

Light-giving God –

**We are magi on a caravan of lumbering hope,
traveling through grinding wind and glaring sun,
chill clear nights and skin-baking days.
We come to seek Your light.**

We come lumbering in hope, each of us on our own life's journey

**– traveling through times of loneliness and fear,
through heartbreak and anger,
through grief and loss,
through economic uncertainty,
through fear for loved ones caught up in war,
through our own private crises,
through the extended shock of horrific images of hurricanes and genocide,
through struggles with the mental illness of a child,
the disintegration of a parent,
the simple letting go of a child more ready to be an adult
than we are ready to allow their growth,
through the changes in a new marriage,
the welcoming of a new child,
the completion of a degree,
the vision emerging in a new work of art.**

**We come lumbering in hope on a journey of joys and sorrows.
We come as magi to seek Your light.**

But Light-giving God,

**we admit that we are also Herod the King,
trembling in fear at the news of the rising of Your light.**

**We admit that we are afraid that the light of Your truth may indeed rise,
and it may be threatening to us.**

Like Herod,

**we fear the rise of the truth of the harm we have done to others to build
our own palaces and to fortify our own power;**

**we fear the rise of the truth that lies beneath the political spin we put on
our own lives;**

**we fear to admit to ourselves the truth that may rise within us as we
acknowledge the pain of what we have done to others and what others have
done to us.**

Light-giving God,
we come as trembling Herod, afraid of Your light.
But Light-giving God,
we are also magi wrapped in joy to arrive at the manger that cradles Your light.
We greet the rising light that Herod so fears.
We, too, fear this light, this truth.
For here we meet Your light and truth, the truth of our own powerlessness.
We are magi, wise and respected sages.
We are Herod the King, holding wealth and power.
Yet we are no more than this helpless infant,
no more than human flotsam on the tidal wave of time,
human beings, no more and no less.

Light-giving God,
let us sit in stillness in the light of this truth of our powerlessness,
until we can see Your real light cradled here,
until we are enveloped in the assuring light of this truth,
until we shine in the light of the common humanity You reveal to us here.

Light-giving God.
We lumber together in hope as Your church to lift Your Light.
Let the light that we lift be this light visible in the manger.
Let us lift not the light of our congratulation of ourselves,
not the light of belief in our own superiority,
not the light of our belief in our own narrow presuppositions,
not even the light of our own church.
Let us lift the light from You that we can encounter here,
the light of the power You make known to us
in the truth of our powerlessness,
the light we can see as we sit quietly as magi at the manger
learning to be at ease with our common humanity,
learning to be at ease with You.

Let this be the light we lift as a beacon in the darkness we know best.
As we lift that light,
may we too be lifted to know the true power that lies among us
waiting to rise as a beacon of our true hope.

Amen.

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