



HUNTINGTON FIRST CHURCH  
OF THE NAZARENE

## Church at Home - Epiphany Week 3

*A guide for worshiping from home with prayer, Scripture, and reflection*

Matthew 4:12-23, "God's Today"



# Brief Instruction

This Worship at Home guide is designed for individuals, couples, or families to engage our shared Sunday worship in a slower, more formative way. Rooted in the Epiphany season, this guide invites you to notice where the light of Christ is drawing near—sometimes quietly, sometimes unexpectedly.

This guide may take anywhere from 20–45 minutes, depending on how you engage and what you choose to linger with. This is not a checklist or an assignment to complete. Move through it at your own pace. Linger with what resonates, and feel free to move past elements that do not connect for you today. What matters most is attentiveness: creating space to listen, reflect, and respond as God meets you where you are.

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## Preparing Your Space

Before you begin, take a moment to prepare a simple worship space.

- Light a candle to symbolize Christ, the Light of the world.
- Minimize distractions.
- If you are with others, sit in a circle if possible.

Take a deep breath. Remember: God invites us into worship—we do not invite God in.

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## Call to Worship

**One:** The Lord is our light and our salvation.

**All:** We will not fear.

*If you'd like, take a moment to pause. As you look at the candle, name quietly where you are longing for light right now.*

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## Welcome

Whether you are alone or with others, take a moment to acknowledge one another.

- If you are with others, briefly share one word that describes how you are doing today.
- If you are alone, offer that word to God in prayer.

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## Announcements (Life Together)

Even when we worship at home, we remain part of a larger body.

- **Two-Year Pastoral Review:** This past Tuesday, our church board completed the two-year pastoral review required in our denominational process, led by our District Superintendent, Rev. Andy Dayton. We are thankful to report that the board unanimously affirmed Pastor Scott's leadership and expressed strong support to continue our pastoral relationship for the next four years!
- **Valentine's Bash:** Our Valentine's Bash Fundraiser is coming up **February 13 from 6-8 PM**. This is a fun evening with food, games, and trivia. Tickets are **\$40 per couple** and can be purchased from a student, at the booth in the foyer, or by signing up at [hnaz.org/bulletin](http://hnaz.org/bulletin). Proceeds support student ministry events like camp and retreats.
- **Spot the Lie Elective:** Spot the Lie is an upcoming elective designed to help parents of teens grow in discernment and faith. Join us **February 1 and 8 at 9:15 AM in Room 203** as we learn together in community.

*Optional Prayer Prompt:* God, help us remember that we belong to one another, even when we are apart.

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## Tithing Invitation

Giving is an act of trust and worship. It reminds us that everything we have belongs to God.

*Reflection Question:* How does generosity shape my relationship with God and with others?

If you are able, you may give online at [hnaz.org](http://hnaz.org) or set aside your gift as an intentional act of worship.

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## Invocation

**God of Light and Life,**  
You are near to us, faithful in every season.  
Turn our hearts toward You.  
Form us as people who reflect Your light in the world.  
We pray in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

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# Worship Through Song

You are invited to engage one or more of these songs. Choose what is most helpful for you today—listen, sing, or read the lyrics prayerfully.

## “Echo (In Jesus’ Name)”

*Reflection:* Where do I need to remember that God’s power and presence echo beyond my present circumstances?

## Worship Words – The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Before you continue singing or listening, take time to hear these words from Jesus:

“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.” (Matthew 13:31-32)

Jesus tells this parable to remind His listeners that God’s kingdom often begins in ways that seem small, ordinary, or unimpressive. A mustard seed would not have looked like much in someone’s hand—but given time, care, and trust, it grows far beyond expectation.

As a church, we return to the parables of Jesus in worship because they form us. Parables invite us to listen slowly, to imagine differently, and to allow God to reshape how we see the world and ourselves. They teach us that God is at work even when growth feels hidden.

### *Formation Questions:*

- Where do I see small beginnings in my faith right now?
- What small act of trust might God use to grow something far bigger than I imagine?

## “More Than Able”

*Reflection:* How does trusting God’s ability reshape my understanding of what is possible?

## “Heal Our Land”

*Prayer:* Lord, begin Your healing work in us, so that it may flow through us into the world.

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# Scripture & Reflection

## **Matthew 4:12-23 – *God’s Today***

Before reading the sermon reflection below, take time to read **Matthew 4:12-23** slowly and prayerfully. If you are with others, consider reading the passage aloud, allowing different voices to read sections.

What follows is a **brief pastoral breakdown of the sermon**, meant to help you reflect on the Scripture, notice God's movement, and listen for how Christ may be speaking to you today.

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When John the Baptist was imprisoned, Jesus began His public ministry—not by retreating, but by stepping into Galilee, a place long associated with darkness, loss, and spiritual compromise. Matthew tells us this was no accident. Jesus' movement fulfilled Isaiah's promise that light would dawn in a land of deep darkness.

**At Jesus' coming, the world was flooded with light.** The light did not avoid the darkness—it entered it. Throughout Scripture, light represents the presence of God, and in Jesus, God's presence is no longer distant or reserved. Darkness cannot overcome the light that Christ brings.

Jesus' message is simple and profound: *"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near."* **Jesus is God brought near.** Repentance is not merely regret; it is a turning of our whole selves toward God, made possible because God's future has broken into the present. In Christ, God's reign is not only promised—it is present.

As Jesus calls His first disciples, He invites ordinary people to leave familiar identities and follow Him. **In Christ, we are gathered by grace and scattered with purpose.** Grace rescues them—and then sends them. Their worth and mission are no longer defined by what they do, but by who they follow.

Jesus' ministry unfolds through teaching, proclaiming good news, and healing. This is the shape of God's work in the world today and the ongoing calling of the Church.

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light.

That light has a name.

Jesus.

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## Guided Reflection Questions

Choose one or two questions to reflect on personally or discuss together.

1. Where is Christ's light currently exposing something in my life that I would rather keep hidden? What might repentance—a real turning toward God—look like in this area?
2. What might Jesus be asking me to leave behind in order to follow Him more fully?
3. Who in my life or community might be living in darkness, and how could I reflect Christ's light to them?
4. Which of Jesus' ministries—teaching, proclaiming, or healing—do I sense God inviting me into right now?
5. What is one small, concrete step I can take this week to join Christ's mission?

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# Response Activities

Choose one or more of the following responses as a way of living into what God is stirring.

## 1. Life of the Church – Prayer for Mission

Pray specifically for our Work & Witness team traveling to Quito, Ecuador **January 31–February 9**. Consider praying for them each day—that they would teach, proclaim good news, and trust God to bring healing.

## 2. Life of the Church – Prayer for Leadership

Pray for our new youth intern, Caleb Wright, as he begins ministry among us. Ask God to form him, guide him, and use him as a reflection of Christ's light.

## 3. Fellowship Response – Stepping into the Light

Faith is formed in community, not isolation.

When you have finished this Worship at Home time, **pause and reach out**—call or FaceTime someone you haven't connected with recently. Maybe this is another congregant, friend, or family member.

Use these prompts to guide your conversation:

- Where have you noticed God's light recently?
- What has been challenging or life-giving for you in this season?
- How can I pray for you this week?

Close your time together by praying for one another, trusting that Christ's light continues to shine through shared life.

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# Benediction

May the Light who has come near in Jesus Christ  
shine in your heart, guide your steps,  
and send you into the world with hope and courage.

You are sent.