Service for Epiphany 1

Welcome:

‘Arise, shine for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.’ Isaiah 60:1

God of our days and years, we set this time apart for you.

Form us in the likeness of Christ so that our lives may glorify you. **Amen.**

Opening hymn: Lord for the years

Lord for the years Your love has kept and guided,

Urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,

Sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided:

Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life, which fires us,

Speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze

Teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us:

Lord of the word, receive Your people’s praise.

Lord, for our land in this our generation,

Spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care:

For young and old, for commonwealth and nation,

Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

Lord, for our world where men disown and doubt You,

Loveless in strength and comfortless in pain,

Hungry and helpless, lost indeed without You

Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

Lord, for ourselves; in living power remake us –

Self on the cross and Christ upon the throne,

Past put behind us, for the future take us:

Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

Confession:

Our Lord Jesus Christ says, ‘A new commandment I give you,

That you love one another as I have loved you.’

Let us confess to almighty God our failure to accept his love and to share it with others.

**God of mercy, we acknowledge that we are all sinners.**

**We turn from the wrong that we have thought and said and done,**

**And are mindful of all that we have failed to do.**

**For the sake of Jesus, who died for us,**

**Forgive us for all that is past, and help us to live each day**

**In the light of Christ our Lord.**  **Amen.**

May God our Father forgive us our sins and bring us to the eternal joy of his kingdom

where all his children, from every nation and tongue will worship with all the hosts of heaven,

the Lamb of God, our Lord and Saviour, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

The gifts of the Magi:

Hymn: We three kings

The worship of the Magi:

Prayers:

O God, who by the leading of a star,

manifested your only Son to the peoples of the earth:

Mercifully grant that we, who know you now by faith,

may at last behold your glory

face to face through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

We are drawn to your feet in worship; your creation facing its creator
Hearts laid bare by your light, humbly asking for your mercy.
We come to you as a people in need of assurance and forgiveness.
We come to you as a people in need of healing and wholeness.
We come dependent upon your love. Draw us close. Enfold us in your arms.

Fill us with your Spirit that we might reflect your light within this dark world,
speak your Word with boldness and draw others to your feet.
We ask this through your dear Son Jesus Christ. **Amen**

In the following prayers the response to ‘Lord help us’ is ‘**Lord, graciously help us’**

Gracious Father, grant that in all the chances and changes of our lives

we may find rest in your unchangeableness.

May we meet this New Year courageously and confidently,

Secure in the faith that whilst uncertainty is everywhere

You are ever the same, your love is constant and your faithfulness sure.

Guide us with your wisdom and protect us by your grace,

Lord help us, **Lord graciously help us.**

Almighty God, You led the magi to worship Jesus by a heavenly light,

So shine in the hearts of your people, as we worship Jesus,

That in this time of darkness, all peoples from every nation,

may be guided to him who is the light of the world.

Lord help us, **Lord graciously help us.**

Lord of all compassion, we pray for all the nations

as a new wave of infections threatens to sweep across the world.

We pray for those countries and regions whose health care services are collapsing,

and whose people cannot be accommodated or cared for.

We pray for the fragile economies and the difficult choices

having to be made by politicians, whether to save lives or save jobs.

Grant wisdom and discernment to our leaders, politicians and advisors

that they may establish clear policies, procedures and practices

so that all people can feel save and provided for.

Lord help us, **Lord graciously help us.**

Lord of all righteousness,

We pray for the forgotten, the vulnerable and those who have no voice;

May we not become so focused on our own struggles

that we fail to acknowledge the hardships of others.

Open our eyes to the needs around us

that we may become a place of healing and refuge.

Lord help us, **Lord graciously help us.**

Lord Jesus, we pray for all who are unwell, grieving and lonely.

In a moment of silence we lift those on our hearts to the Lord.

Lord, take them to your heart, pray with them and for them

Comfort and uphold them, heal them and bless them.

Have compassion and speak your word of life.

Lord help us, **Lord graciously help us.**

Lord Jesus, we pray for ourselves and the witness of our lives.

May we be pure and holy without and within.

May we truly reflect your goodness and godliness

In all we think, say and do, that others may be drawn to you

and receive the promise of eternal life you offer.

Have compassion and speak your word of love.

Lord help us, **Lord graciously help us.**

We draw our prayers to a close with the prayer our Lord taught us:

**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 trespasses**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil**

**For thine is the kingdom the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.**

Closing Hymn: The Lord’s my shepherd

The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want

He makes me lie in pastures green.

He leads me by the still, still waters,

His goodness restores my soul.

 *And I will trust in You alone (x2)*

 *For Your endless mercy follows me,*

 *Your goodness will lead me home.*

He guides my ways in righteousness,

And He anoints my head with oil,

And my cup, it overflows with joy,

I feast on His pure delights.

And though I walk the darkest path,

I will not fear the evil one,

For You are with me, and Your rod and staff

Are the comfort I need to know.

Blessing:

You are called and loved by God the Father and kept safe by Jesus Christ

Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance, from God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

Be with you all this day and for ever more. **Amen.**