

The Season after Epiphany 2009 – Straining Toward Salvation

GATHERING



ENTRANCE

REFLECTION

To love the world as God loves the world is to embrace it as it is and run with it, straining toward salvation.

from Rachel Reeder, "Art of Our Own Making" in The Landscape of Praise: Readings in Liturgical Renewal, Blair Gilmer Meeks, ed., p. 13.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Arise! Shine! For your light has come.

People: The glory of the Holy One has risen upon us.

Leader: Lift up your eyes and look around.
All: God's people are gathered together.
The Holy One is in our midst.
God's glory is made manifest among us.

HYMN

WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

SILENCE

RESPONSIVE READING

Leader: When we follow Jesus,
we move from death to new birth,
from burial to resurrection.

People: When we are in Christ,
we move from the stain of sin
to the cleansing power of grace.

Leader: When we follow Jesus,
we are never the same again.

People: When we are in Christ,
the chaos and self-centeredness of our lives
are washed away.

Leader: When we follow Jesus,

we become members of his holy, risen Body.

All: When we are in Christ,
the waters that drown us
also give us life.

SILENCE

PRAYERS

COMMON CONFESSION

Leader: Holy One, we don't always want freedom.

Voice 1: We want security and comfort.

 We want nothing to go wrong.

Voice 2: We want nobody to disappointment us.

 We want laughter but no tears.

Leader: We want what we want.

All: We don't want to accept
 the salvation we want so badly.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE

Leader: When we strain toward salvation for all of
creation,

 when we are uncomfortable,

 when things go wrong,

when we are disappointed and tears flow freely,
still God resides in us, surrounds us and loves
us.

All: Amen!

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

UNISON PRAYER

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.
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

SHARED REFLECTIONS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HYMN

BENEDICTION

Leader: As we follow God's call into our many places
of mission, ministry and relationship,
the Holy Spirit is with us,
making sure we aren't given more
than we can get our arms around.

Let us embrace the world as it is,
and run with it, straining toward salvation.

People: Amen

WORSHIP RESOURCES

Call to Worship based on Isaiah 60.

*Responsive Reading based on S. Anita Stauffer in Liturgy:
Dressing the Church, as quoted in The Landscape of Praise:
Readings in Liturgical Renewal, Blair Gilmer Meeks, ed., p.
5.*