

2021 Lent: Signs of Grace

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photo by Sheri Bergen

ENTRANCE

REFLECTION

Grace is something you can never get but can only be given. There's no way to earn it or deserve it or bring it about any more than you can deserve the taste of raspberries and cream or earn good looks or bring about your own birth. A good sleep is grace and so are good dreams. Most tears are grace. The smell of rain is grace. Somebody loving you is grace. Loving somebody is grace. Have you ever tried to love somebody? ... There's only one catch. Like any other gift, the gift of grace can be yours only if you'll reach out and take it. Maybe being able to reach out and take it is a gift too.

– Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC*, p. 33-34

CANDLE LIGHTING

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: In this season of Lent,
we are called to tears of repentance and renewal.

People: Each day of our lives is filled with grace,
each night brings the forgiveness of sleep.

Leader: In this season of Lent,
we are called to remember those who have gone before us.

People: Tears of grief and sorrow remind us of those we have
lost,
of those who showered us with love and grace.

Leader: In this season of Lent,
we are called to reach out and accept the gift of grace.

People: Our eyes are filled with tears of joy
as we worship the God who calls us,
offering us signs of grace in each new moment.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN

SILENCE

PRAYERS

CONFESSION

Leader: The signs of grace are all around us,
freely given gifts for us to accept.

People: We resist the gift,
and instead try to keep an account
of what we have earned and what we deserve.

Leader: Grace, like the smell of rain
and the taste of raspberries and cream

is all around us.

All: Holy One, forgive us for trying to control your grace.
Help us to reach out and accept your gift.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE

Leader: The Holy One forgives us,
and invites us to receive the grace
in our tears,
in the smell of rain,
and in the love we bear for one another.

People: Amen.

THANKSGIVING AND PRAISE

INTERCESSION AND PETITION

COMMITMENT

All: O Holy One, we come today
to claim our relationship with you.
We pray for the commitment to grow together,
sharing the gifts you give us with others
here and in the wider world.

Forgive us for the hurt we have inflicted,
and help us forgive those who have hurt us.

Give us strength and discipline
to nurture our relationship with you;
to care for every part of your creation;
to foster justice and be in solidarity with those in need;
to work to end all war, and violence, and discord;
and to respond joyfully when you call,
freely giving our selves as you have shown the way.

We open our hearts to you and your creation

in the name of Jesus, who is the Christ. Amen.

HYMN

THE WORD

SCRIPTURE

SERMON

SILENT REFLECTION

OFFERING

COMMUNION

PREPARATION

Leader 1: This is the table of the heavenly feast,
the joyful celebration of the people of God.

Leader 2: We gather now as one body, joined around the
table.

Here we celebrate God's presence among us,
united in Christ's spirit, broken and whole all at once.

All: Nourished and hungry, loved and loving,
sinner and forgiven, we make one circle
of knowing, believing, rejoicing, being,
as God lights and rests among us.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Leader 1: Holy Creator of all that is, has been, and will be,
we give you thanks for the signs of your grace,
everywhere and always inviting us to receive the gift.

People: We give you thanks for your grace in human love,
Jesus the Christ, our brother,
who lived, died, and lives again,
leading us toward your eternal grace.

Leader 2: We breathe thanks and praise to you,
for grace-filled breath, wind, and fire,
signs of your Holy Spirit alive in us.

People: We come with gratitude for your Holy Church,
each member a vital sign of your grace,
a gift of your love for all your Creation.

BLESSING THE ELEMENTS

Leader 1: Christ invites everyone to eat the bread of life,
to drink the cup of the new covenant.

Leader 2: Jesus said, I am the bread of life.
You who come to me shall never hunger;
you who believe in me shall never thirst.

Leader 1: On the night he gave himself up, Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks to God, broke it and said,
This is my body,
broken for the healing of the world.
Whenever you eat it, do so remembering me.

Leader 2: After supper, Jesus took the cup and said,
This is the cup of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for all.
Whenever you drink it, do so remembering me.

All: O Holy One, send down your Spirit
that these gifts of grain and grape,
and work of human hands
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.
Unite us with Christ forever
and bring us with the whole creation
to your eternal realm.

SHARE THE ELEMENTS

*Please use what you have at home as you eat the bread and
drink from the cup today.*

If you do not have grape juice, use whatever is convenient.

*As a sign of gathering in spirit while scattered, you may want
to lift your bread toward your camera as we break bread
together.*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

All: God of abundance and mercy,
we give joyful thanks
for your eternal love and healing presence
in our celebration of bread and cup.
Bless this Body of Christ
that we may attend faithfully
to our call to be your servants,
with each other and throughout the world. Amen.

SHARED REFLECTIONS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN

BENEDICTION

Leader: With hearts overflowing with God's grace,
we go forth to be rain for a thirsty world.
Let us share the grace we have been given,
as we keep a holy Lent.

All: Amen.