

# Flight to Egypt



Massacre of the Innocents, Léon Cogniet, 1824

St Aidan's Uniting Church  
28<sup>th</sup> December 2025  
Christmas 1

## Call to Worship

People come to seek the Messiah from many different places  
**and they are all loved by God.**

People come to seek the Messiah with many different motivations  
**and they are all loved by God.**

Young and old, wise and foolish, rich and poor seek the Messiah,  
**and they are all loved by God.**

So let us worship this God who loves us.

## Thanksgiving

Loving God,  
you reveal yourself to us in so many different ways  
and for this we give thanks.

Once long ago, you showed yourself to astrologers,  
those who followed a profession condemned by the Torah  
and laughed at by modern science,  
but you guided them and welcomed them,  
and when they returned without a conversion,  
you still loved them.

For all these experiences of you, we give you thanks.  
Amen.

## Prayers of Confession & Intercession

God of all people,  
as we remember the revelation of the Messiah to the people  
of all nations,  
we also remember those who have not wanted to see your  
reign come into fruition.

For the times we have supported the status quo rather than  
seeking out changes that help bring about your reign, loving  
God, **forgive us.**

We pray for those who have been the victims and survivors of those who want the status quo. Those who do not have enough to eat, a home to call their own, or even a roof over their heads. We pray for those who have been chased out of their society, whether it is fleeing for fear of their lives, or because their society will no longer accept them as they are.

For the times we have thought that we can only hear you by limited means and have discounted other people's experiences because they do not equate with what we know, loving God, **forgive us.**

We pray for those who cannot experience you in their lives, because they do not experience love. For people of all ages who experience abuse and neglect, for those whose opportunities in life are stunted because they do not have access to education, and for those who rigidly adhere to their interpretation of the Bible regardless of what they see in the world around them.

For the times we have thought our experiences are more important than other sources of wisdom and we discount the learnings of others simply because it is not our experience, loving God, **forgive us.**

We pray for those who discount the discrimination in our society because they do not personally experience it, we pray for those who feel disaffected because they have failed to succeed despite their inherent privilege, and we pray that all who benefit from discrimination against others may have their heart softened.

Forgive us the times we have prayed for change and failed to be part of the solution, or have failed to recognise it when it has occurred. Help us to be your hands in this world and where we cannot, help us to trust in your love.

Amen.

## *Forgiveness*

God loves you more than you can know,  
When we own up to where we have fallen short,  
God forgives and help us to start again.

Know that you are forgiven.

***Thanks be to God.***

## *Benediction & Blessing*

So, go out expecting to find God in unexpected places,  
be open to experiencing God in all people whom you meet,  
and go knowing the love of God, the hope of the Messiah,  
and the joyous blessing of the Holy Spirit!