

**FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY
8 JANUARY 2023**

GATHERING

CALL TO WORSHIP

God who is beyond us,
maker of heaven and earth –
open our eyes to see the wonder of creation!

God was made known
In the life of Jesus the Christ
**Open our hearts to know the deep love of
Christ!**

God who lives in each one of us as Spirit
Holy fire to kindle our true purpose
**Open our beings to each other to confirm
that we all belong,
And together we can give birth to your new
earth.**

(Source: [St Martins Presbyterian Church, Christchurch NZ](#))

SONG: TiS 268

**Joy to the world! the Lord is come;
let earth receive our king;
let every heart prepare him room,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**Joy to the world! The Saviour reigns;
let them their songs employ;
while fields and streams, rocks, hills, and
plains
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat the sounding joy,
repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**He rules the world with truth and grace,
and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness
and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love,
and wonders, wonders of his love.**

PRAYER

ENCOUNTERING THE LIVING WORD

Matthew 2:1-2,10-11

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ² asking, 'Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising and have come to pay him homage.' ¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. ¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child

with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure-chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Epiphany Carol (Tune: Beach Springs)

**Every nation sees the glory
of a star that pierced the night.
As we tell the wondrous story
we are bathed in radiant light.
Star sent forth from highest heaven,
dancing light of God's design,
Shine upon the gift that's given:
Word made flesh now born in time.**

**Every tongue shall sing the praises
of his birth in deepest night.**

**He is healing for the ages.
he is Christ, our God's delight.
He proclaims within his being
all our hopes, our great desires.
He shall die to rise redeeming
all who follow with their lives.**

**Once again may we discover
Word made flesh sent from above
In our neighbour, sister, brother,
in the lonely and unloved.
May we touch him, may we hold him, may we
cradle him with care
As we learn to love each other,
bringing hope from out despair.**

**Gather, God, the world together in the
brightness of your day.**

**Fill our hearts with joy forever,
help us walk the holy way.
May your justice rule the nations.
may all people live as one.
Now we see our true salvation
in the glory of your Son.**

Francis Patrick O'Brien.

Isaiah 42:1-5

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my spirit upon him;
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

² He will not cry or lift up his voice,
or make it heard in the street;

³ a bruised reed he will not break,
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

⁴ He will not grow faint or be crushed

until he has established justice in the earth;
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

⁵ Thus says God, the LORD,
who created the heavens and stretched them
out, who spread out the earth and what comes
from it, who gives breath to the people upon it
and spirit to those who walk in it:

Acts 10:34-36 The Message

³⁴⁻³⁶ Peter fairly exploded with his good news: "It's God's own truth, nothing could be plainer: God plays no favourites! It makes no difference who you are or where you're from—if you want God and are ready to do as he says, the door is open. The Message he sent to the children of Israel—that through Jesus Christ everything is being put together again—well, he's doing it everywhere, among everyone.

May your Word live in us
And bear much fruit to your glory.

*We are one, but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We'll share a dream and sing with one voice
I am, you are, we are Australian*

REFLECTION

RESPONDING WITH OUR LIVES

Prayers of the People:

Loving God you, have opened your heart to us
May we open our hearts to others

*(You will be invited to light a candle
as a symbol of your prayer.)*

Jesus stand among us
At the meeting of our lives;
Be our sweet agreement
At the meeting of our eyes.
O Jesus, we love You, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.

So to You we're gathering
Out of each and every land;
Christ the love between us
At the joining of our hands.
O Jesus, we love You, so we gather here;
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.

Disciples' 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.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and forever.
Amen**

**Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell how
hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions, rock
of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions:
*All are welcome, all are welcome, all are
welcome in this place.***

**Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek to
dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness and as
symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus:
*All are welcome, all are welcome, all are
welcome in this place.***

**Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter, prayers
of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter:
*All are welcome, all are welcome, all are
welcome in this place***

Marty Haugen

A BLESSING PRAYER

**May God's peace rest upon us.
May God's great love reach to every heart.
May we always sense God's care among us,
so that we find the good in one another and
never doubt the goodness of God.
Go in peace. Amen**