

# THOSE WHO *persevere* DREAM *Epiphany*

## LITURGY *for Epiphany Star Words*

Written by Sarah Are

You are welcome to use or adapt this liturgy for worship, with credit. When using these prayers for worship, please use the following credit line: "Liturgy by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)." If you adapt the prayers, please include the following credit line: "Adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | [sanctifiedart.org](http://sanctifiedart.org)." Refer to our licensing guidelines for more information: [sanctifiedart.org/licensing-terms](http://sanctifiedart.org/licensing-terms).

---

## INTRODUCTION

### *What Are Star Words?*

The use of star words, also called "star gifts," is a prayer practice connected to Epiphany and the new year that has been growing in popularity in Protestant churches for nearly a decade now. The idea is that a list of intention words, or guiding words, are written or printed on paper stars. These paper stars are then arranged, most commonly face down, on the Communion Table or in a large basket. At some point during your Epiphany service, individuals are invited to draw a word from the basket or off the Table, and to use that word as a guiding word throughout the year. Typically, participants are encouraged to trust the word they have drawn, and not to replace the word. However, there is not a strong need to be the "star police" if an individual wants to trade. Individuals are often encouraged to place their star word somewhere they will see it regularly throughout the year to allow consistent reflection on how God has moved through, around, or in connection to that word.

### *There Are Several Theological Statements Being Made in this Tradition:*

1. The Magi followed a star, which ultimately led them to Jesus. Therefore, we too use all the resources we have available to us—including creative prayer practices and intention words for the new year—to move closer to Jesus.
2. We trust that God uses multiple ways to guide us and speak to us. Star words are one such lens that might provide us a way to look for God in our midst, both actively and in hindsight.
3. We trust that it is often easy to miss God in our daily midst. Having an intention word to consider both in present days, as well as to reflect on at the end of the year, allows for us to see God in ways we may not have seen God before. This is the greatest gift.
4. We know that the most common prayer practice for many involves speaking to God as opposed to silence or contemplation. We believe that star words invite a new prayer rhythm of reflection and review that can be a powerful new way to connect with God.
5. By not looking or sorting through the star words at their selection, we practice the spiritual task of receiving. It is not we who are in control in this moment. Instead, we trust that God is present, and we let go of our desire to cultivate or control.