

FIRST SABBATH WORSHIP

January 6, 2007

Epiphany – “To Show” The January 6 festival marking the coming of the wise men, the magi; The first showing of the Messiah to the Gentiles; A manifest-ation, especially of divinity.

Welcome and Announcements

Norman Moll

PREPARING TO HEAR THE WORD

Preparation

“Jesus, Priceless Treasure”

(#239) *Paul Manz*

Call to worship:

poem by *Howard C. Robbins*

And have the bright immensities received our risen Lord,
Where light years frame the Pleiades and point Orion’s sword?
Do flaming suns his footsteps trace thro’ corridors sublime?
The Lord of interstellar space and conqueror of time?

The heav’n that hides Him from our sight knows neither near nor far;
A little candle sheds its light as surely as a star.
And where His loving people meet to share the gift divine,
There stands He with unhurrying feet, there heavenly splendors shine.

* Hymn of Praise: “O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright”

No. 18

Call to Confession:

Leader: The proof of God’s amazing love is this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us. Because we have faith in him, we dare to approach God with confidence. With full assurance inspired by our trust in the perfection of His gift of grace let us come confessing our sins and seeking pardon.

All: Great God our Father, you have given us Jesus, light of our world, but we choose darkness. We cling to sins that hide the brightness of Your love. We are frightened disciples who are slow to speak good news about you. Immersed in ourselves, we have not risen to new life. Baptize us anew with Your Holy Spirit, so that forgiven and renewed we may preach Your Word not just to nations but especially to our neighbors, friends and those we meet from day to day. May we witness to Your glory shining in the face of Jesus Christ, in whose name we now offer our silent prayers of confession.

Silence for personal reflection and confession.

Leader: God commands us to arise and shine, Christ our light has come and the glory of God's grace has shone on us.

All: Into our darkness the light of God has shown. Light has banished the darkness. In Jesus Christ we have found forgiveness.

Response: "Blessed Assurance" (stanza 1)

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Children's Story	"Who Made This?"	David and Norman Moll
Scripture Lesson	Luke 9:18-23	
Sermon	"Who Is This Christ?"	Norman Moll

OUR RESPONSE

WHO DO YOU SAY THIS JESUS IS? (Opportunity for brief responses)

Family Prayer		Norman Moll
Offering Offertory Prayer of Dedication	"Brightest and Best"	Church Budget <i>Randolph Currie</i>

***Hymn of Response "Eternal God" No. 90**

***Words of Assurance** Adapted from 1 John 5:1-15 (J. B. Philips)

Leader: Everyone who really believes that Jesus is the Christ proves himself one of God's family.

All: Anyone who loves the Father cannot help loving the Father's Son.

Leader: The test of genuineness of our love for God's family lies in the question—do we love God himself and do we obey his commandments?

All: For loving God means obeying his commandments and these commandments of his are not burdensome, for God's "heredity" within us will always conquer the world outside us.

Leader: In fact, this faith of ours is the only way in which the world has been conquered. For who could ever be said to conquer the world, in the true sense, except the man who really believes that Jesus is God's Son? Jesus Christ himself is the one who came by water and by blood—not by water only, but by the water and the blood. The Spirit bears witness to this, for the Spirit is the truth.

All: The witness therefore is a triple one—the Spirit in our own hearts, the signs in the water of baptism and the blood of atonement—and they all say the same thing. If we are prepared to accept human testimony, God's own testimony concerning his own Son is surely infinitely more valuable.

Leader: The man who really believes in the Son of God will find God's testimony in his own heart.

All: The man who will not believe God is making him out to be a liar, because he is deliberately refusing to accept the testimony that God has given concerning his own Son. This is, that God has given men eternal life and this real life is to be found only on his Son. It follows naturally that any man who has genuine contact with Christ has this life; and if he has not, then he does not possess this life at all.

Leader: . . . [Y]ou who already believe in the name of God's Son . . . may be quite sure that, here and now, you possess eternal life.

All: We have such confidence in him that we are certain that he hears every request that is made in accord with his own plan. And since we know that he invariably gives his attention to our prayers, whatever they are about, we can be confident that our prayers will be answered.

Benediction Blessing

Postlude

"Deus Tuorum Militum"

Robert Hebble

* *Congregation stands*