

Advent 2012

GATHERING

ENTRANCE

REFLECTION

As we wait
in this lonely dark of ourselves
we do sometimes see tracings and splinters
a flicker of the dream of your world –
sparks and flashes we almost remember.

Rod Jellema,

excerpt from "A Litany Prayer for Darkness in an Age of Glare"

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader:

The days grow shorter.
The long nights of the coming winter send us indoors,
searching for warmth and light.

People:

War and unrest echo around the world.
We long for peace and hope.

Leader:

The Holy One calls us from the lonely darkness,
offering a new heaven and a new earth filled with love.

People:

The Spirit of God gathers us in goodness,
filling our hearts with sparks and flashes of delight.

Leader:

However dark the season,
the Body of Christ holds each member in grace.

All:

As we worship the God who calls us,
the Light of Christ shines in our lives,
brightening a world that yearns for faith.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN

WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

SILENCE

PRAYERS

COMMON CONFESSION

Leader:

Holy One, we who are inclined
to walk by sight and not by faith
confess that we have turned away from your light.

Voice 1:

We are people of little faith,
depending on our own works
and stumbling in the dark.

Voice 2:

We want confidence in what we hope for
and assurance about what we do not see.

Voice 1:

We need the faith to boldly ask Jesus for sight.

Voice 2:

We long to return to your light,
but we lose faith every day.

All:

Forgive our unbelief, and let the fruits of your Spirit –
faith, hope, and love – grow in us.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE

Leader:

Rejoice, for our sin is forgiven.
Through Jesus, who offered himself for us,
we are brought out of darkness
into the light of the Holy One.

All:

Amen.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND 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 One of everlasting promise and fulfillment,
we give you thanks for your great yes,
which brought into being this universe,
this beautiful planet, and all your creatures.

People:

We thank you for your son Jesus,
your promised one, light in our darkness,
who calls us through the death of all we know
and into new life in his body.

Leader 2:

We give thanks for your Holy Spirit,
Your guiding, disturbing presence,
calling us to live into your new age,
fulfilling your promise of mercy.

People:

We are grateful for your holy church,
the community of our sisters and brothers
who listen for your call, seek to live your yes,
and carry your love and justice into the world.

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 of his arrest, Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks to God, broke it and said,
This is my body, broken for the healing of a broken 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.

SHARE THE ELEMENTS

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:

Go forth from this place
remembering the sparks and flashes
that mark the Holy Presence in our lives.
Know that the light shines in the darkness
and is not overcome.

All:

Amen