



A New Year's Service during the season of Epiphany January 8, 2026

Welcome and brief explanation of the rubrics of our time together.

Announcements and prayer requests

Brief silence to quiet our hearts and to acknowledge that Christ is among us

V. O God, come to my assistance.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

V. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

R. as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen

Antiphon: *Begotten before the daystar and before all ages, the Lord our Saviour has appeared to the world.*

Psalm 119:33-40 (read responsively)

Teach me the demands of your statutes
and I will keep them to the end.
Train me to observe your law,
to keep it with my heart.

Guide me in the path of your commandments;
for there is my delight.
Bend my heart to your will
and not to love of gain.

Keep my eyes from what is false;
by your word, give me life.
Keep the promise you have made
to the servant who fears you.

Keep me from the scorn I dread,
for your decrees are good.
See, I long for your precepts;
then in your justice, give me life.

V. God has appeared on earth.
R. And lives with people.

Prayer: Father, you have revealed your Son to us through the Spirit who rested on him, and in whom we are baptized. Grant that, faithful to this gift, we may be witnesses to Jesus, proclaiming him as Lord, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

A time for prayer with a special focus on the Kirby Laing Centre for Public Theology's work and community.

Please conclude your petition with "*Lord, in your mercy*" and we will respond with "*Hear our prayer.*"

Lectio Divina using the Reading for Thursday 8 January from ***Sacred Space***

Presence

God, You are nearer than I dare believe, closer than my own breath. I am blessed by Your Intimate Nearness, and I need not fear.

Freedom

Lord, You granted me the great gift of freedom.
In these times, O Lord, grant that I may be free
from any form of racism or intolerance.
Remind me, Lord, that we are all equal
in Your loving eyes.

Consciousness

I remind myself that I am in the presence of the Lord.
I will take refuge in His loving heart.
He is my strength in times of weakness.
He is my comforter in times of sorrow.

The Word of God

Mark 6:34-44

As he went ashore, he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things. When it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now very late; send them away so that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy something for themselves to eat." But he answered them, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "Are we to go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" And he said to them, "How many loaves have you? Go and see." When they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." Then he ordered them to get all the people to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and of fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to his disciples to set before the people, and he divided the two fish among them all. And all ate and were filled, and they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. Those who had eaten the loaves numbered five thousand men.

New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE)

"Copyright © 2021 National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide."

Inspiration

Those who come to listen to the Lord, even without knowing it themselves, probably sense that they need both their bodies and their spirits to be re-energised. Does he not try to do exactly that for us? He not only wants to feed our various hungers but can use whatever talents we might have to make good the hungers of those whom we may find

ourselves encountering. Think of the times you have been able to be that person for others. Ask that those sorts of occasions might present themselves again, and that Jesus may strengthen you to be a positive provider for those around you.

Conversation

Lord, I know that when I turn to You there is no need for words.
You can see into my heart.
You know my desires and You know my needs.
I place myself into Your hands.

Conclusion

Filled with the loving presence of God,
I ask Him to bless me and guide my steps
as I go to do His work in my daily life.

Amen

— A Brief Silence

A Covenant Service for the New Year *from the Northumbrian Community of Iona*

**I bind unto myself this day
the strong name of the Trinity.
I humbly praise the awful name:
the Three in One, the One in Three,
of whom all nature hath creation —
eternal Father, Spirit, Word.
Praise to the God of my salvation!
Salvation is of Christ the Lord.**

**I bind this day to me for ever
by power of faith: Christ's incarnation,
His baptism in the Jordan river,
His death on the cross for my salvation.
His bursting from the spiced tomb,
His riding up the heavenly way,
His coming on the day of doom,
I bind unto myself today.**

**Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,**

**Christ in the hearts of all that love me,
Christ be with me this day.**

Reader 1:

O God, You have been good.
You have been faithful;
You have been good.

You have shown us Your love,
not just in the year that is past,
but through all the years of our lives.

O God, You have been good.
You have been faithful;
You have been good.

Reader 2:

You have given us life and reason,
and set us in a world that is full of Your glory.

You put family around us
and comfort us with friends.
You touch us through the thoughtfulness
and warmth of other people.

O God, You have been good.
You have been faithful;
You have been good.

Reader 3:

In the darkness You have been our light,
in adversity and temptation a rock of strength.
You are the source of our joy,
and all the reward we ever need.

Your loving kindness is everlasting.

You remembered us when we had forgotten You,
followed us when we ran away,
met us with forgiveness
whenever we turned back to You.

Your loving kindness is everlasting.

Reader 4:

God our Father,
You have set forth the way of life
for us in Your beloved Son.
We confess with shame

our slowness to learn from Him,
our reluctance to follow Him.

You have spoken and called,
and we have not given heed.
Your beauty has shone forth,
and we have been blind.

Be tender in Your mercy, Lord,
be tender in Your mercy.

Reader 1:

Forgive us,
that we have not loved You
with all our heart,
with all our soul,
with all our mind,
with all our strength.

We have taken much, and returned little thanks;
we have been unworthy of Your unchanging love.

Reader 2:

Forgive us
our coldness and indifference,
our lack of constant love,
our unbelief,
our false pretences,
our refusal to understand Your ways.

Be tender in Your mercy, Lord.
be tender in Your mercy.

Reader 3:

Teach us Your ways, O Lord,
and let us walk in Your truth.
We put behind us
our stubborn independence,
and turn again to You.

Now let us willingly fasten ourselves
to the God of the covenant:
that we be Christ's,
and Christ be ours.

Reader 4:

Christ has many tasks for us.
Some are easy; others are difficult.
Some bring honour; others bring reproach.

Some are to our liking, and coincide
with our own inclinations, and are
in our immediate best interest;
some are just the opposite.
In some we may please Christ
and please ourselves;
in others we cannot please Christ
except by denying ourselves.
Yet the power to take on all of these
is most definitely given us in Jesus;
for it is He who strengthens us,
and comes to help us when we are weak.

Let us say Yes to the covenant
that He makes with us, saying:

***I am no longer my own, but Yours.
Use me as You choose;
rank me alongside whoever You choose;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for Your, or laid aside for You,
raised up for You, or brought down low for You;
let me be full, let me have nothing;
with my whole heart I freely choose to yield
all things to Your ordering and approval.***

***So now, God of glory,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
You are mine, and I am Your own. Amen***

- Brief Silence

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.
Amen*