

SEEKERS CHURCH
A Church of the Saviour Community

Epiphany 2023
Showing the Way

GATHERING

ENTRANCE

REFLECTION

Maybe you will not be called
With the coal held to your lips,
The rush of wings of
Ambitious angels
Covering you. ...
But maybe you will be called by
Fallen mustard seeds and
Open-eyed dreams.
Maybe you will be called by
The ordinary and the striking,
The places where your heart catches
More than once. ...
Maybe you will know that
Your call is no less real
Because it comes with
Seeds in your hand
And the taste of fruit in your mouth,
With a sound so soft
It could have just been the breeze,
But wasn't.

– Laura Martin
Associate Pastor
Rock Spring Congregational UCC, Arlington, VA

LIGHTING THE ALTAR CANDLE

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: God calls us to show the way,
to be a light in darkness,
a voice in the wilderness.

People: Our hearts catch
at the ordinary beauty of the world,
at the everyday wonder
of seeds in our hands.

Leader: God calls us to listen
to the sounds of silence,
to the Word beyond words,
singing secrets into our hearts.

People: Our hearts skip a beat
at the voice of the voiceless,
at the everyday whisper
of wind in the trees.

Leader: God calls us to feel
the soft breeze of the Spirit on our skin,
to taste the sweet fruit
that reminds us of God's love.

All: Help us to become the Body of Christ,
your presence shining in us
and around us and through us,
a bright beacon of hope to the world.

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN

WORD FOR THE CHILDREN

SILENCE

PRAYERS

CONFESSION

Leader: Holy One, you call us to show the way,
to light the darkness that surrounds us.

People: We wait impatiently for shining angels to descend,
announcing news of great import,
and forget the seeds of light in our own hands.

Leader: Holy One, you call us to listen,
to hear the sounds of silence,
the singing in our hearts.

People: We try so hard to hear the rush of angel wings
that we miss your Word beyond words,
singing in our hearts.

Leader: Holy One, we have forgotten that your call
can be revealed in fallen mustard seeds,
open-eyed dreams,
and in the places where our heart catches.

People: Forgive us, Holy One,
for not hearing your call in the ordinary:
in the seeds we carry,

in the taste of sweet fruit,
and in the silence of the voiceless.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

ASSURANCE

Leader: The Holy One hears us and forgives us
and promises to form us into the Body of Christ,
through which their presence can shine
as a beacon of hope to the world.

All: 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

Whether you are here in person or attending on Zoom, offerings may be made by sending a check to the church or through PayPal by clicking on the Donate button on the Seekers website or at [PayPal.Me/SeekersChurch](https://www.paypal.com/SeekersChurch). Those in the sanctuary are welcome to place their offerings in the plate on the altar.

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,
we are thankful that
you are always reaching out to us,
calling us in many different ways.

People: We are grateful that Jesus,
who is the Christ,
shows us the many ways
that you reach out to us.

Leader 2: With gratitude we feel the many ways
your Holy Spirit moves within us and among us.

People: We offer thanks, Holy One, for your Church,
where we are sustained by others
as we discern your will and strive to do it.

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

As a sign of gathering in spirit while scattered, you may want to lift your bread and cup toward your camera.

Leader 1: The body of Christ, broken for all of us.
Feed on Christ in your hearts with thanksgiving.

Leader 2: The cup of the new covenant, poured out for the healing of the world.
Drink deeply of it.

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: We have heard the Word beyond words,
we have seen the holy in ordinary beauty,
we have tasted the sweetness of God's love.

Let us go out into the world
carrying mustard seeds and open-eyed dreams,
following God's call to be the Body of Christ.

All: Amen.