



## The Second Sunday after the Epiphany Year B January 18 2015 Worship resources

### INTRODUCTIONS

*For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines*

**The First Reading** - 1 Samuel 3: 1-10, 11-20

Samuel became an important priest and prophet to Israel, but God's call to him, as a child, was quite unexpected. Our Gospel will be another example of God's surprises.

**The Psalm** - Psalm 139:1-5, 12-18

**The Second Reading** - Revelation 5: 1-10

These Sundays of Epiphany set before us some extraordinary mystical visions of heaven. In this passage, Jesus appears as both lion and lamb, strong in weakness. He is the only one who can reveal the mysteries of God to us.

**The Gospel Reading** - John 1: 43-51

Following his baptism, of which we heard last Sunday, Jesus began to choose men to share his work. Among them was Nathanael, who received an unexpected invitation from Philip to 'Come and see', and was even more surprised to discover that Jesus knew all about his past, present and future.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

[http://bible.oremus.org/?show\\_adj=no&passages=1%20Samuel%203:%201-10,%2011-20%0Acw%20Psalm%20139:1-5,12-18%0ARevelation%205:%201-10%0AJohn%201:%2043-51](http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=1%20Samuel%203:%201-10,%2011-20%0Acw%20Psalm%20139:1-5,12-18%0ARevelation%205:%201-10%0AJohn%201:%2043-51)

### COLLECTS OF THE DAY

#### Collect One

Almighty and everlasting God,  
who dost govern all things in heaven and earth;  
Mercifully hear the supplications of thy people,

and grant us thy peace all the days of our life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **Collect Two**

Almighty God,  
in Christ you make all things new:  
Transform the poverty of our nature  
by the riches of your grace,  
and in the renewal of our lives  
make known your heavenly glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 1**

Let us pray for all people everywhere according to their needs.

O God, creator and preserver of all mankind, we pray for people of every race, and in every kind of need: make your ways known on earth, your saving power among nations. We pray for those who hate, that they may learn to love. Grant, Lord that all people may live without fear and hatred as they walk in your ways.

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Strengthen your church, Lord, in a world where conflict tears nations and communities apart. May we, as Christians, be united in love and prayer while respecting each other's differences. May we celebrate our variety while facing a common purpose as each pursues gladly our own mission as we journey through life.

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

We thank you, Lord, for the gifts and talents you have bestowed on each one of us. May we have the confidence to use those gifts in furtherance of your work, and the wisdom to recognise when our contribution is required and when we must leave things to others. Grant us the words to say when encouragement is needed and the ability to listen when others need to talk.

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

We pray for all who suffer in mind or body and for those who care for them.  
We pray for  
the sick; for those who mourn; for those without faith, hope or love.

We pray for any known to us who are in special need of our prayers at this time. We  
remember them now in a moment of silence ....

Lord, in your mercy, Hear our prayer.

Jesus Christ is the light of the world, a light which no darkness can quench.  
We remember  
before God those who have died and light a candle to symbolise the light of  
Christ, which eternally shines and brings hope. We remember

You turn our darkness into light: in your light shall we see light.

Merciful Father, accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour  
Jesus  
Christ. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE 2**

Presider or deacon

Jesus calls on us to follow him. Let us call on Jesus for the needs, concerns,  
and hopes of all peoples.

Deacon or other leader

For the church of Jesus Christ in every place.

Lord, have mercy.

For our bishop, for presbyters, deacons, and all who minister in Christ.

Lord, have mercy.

For this holy gathering and for all who are called to follow Jesus.

Lord, have mercy.

For this country, for all nations and their leaders, and for those who guard the peace.

Lord, have mercy.

For all those in danger and need: the sick and the suffering, prisoners, captives, and their families, the hungry, homeless, and oppressed.

Lord, have mercy.

For the dying and the dead.

Lord, have mercy.

For ourselves, our families, and those we love.

Lord, have mercy.

Remembering the Blessed Virgin Mary, N, and all the saints, let us offer ourselves and one another to the living God through Christ. To you, O Lord.

Presider

God of mystery, lover of men and women, hear the prayers of your people and keep us ready always to serve as prophets and apostles of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **POST COMMUNION**

God of glory,  
you nourish us with bread from heaven.  
Fill us with your Holy Spirit  
that through us the light of your glory  
may shine in all the world.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **PRAYERS**

Perfect Light of revelation,  
as you shone in the life of Jesus,  
whose epiphany we celebrate,

so shine in us and through us,  
that we may become beacons of truth and compassion,  
enlightening all creation with deeds of justice and mercy. Amen.

Fill all creation with that word again,  
so that by proclaiming your joyful promises to all nations  
and singing of your glorious hope to all peoples,  
we may become one living body,  
your incarnate presence on the earth. Amen.

To God who welcomes all in love,  
let us pray for the good of the church  
and the concerns of those in need.  
God of every land and nation,  
you have created all people  
and you dwell among us in Jesus Christ.  
Listen to the cries of those who pray to you,  
and grant that, as we proclaim the greatness of your name,  
all people will know the power of love at work in the world.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sisters and brothers,  
let us lift our hearts in faith  
to the one who hears all prayers  
and holds close all those in need.  
Holy God, you gather the whole universe  
into your radiant presence  
and continually reveal your Son as our Savior.  
Bring healing to all wounds,  
make whole all that is broken,  
speak truth to all illusion,  
and shed light in every darkness,  
that all creation will see your glory and know your Christ. Amen.

Insistent God,  
by night and day you summon your slumbering people,  
So stir us with your voice  
and enlighten our lives with your grace  
that we give ourselves fully  
to Christ's call to mission and ministry. Amen.

O God,  
you spoke your word  
and revealed your good news in Jesus, the Christ.

## **LECTIONARY NOTES     1**

### **1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)**

- This is a great story of call, and along with today's texts from Psalms and John, makes a great day for preaching about knowing who we are and what we're meant to be doing. You've got the makings for a great day to inspire people to respond to God's call.
- Samuel is confused about who is calling him. He keeps thinking Eli is calling him. But his confusion doesn't keep Samuel from being willing, again and again, to respond to the call. How have you been called? Have you shared your call story with your congregation?
- Eli plays such an important role in this text, helping Samuel understand what is happening to him. It is an essential role in ministry to have people who are willing to support, endorse, and guide people who are trying to discern a call from God.
- "the Lord . . . let none of his words fall to the ground." What a neat phrase - God keeping your words from being useless. All pastors should pray for such a gift!

### **Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18**

- Not only did God knit us together in our mother's womb, but this whole passage reads like we are in God's womb - hemmed in by God behind and before. Our life is in God's womb - that is a very peaceful and comforting thought.
- It is both comforting to know that we can't go where God is not, but it is also a

challenge, in a way. We're reminded that God, in a sense, chases us. We are "hem[med] in" behind and before. God is strategically cornering us. An aggressive God, who insists, perhaps, on having a relationship with us.

- How weighty to us are God's thoughts! Indeed!
- "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." This psalm affirms God and God's power, but also affirms our human worth and goodness - a rare scriptural combination. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. How well do you know that? How many in this society know that and are taught to know that?

### **1 Corinthians 6:12-20**

- This is a great passage. Paul argues that though something may be technically ok, lawful for one to do, it is still not necessarily beneficial. We worry a lot about rules and whether what we are doing is right or wrong, but sometimes we're worried only about "what we can get away with" instead of what is God's best hope for us.
- "your body is a temple" Here, in a rare moment, is some of Paul's best non-dualistic thinking. Our body is meant for God, and we're meant to glorify God in our body. How do you go about doing that? I love watching dancers, because they are such a beautiful example of body as temple. But as a society, we're really bad, dangerously bad at glorifying God with our body.

### **LECTIONARY NOTES     2**

#### **REFLECTIONS ON THEME:**

At first glance this is a strange collection of readings! But, with a little bit of time and reflection some very exciting insights begin to emerge. It is helpful to remember that the season of Epiphany invites us to witness two things. The first is the way various individuals and groups perceived Jesus. This is a fitting way to follow the season of Christmas, because now we are given the opportunity to learn who this Jesus is through the eyes of those who met him. The second invitation of Epiphany is for us to witness God's glory as it is revealed in the incarnate Christ. This week's readings give us a wonderful way to accept both of these invitations. As the first disciples are called, we meet Nathaniel, initially a little sceptical of Jesus, but won over by Jesus'

insight. But, Jesus calls both Nathaniel and us to a deeper experience than that of mere witnesses of a small perception of Nathaniel's true character. In the enigmatic reference to Jacob's ladder, Jesus claims that he is the one who will both reveal God's glory to the world, and be the "channel" through which God's presence, glory and purpose is mediated to the world. The call to witness God's presence and glory is affirmed by all of the other readings for this week. Samuel's experience of God's manifestation and communication reveals both God's desire to connect with humanity, and the human capacity to connect with God. The psalmist's song reveals how intimately God is connected with the people God has created, and how deeply we can know God. Finally, the letter to the Corinthians reveals the way God continues to be incarnated in every person who believes, as we become temples of God's Spirit, and are called to use our entire beings – including our flesh – in God's service. The invitation this week is up close and personal – not only do we get to witness God's glory in Jesus; we are called to accept God's presence and glory into our own being!

### **CONNECTING WITH LIFE:**

**GLOBAL APPLICATION:** After last week's assurance of God's solidarity with us, the gift of God's self goes even further this week – God is not just with us, but within us. This is an echo of the assurances we have already received during the Advent season, but takes it even further. As we address issues of justice in our world we are invited to ensure that our response is one of deep faith in two realities – firstly, that God's presence and God's glory are not just available to us, but are available within us, and secondly, that God is always communicating with us, if we will just learn to listen. As naive as this may sound, if we have the humility and the imagination to believe it, we will discover that we do not face our world's challenges alone. Rather, we can trust that God's resources and presence are with us to guide and strengthen us, and we can listen for God's communication to lead and teach us. Of course, much of this communication of God's self has already happened in Christ, and we need only look to him to know how to act, how to treat others and how to respond to the challenges of greedy consumerism, reckless exploitation of the planet's resources, violence in all its forms and the unjust distribution of the world's wealth. Our task, then, is to study each day, the example of Christ and seek to embody in our own actions and attitudes what we see in him, trusting in the power of God's Spirit to enable us to do this. If even a small percentage of Christ followers made this a habit, what a different world we could begin to manifest – as we are already seeing happen in some significant ways

**LOCAL APPLICATION:** Two small, but important, factors impact every relationship, from families to churches to neighbourhoods. The first is our



struggle to believe in our own worth and capability to rise to the challenges of modern living. This struggle manifests itself in the constant need to prove ourselves, in defensiveness when we are challenged, and in fear of sharing our resource in case we end up with less than we need. The second factor is our struggle to recognise the glory in the humanity of others – particularly those who are different from us. This results in factions and divisions between people along racial, gender, religious, sexual, economic and educational lines, and often leads us to treat one another with disdain, suspicion and even hostility. The message of this week's Lectionary gives us ways to overcome both of these struggles. As we begin to recognise the way God has revealed God's self to us in Christ, and how we have become, in ourselves, temple's of God's Spirit, we are able to accept our worth and our significance in God's purposes and God's domain. When this sinks into our hearts, we are able to relax into our new identity in Christ, and stop striving against others to feel good about ourselves. Secondly, when we are able to recognise God's glory in others, and affirm them as temples of God's Spirit, we begin to see them as Christ and treat them as Christ, which naturally leads us into collaboration, affirmation, forgiveness and acceptance of one another. And, as we allow ourselves to believe in God's revealed glory in ourselves and those we live and worship with, we discover that God's glory is not only revealed to us, but is revealed through us.

## ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

### Sermons that work - The Episcopal Church - Hannah

[1 Samuel 3:1-10 \(11-20\)](#); [Psalm 139:1-5, 12-17](#); [1 Corinthians 6:12-20](#); [John 1:43-51](#)

Scroll down for this Sunday's sermon - Hannah was barren. She could not have children. In the ancient times, this was a disgrace, but her husband loved her and did not care. Hannah cared. She stood deeply ashamed in the presence of other women. She was an underdog.

Like so many of us who turn to the Lord when we need help, Hannah turned to the Lord God, the friend of the underdog. The Lord heard Hannah's prayer.

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2012/01/?cat=7>

### Day 1 - Living Belief

What is the point of religion? What is a Christian? The answers to those questions are likely not as self-evident as many may think. Just ponder it, if you will. One of your children or grandchildren or some person on the street

pops those questions to you, how would you respond? What is the point of religion? What is a Christian?

For a long time, the Church pretty much addressed those questions in this fashion. Religion is a way that people try to get in touch with God or with the divine or with whatever's bigger than we are, but Christianity is the true religion because we have Jesus who is the only way to God. So you can try those other religions, but they will only lead you to a dead end. Some in the Church have thought that that dead end is a burning place called hell where you'll be punished for not choosing the right religion; and if you want to be a Christian, here's what you have to believe. You have to believe this, this, and this, and then you're in.

[http://day1.org/973-living\\_belief](http://day1.org/973-living_belief)

### **America - John Donahue - What are you looking for?**

John R Donahue's typical short homily style on the question: What are you looking for? he concludes: This narrative is a Johannine "coming to faith" story not only for

John's original readers but for Christians today. The questions and commands highlight the process: "What are you looking for?" "Where are you staying?" "Come and you will see." People come to Jesus on the testimony of others; Jesus enters their lives as a response to their deepest longing, and only after "staying" with him can they confess him as "Christ."

<http://americamagazine.org/node/134203>

## **CHILDREN**

### **Talks2children**

There are three talks for Epiphany here -

<http://talks2children.wordpress.com/category/epiphany/>

## **Lesson for January 15, 2012 (Second Sunday after Epiphany, Year B)**

### **"Seeing Into the Heart"**

**Scripture Reference:** John 1: 43-51

**First Thoughts:** Here we are looking at Jesus' first "recruiting" mission, as depicted in John. The gospel writer depicts him having supernatural knowledge of the disciples-to-be, and calling based on what he alone can see. What do we think God sees when God looks into our heart? I think too

often we expect God is disappointed, or – at best – sees us as fixer-uppers. But that's more likely how we see ourselves, not how God really sees us. Scripture tells us over and over that we are God's beloved, the apple of God's eye. I invite you to spend a few moments reflecting on that, letting it sink in. Then turn and apply that meditation to the kids you will teach! *To access full lesson, please contact [Sermon Suite!](#)*

<http://annashosannas.net/Children%5C%27s-Lessons-Epiphany-B.php>

**Please commend this resource to colleagues - they simply send an email to [churchnewsireland@gmail.com](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.com) with the message Passwords in the title**