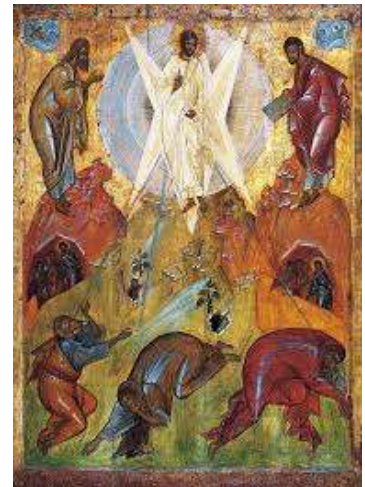




LECTIONARY - YEAR A (2025-2026)

WEEK 1	The Baptism of Jesus
WEEK 2	John Testifies About Jesus
WEEK 3	Jesus Begins to Preach
WEEK 4	Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount
WEEK 5	Salt and Light
WEEK 6	The Transfiguration



HOME GROUPS AND CLASSES GUIDE:

1. Open in Worship and Prayer: this is to invite God into the meeting. For example, you can light a candle, sing together, or use a YouTube Hymn or song.
2. Open your Bibles and read the Bible verses for this week (take turns?) see below.
3. Reflect on the Bible verses and the reflection written by a Minister or Lay Preacher.
4. Connect with each other and take the reflection deeper by answering the Questions.
5. Works out: What have we learned that we can apply in our lives in this session? Keep each other accountable for promises made or important steps taken. Pray for and over each other (after taking prayer requests).



WORSHIP SONG:

Who you say I am by Hillsong Worship

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lKw6uqtGFfo&list=RDlKw6uqtGFfo&start_radio=1

LECTIONARY READINGS

- **Monday**, January 05: Psalm 72; Joshua 1:1-9; Hebrews 11:32-12:2;
- **Tuesday**, January 06: **Epiphany of the Lord** - Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12 B
- **Wednesday**, January 07: Psalm 72; 1 Kings 10:1-13; Ephesians 3:14-21;
- **Thursday**, January 08: Psalm 29; 1 Samuel 3:1-9; Acts 9:1-9;
- **Friday**, January 09: Psalm 29; 1 Samuel 3:10-4:1a; Acts 9:10-19a;
- **Saturday**, January 10: Psalm 29; 1 Samuel 7:3-17; Acts 9:19b-31;

WEEK1: Sunday, January 11, 2026:
The Magi Visit the Messiah



Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalms 29

Acts 10:34-43

Matthew 3:13-17 *New International Version*

The Baptism of Jesus

¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. ¹⁴ But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” ¹⁵ Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfil all righteousness.” Then John consented. ¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

REFLECTION WRITTEN BY: REV THABISO MCINGA

The Gospel reading for this week places us at the banks of the Jordan River. And it is here that we are given a powerful revelation about how God chooses to make himself known. God is not revealed through spectacle or display. Instead, Jesus steps into waters meant for repentance, not because he needs cleansing but because he chooses complete solidarity with humanity. Here, the light of Epiphany does not blaze from above; it bends low. God is revealed not in distance or dominance, but in nearer to those longing for renewal, healing and hope.

Listen carefully to verse 14, where John tries to stop Jesus, saying, “I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?” John’s words echo something deeply familiar within us. Like him, we are often uncomfortable with a God who disregards our human rankings of status and worth. We would prefer a Saviour who remains above the fray, safely removed from the mess of ordinary lives. Yet Epiphany tells us that true holiness is not found in separation, but in solidarity. It challenges us to examine where we, too, resist a God who chooses to stand in line with everyone else. Then comes the voice from heaven, declaring, “*This is my beloved Son.*” Notice the timing of this affirmation. It comes before Jesus preaches a sermon, before he performs a miracle, before he makes any sacrifice. Jesus is named and loved simply because he belongs. In a world (even in our time today) where worth is often measured by productivity and performance, epiphany reminds us that our identity in God comes first. We, too, are beloved before we prove anything. Our worth is grounded not in what we do but in who we are in God.

But this revelation is never just for admiring. It always calls for a response. True epiphany is not passive recognition; it is active change. Jesus, the beloved Son, is immediately led from these waters into the wilderness, into a life of costly, obedient love. So the question now comes to us, shaped by this humble light: What waters is God calling you to step into? Where are you being invited to stand in solidarity, perhaps with someone overlooked, in a situation you’d rather avoid, in a humble act of service that won’t be praised? May we have the courage to step forward, to follow where this surprising, gracious light leads.

GROUP/CLASS QUESTIONS:

1. Where do we usually expect God to show up in powerful or dramatic ways?
2. What does solidarity look like in our own lives, and who are the people God may be inviting us to stand beside?
3. In what ways do we, consciously or unconsciously, resist a God who refuses human hierarchies of status and importance?
4. What does solidarity look like in your own life or community right now?
5. Where might we be tempted to distance ourselves from others in the name of being ‘holy’ and how does this passage reframe that idea?

MEMORY VERSES FOR THE WEEK:

Monday: **Micah 6:8** “What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.”

Tuesday: **Isaiah 57:15** *"I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit."*

Wednesday: **Psalms 34:18** *"The Lord is close to the broken hearted."*

Thursday: **John 1:14** *"The Word became flesh and lived among us."*

Friday: **Romans 8:16** *"We are God's children."*

Saturday: **1 John 3:1a** *"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!"*



- **Monday**, January 12: Psalm 89:5-37; Genesis 35:1-15; Acts 10:44-48;
- **Tuesday**, January 13: Psalm 89:5-37; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Acts 8:4-13;
- **Wednesday**, January 14: Psalm 89:5-37; Isaiah 51:1-16; Matthew 12:15-21;
- **Thursday**, January 15: Psalm 40:1-11; Isaiah 22:15-25; Galatians 1:6-12;
- **Friday**, January 16: Psalm 40:1-11; Genesis 27:30-38; Acts 1:1-5;
- **Saturday**, January 17: Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Kings 19:19-21; Luke 5:1-11;

FAMILY TIME: WRITTEN BY JENNY BLAKE

Week 1: The Magi Visit the Messiah

Scriptures:

- *Isaiah 42:1-9*
- *Psalms 29*
- *Acts 10:34-43*
- *Matthew 3:13-17*



Theme: Jesus is God's Light for the Whole World

Opening Prayer

"Jesus, thank You for showing Yourself to the world. Help us to recognise Your light and follow You just like the Magi did. Amen."

Family Introduction

Epiphany is the season when we remember how Jesus was *revealed*, or shown, to the whole world. Today's readings show how God makes Himself known through Jesus: to the nations, to all people, and to us.

To help your family connect everything, imagine turning on a light in a dark room. Suddenly, you see everything clearly. That's what Jesus does. He is God's light shining for everyone.

1. God's Promised Servant (Isaiah 42:1-9)

God promises to send a gentle, loving Servant who will bring justice and hope, this is Jesus!

Talk About It

- **Kids:** Why do you think God wanted His King to be gentle?
- **Teens:** Where do you see brokenness or injustice around you? How might Jesus bring hope there?

2. God's Powerful Voice (Psalm 29)

God's voice is strong enough to shake mountains but tender enough to bring His people peace.

Talk About It

- **Kids:** What do you think God's voice sounds like? Loud like thunder or soft like a whisper?
- **Teens:** How do you recognise God's "voice" in your life, through Scripture, worship, conscience?

3. God Welcomes Everyone (Acts 10:34–43)

Peter discovers a big truth: **God doesn't choose favourites.** Everyone is welcome in His family.

Talk About It

- **Kids:** How can you include someone new this week?
- **Teens:** What groups or people do you think get left out? How can you show Christ-like welcome?

4. Jesus Is Revealed (Matthew 3:13–17)

At Jesus' baptism, heaven opens and God declares, "This is My Son, whom I love."

This is a moment of *Epiphany*. God reveals exactly who Jesus is.

Talk About It

- **Kids:** Why do you think God wanted everyone to hear that Jesus is His Son?
- **Teens:** What does it mean for your identity that Jesus, God's beloved Son, leads the way for us?

Bringing It Together

Just like the Magi followed the light to find Jesus, these Scriptures show that:

- God keeps His promises
- God speaks with power and peace
- God welcomes all people
- Jesus is revealed as His beloved Son

That's why the Magi came. God's light was shining for the whole world.

Family Activity: Follow the Light

Turn off the lights. Hide a small torch somewhere in the room.

Everyone searches until they find the shining light.

Discussion after:

- **Kids:** How is Jesus like that light?
- **Teens:** What "lights" (habits, people, Scriptures) help guide you when life feels dark?

Family Prayer

"Jesus, Light of the World, help us to follow Your light and show Your love to everyone. Amen."

Blessing

"May the light of Christ guide your family this week with joy and peace."