

**January 20-26, 2019**  
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Light for Our Darkness: The Epiphany Season

**Sunday, January 20, 2019**

Text: **Psalm 27 :1**

**The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?**

King David displays a remarkable confidence, whether taking on the challenge of Goliath, or avoiding the evil intentions of King Saul in the Judean wilderness. But that confidence comes from a steadfast faith in God's protection and salvation, a light that shows David the way even in the darkest of times.

This season of weeks after the Epiphany shows us God's light in Christ Jesus. It happens to fall in the darkest weeks of the year, a time when many of us in the northern hemisphere wish for more light and longer days. We do well to remember David's confidence in the Lord—no matter how difficult our situations may seem, the Lord is our light and salvation, God's word is a light for our pathway through life.

We pray: *Almighty God, show us your truth and your light, so that we need never walk in fear or doubt, but hold fast to the confident faith that comes from knowing your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*



**Monday, January 21, 2019**

Text: **Isaiah 60: 1-3**

**Arise, shine, your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will rise upon you, and his glory will appear over you. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.**

Isaiah delights in the image of light and a new dawn for God's people. Jerusalem has been in exile in Babylon for 70 years, and now the prophet offers a new day of hope and promise. Even though they have been far from home for several generations, and Jerusalem has been in ruins, Isaiah gives them a vision of a new dawn and God's light shining on them again. Jerusalem, which has been crushed and left in ruins, will shine again with God's light, and the nations of the world will come to its brightness.

The light of God brings hope to God's people of every time and place, but especially for those who like the exiles in Babylon have lost everything. Even when all seems lost, God sees a future of hope and life for his people. We have been blessed with the light of Christ, and that light continues to draw all nations to God's glory.

*We pray: God of the nations, we live in such confusing and troubling times. Let the light of Christ shine on your people, and may it lead the nations of the world into a new day of hope and peace. Amen.*



**Tuesday, January 22, 2019**

Text: Luke 2:30-32

**My eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.**

Of all the gospel writers, Luke seems most intent upon connecting the tradition of the prophets with the new light revealed in Jesus Christ. John the Baptizer is portrayed as a prophet of the Most High, who shines the light of God on those living in darkness and the shadow of death. And when Jesus is brought to the Temple for his presentation, the prophet Simeon declares that he is God's light for the Gentiles, and glory for God's people Israel. The light Isaiah saw is now focused in the birth of Jesus.

In Simeon's brief song of praise, God's light and salvation are shown to the world in the baby Jesus. Light, salvation, and glory from God are given to the whole world in this story of Jesus' humble birth. When we need to remind ourselves of God's presence in our world, we need look no further than this tiny baby, held in his mother's arms, and shining forth for all the world to see.

*We pray: God of mercy, you sent your Son Jesus into our world to bring your light and truth to all the nations of the world. Help us always to remember that your revelation in Jesus speaks beyond our human boundaries of nation and race, and reaches out to every person in your world. Amen.*



**Wednesday, January 23, 2019**

Text: John 1:1-9

**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being with him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not**

overcome it.

**There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.**

These first verses from the Gospel of John are without question some of the most profound words in all of God's word. The birth of Jesus, and the beginning of John's gospel, are linked directly to the beginning of all creation. God's plan for the universe, God's plan for human history, all begin with the Word made flesh, the Light of life. The meaning of creation and life are all revealed in the story of Jesus Christ, who was with God and who is God. Volumes of theological meaning are contained in these short verses.

This is the light which makes sense of everything and everyone. For those who know Jesus as their Lord and Savior, the mystery of the Incarnation is the key to understanding all of nature, all of life, and all of history. The mighty God of all creation comes to live with us, and to give us his light and his life.

*We pray: God of the universe, your Son Jesus is present in every part of your creation, from the smallest atom to the largest galaxy. Help us to understand everything in the world around us through the light of Jesus' love and compassion. Amen.*



**Thursday, January 24, 2019**

Text: Matthew 5:14-15

**You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works, and give glory to your Father in heaven.**

For Matthew, Jesus is the wisdom of God shown forth in human flesh and blood. Jesus is the one greater than Solomon who shares the secrets of the kingdom of God with God's people. The Sermon on the Mount offers Jesus' wisdom teaching for his people. The light of God is now shared with the people of God, and world will see their light and their goodness, and so come to know what God is truly like.

What a challenge this presents for the church: light and goodness and the glory of God are now shared with the world through God's people. One clear criteria for our life together has to be how we are showing the world the light of Christ and the goodness of God in our words and our deeds. How are we the "light of the world?"

*We pray: God of new challenges, you ask us to be light for the world. Grant that your church may always seek to share the light of Christ in everything we say and do. May we become*

*transparent to his goodness and glory. Amen.*



**Friday, January 25, 2019**

Text: John 8: 12

**Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”**

The writings of John (gospel and letters) embrace the truth of Jesus’ light more than any other of the New Testament writings. This is just one of the many “I AM” sayings of Jesus in John’s gospel, each one revealing a special insight about Jesus. This one connects directly to the prologue in chapter 1, Jesus is the light, not just for humankind, but for the whole cosmos, the whole created universe. Darkness is not just human confusion or bad thinking, but the very absence of life. Without the light of Christ, there can be no life at all.

We may think we understand light in all of its scientific dimensions: the spectrum of light as part of the electromagnetic waves that permeate the universe. Can we see that visible light as just a physical hint of Christ’s presence in the universe, a field that holds everything together, that makes life possible, that promises that all things find their meaning and function in God’s light?

We pray: *Lord Jesus, help us to understand the world we live in through the transforming light of your goodness and love. Remind us each day that the light we see is but one aspect of your light which empowers every living thing, and which holds our universe together. Amen.*



**Saturday, January 26, 2019**

Text: 1 John 1:5-7

**This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.**

This season of Epiphany is a great time for us to reflect on the light of Christ. He is God’s way, God’s truth and God’s life. There is no darkness where the light of Christ is found. All of us struggle in one way or another to make sense of our lives, to understand our human society, to try to discern the future of God’s created world. The witness of Epiphany is clear: where there is Jesus Christ, there is truth and light. Where Jesus shows us the Father’s will, we can find our path through life. And where the light of Christ brings life and hope, there is a future for our world, and for all the living creatures with which we share God’s creation. May the light of

Christ shine in our hearts and minds and bring us all into the fellowship of God and God's people.

We pray: *God of grace and glory, we long to live each day in the light of Christ, to know his fellowship, and to celebrate the joy of human fellowship in his light. Help us to always hold fast to that light, and to live in hope for a future where all will claim him as Savior and Lord. Amen.*

