worship, pp. 94 ff.*

*Methodist: According to Service of Word and Table,  
United Methodist Book of Worship, pp. 33 ff and Acts of Worship, p. 296*

---

## **Opening Hymn**

---

## **Penitence**

*If there is a prescribed penitential order, it occurs here:*

*Presbyterian: Book of Common Order, p. 205*

*Episcopal: Book of Common Prayer, Penitential Order I, pp. 319-321;*

*Penitential Order II, pp. 351-353 ff.*

*Lutheran: Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 10 settings of Holy Communion, pp. 95 ff*

*Methodist: United Methodist Book of Worship, Service of Word and Table, p. 35*

---

Singing the **Gloria in Excelsis** may be included here.

---

*In some traditions the confession of sin and the peace occurs after the prayers of the people and prior to the offering. In others it may take place here following confession as a sign of forgiveness and reconciliation.*

---

### **\*The Peace:**

**Leader:** The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**All:** And also with you.

## **Word**

### **Prayer for Illumination:**

*Presbyterian: Book of Common Order, p. 205*

or

### **Collect or Prayer for the Day:**

*Episcopal: Book of Common Prayer, p. 214*

*Methodist: The United Methodist Book of Worship, p. 296*

*Lutheran: Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 21*

---

### **First Reading:** Isaiah 60: 1-6

---

**Lector:** The First Reading for the Epiphany of the Lord is recorded in the Book of the Prophet, Isaiah, the 60<sup>th</sup> chapter, beginning at the 1<sup>st</sup> verse.

Listen for the Word of God.

*Reading, followed by:*

Lector: The Word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

*Or whatever spoken or sung response to the reading of Scripture is customary*

**Psalm 72: 1-7, 10-14**

---

*The appointment of a portion of Psalm 72 for Epiphany testifies that this festival proclaims the arrival of foreign “kings” to witness to the birth of Christ. This Psalm forms a gradual transition from Old to New Testaments.*

---

**Second Reading:** Ephesians 3: 1-12

Lector: The Second Reading is recorded in the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians, the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter, beginning at the 1<sup>st</sup> verse.

Listen for the Word of God.

*Reading, followed by:*

Lector: The Word of God for the people of God.

**All: Thanks be to God.**

*Or whatever spoken or sung response to the reading of Scripture is customary*

---

*A procession with the Bible or Gospel Book into the assembly or pulpit may take place accompanied by a chant or hymn.*

**Gospel:** Matthew 2: 1-12

*Whatever is customary in the announcement of the Gospel shall be spoken or chanted here.*

---

---

*Roman Catholic: “Where it is the practice, if appropriate, the movable Feasts of the current year may be proclaimed after the Gospel, according to the formula: ‘Know dear brothers and sisters, that as we have rejoiced in the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, so by leave of God’s mercy we announce to you also . . . .’ [A chant tone is provided in the Missal.]*

---

**Sermon/Homily**

---

*A period of silence may take place, followed by a hymn or anthem.*

---

**Affirmation of Faith**

*The assembly may speak or sing one of the creeds in unison as is customary in the assembly.*

---

*A hymn or anthem that is creedal in nature is appropriate after the creed.*

---

### **Intercessions**

---

*In some traditions intercessions are included in the prayers of the Eucharist. Otherwise intercessions occur here in the formats that are customary in the church's practice.*

*Presbyterian: Book of Common Worship, p. 206*

*Episcopal: Book of Common Prayer, pp. 383 ff.*

*Methodist: United Methodist Book of Worship, p. 279*

### **Concluding Response**

---

## **Eucharist**

### **Offering and Offertory:**

#### **Presentation**

*Roman Catholic: Missal, Mass for the Epiphany of the Lord, Prayer over the Offerings.*

---

### **The Great Thanksgiving:**

---

*Some liturgical traditions have authorized settings for the Eucharist. Others have optional and/or alternate settings for special seasons and festivals, especially for the Epiphany.*

*Presbyterian: Book of Common Order, pp.206-208.*

*Roman Catholic: Missal, Preface of the Epiphany of the Lord followed by Eucharistic Prayer I, II, or III.*

*Lutheran: Evangelical Lutheran Worship: Eucharistic Prayer III in Settings One and Two are for the seasons of Advent through Epiphany.*

*Methodist: United Methodist Book of Worship, pp. 58-59*

*Episcopal: Book of Common Prayer, Eucharistic Prayers I or II, pp. 333-343 (Rite I) or Eucharistic Prayers A, B, C, D; pp. 361 -376 (Rite II)*

*Preface for Epiphany, p. 346 and p. 378*

*If Eucharist is not celebrated, the service continues with a prayer of thanksgiving*

*Presbyterian: Book of Common Order, p. 210*

## **Sending**

## **Commission and Blessing:**

*Roman Catholic: Missal, Order of Mass for Epiphany  
with optional solemn blessing,*

*Presbyterian: Book of Common Order, Blessing and Charge, pp. 197-198*

*Methodist: United Methodist Book of Worship, p. 39*

*Episcopal: Book of Common Prayer, p. 339 (Rite I) or p. 366 (Rite II)*

*Choral or customary congregational responses*

## **Hymn or canticle**

**Leader:** Go in peace to serve the Lord.

**All:** **Thanks be to God!**

## **Postlude:**

---

## **Chalking the Doors**

*Presbyterian: Book of Common Order, p. 210:*

*“An old Epiphany tradition involves using chalk to write the letters CMB and the numbers of the current year, separated by crosses (+) over the doors of congregations and Christian homes: 20 + C + M + B + 20 or CMB + 2020. The letters CMB are said to stand for the names of the magi (Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar) or the Latin phrase *Christus mansionem benedicat* (Christ bless this house.)*

*Prayer for the chalking, p. 210*