



'Worship at home' January 22nd 2023



We come to worship God
who invites us to live in light
and love, and calls us to be light to others.
Light a candle to remind you of God's light in your life.

Opening based on Isaiah 9, Psalm 27, Matthew 4

To those who sit in darkness,
light has dawned.

**To those who dwell in gloom and despair,
God's glorious presence has appeared.**

God is indeed our light and our salvation.

**We will follow, unafraid,
where God and Jesus lead us.**

Let us worship our God of light and promise.

Let us celebrate the hope and joy of our salvation.

<https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/4613/worship-elements-january-22-2017-option-1>

We continue in the liturgical season of Epiphany, a time when we reflect on the many ways in which God is revealed in our world. We celebrate the ongoing presence of Christ with us, bringing light and hope to our world. This is the Christ whom we are called to follow, and we are called to shine light to others, that they too may come to know the fullness of Christ's light and love and life.

Matthew 4:12-23

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he went away to Galilee. He did not stay in Nazareth, but went to live in Capernaum, a town

by Lake Galilee, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. This was done to make come true what the 1

I am
the light of the world;
he that follows me
shall not walk in
darkness, but shall
have the light
of life.

John 8:12

prophet Isaiah had said, "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, on the road to the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee, land of the Gentiles! The people who live in darkness will see a great light. On those who live in the dark land of death the light will shine."

From that time Jesus began to preach his message: "Turn away from your sins, because the Kingdom of heaven is near!" As Jesus walked along the shore of Lake Galilee, he saw two brothers who were fishermen, Simon (called Peter) and his brother Andrew, catching fish in the

lake with a net. Jesus said to them, "Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people." At once they left their nets and went with him.

He went on and saw two other brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee. They were in their boat with their father Zebedee, getting their nets ready. Jesus called them, and at once they left the boat and their father, and went with him. Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, preaching the Good News about the Kingdom, and healing people who had all kinds of disease and sickness. *Good News Bible*

Each of us have been called to follow Jesus, who calls us, in turn, to invite others to follow also. Catching people does not mean ensnaring them in a net so they cannot get away, forcing them to listen to us and trying to convince them to come to church. That might be seen as indoctrination, not witnessing to God's love and grace. Rather, catching people is about showing God's love and grace in such a manner that they want to know more... they see light and love and life in our lives in such a way that they too are drawn in, to find safety and support in the wide net of Christ's hospitality and love.

'Come, follow me', Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.'

Matthew 4:19



How are you called to follow Jesus?

How does your life reflect the light and love of Christ?



We each do this in different ways, as we teach and preach and live out the Kingdom. We each have our own gifts, skills, experiences and ministries to show Christ's light and love and life. When we are praying with people, visiting the sick, caring for people in practical ways, teaching, feeding the hungry, reaching out to those in need, when we are putting in

place good processes, chatting with friends or working to improve what we do, who we are reflects Christ to others. In all we do and with all we say, we preach the good news of God's Kingdom. Whether we like it or not, and even whether we intend to or not, we are the light of Christ to those around us.

When we look around our world, too often we find darkness and suffering. The reality is that our lives are not all light and peace and good news of great joy that we have sung about at Christmas. Joy and pain, love and loss, peace and fear, hope and despair, light and darkness are all interconnected, integral parts of our world. Our faith does not prevent darkness in our lives. However, we can be assured of God's presence with us during times of darkness, and we can bring the hope of God's presence and love and light to others.

In this way, we find glimpses of the Kingdom of heaven.

Prayer

Holy One,
a brief look at the news shouts out
that there are many dark places in our world.
Darkness through mindless violence
Darkness through frustration and horror
Darkness through grief and distress

**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?*

- Psalm 27:1



PsalmsQuotes.com



Darkness through pain and disease
Darkness deep within those we love...

Holy One,
into these dark places
into those unnamed dark places
into the darkness of fear and loneliness
pour out your radiance
shower down your light
break through pure brilliance
until the darkness is dispelled
and our hearts find peace
and the light of hope
can shine forth again
fresh and new with this new day
hear our prayers we pray,
Amen

Trust in the
Lord . Have
faith, do not
despair.
Trust in the
Lord .
Psalm 27:14

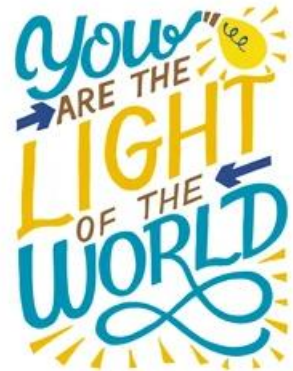
~ adapted from Julie Rennick

<https://revgalblogpals.org/2018/03/05/monday-prayer-175/>

In Christ we find hope and light and love and life, and the strength
to show hope and light and love and life to others.

Closing

The Christmas star has not faded,
it has been implanted in us.
The light of the world is not dimmed,
it shines in you, in me,
and in all creation,
and the darkness cannot extinguish it.
Let us be God's revelation,
God's path of transformation,
shining like stars in the heavens
to give light to every weary pilgrim,
every wanderer,
every lost and rejected one.
Let us go forth,
carrying God's light into our needy world.



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