

Litanies and Reflections based on Bible Themes

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John 1, altered for choral reading.

In the beginning

was the Word.

The Word was with God,

and the Word was God.

In the beginning with God.

All things came into being through the Word,

without the Word not one thing came into being.

What has come into being was life,

And the life was the light of all people.

The light shines in the darkness,

And the darkness did not

will not

can not

overcome it.

John 3:1-17 - Call to Worship

For God so loved the world;

**The sparrows, the mountain lions,
the fish and the people.**

For God so loved the world;

**In success and failure, in sickness and
health, in mediocrity and extraordinary.**

For God so loved the world;

**Enough to become one of us, enough to suffer
along with us,
enough to offer new life for us.**

For God so loved the world;

Let us worship God!

John 6:1-15 (1997)

Gospel Reflection

A young boy's lunch,

Two loaves and a few fish,

Fed the multitude;

Five thousand and more.

Each eating their fill,

Each knowing enough;

With baskets to share,

Plenty for all.

Insufficiency shared

Is broken and blessed

And scarcity is redeemed,

Now and forever.

Prayers of the People

We come believing in our emptiness,
believing that we will never have enough,
believing that what we have is unworthy.

We come fearful of sharing,
fearful of losing our tenuous grip on security,
fearful of touching and knowing the pain of
others.

We come overwhelmed by the hunger,
overwhelmed by the suffering of children near
and far,
overwhelmed by the endless tales of senseless
violence, greed, and death.

We come aching from the weight of the
responsibility,
aching from the chilling challenge of knowing
our abundance,
aching from the gnawing awareness that we
have much to share.

We come clinging to our meager lunches;
bless them, and us.
break them, and us.
share them, and us.

John 6:59ff - see 1 Kings 8:41-43 (2006)

John 13:34-35

Call to Worship

Jesus offers a new-old commandment,
that we should love each other.

With the incredible power
and the unfathomable depth
of God's love for us
we can

we must love one another.

And it is in this our love for one another
that the world will know
whom and what we worship.

Come, children of God,
let us love one another.

Called to love one another
we gather aware not only of our "Hallmark"
moments but also our pain;
hiding from wounds still festering
and dreams denied knowing
and at the same time not knowing
the impossible essential truth of love's
demand.

Called to love one another,
God of mercy,
hear our prayer.

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John 13:34-35

Litany of Confession and Assurance

Come with what you have.

For you who grieve this day
know that you are invited to bring the broken
pieces of your heart.

**Loved by one another,
we discover God's love for us.**

Come with what you have.

For you who come with gladness know that
your melody will find harmony.

**Accepting God's love for us,
we are called to love one another.**

Come with what you have.

For you weighed down by too many 'shoulds'
and 'what-ifs'
know that here you may lay down the burdens
of guilt and shame.

**Loved by one another,
we discover God's love for us.**

Come with what you have.

For you who have the answers,
know that new questions await you.

**Accepting God's love for us,
we are called to love one another.**

Come with what you have.

For you who come seeking,
know that your questions are safe in the
presence of God.

**Loved by one another,
we discover God's love for us.**

John 14:15-21

loving Jesus
is loving our neighbor
loving Jesus
is being loved by God
loving our neighbor

is being loved by God
who would have guessed
that the kid next-door was divine?

John 15:1-8 - 1997

Abide in me,

We pray for God to abide in us.

Abide in me,

**We yearn to feel God's presence,
hoping that God will find and protect us.**

As I abide in you,

**Jesus offers an invitation for us to do the
abiding.**

As I abide in you,

**We can choose life in the Spirit's presence,
bearing the fruit of the Spirit's love.**

Abide in me as I abide in you.

John 15:1-8 - We are the Vines (2000)

Reflection

The vine emerges from the earth,
nourished

and nourishing.

Rises without visible connection;

roots hidden,

promise unknown.

Strong to withstand storms,
fragile when plucked too soon.

So it is that we grow...

nourished by invisible connections to the
living God,

called to nourish that which is seen and that
which is yet buried within.

Call to Worship

Called to be branches in Christ's body,

We yearn to be connected to the vine.

Called to be mustard bushes offering shade to
God's creatures,

**We search for places to plant the seeds of
faith.**

Called to be growing with God in the midst of
this world's painful questions,

We seek God's nurturing presence.

John 21:15-19 (2003)

Children of God, do you love the God
who hovered over the face of the deep and
called the worlds into being?

Yes, you know that we do.

Then feed God's children.

Children of God, do you love the God
who was revealed in the life, death, and
resurrection of Jesus the Christ?

Yes, you know that we do.

Then take care of God's children.

Children of God, do you the God
who breathes new life into us even as we
gather this day?

Yes, you know that we do.

Then feed God's children.

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John 21:15-19 (1999)

Jesus asked: Do you love me more than these?

Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.

Feed my lambs.

Coming to church on Sunday

Teaching, cleaning, planning

Making church happen

But do we love Jesus?

Jesus asked again: Do you love me?

Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.

Tend my sheep.

Glancing over the newspaper

Blood spilled in Kosovo and Denver

Shudders, tears, silence

How can we take care of the sheep?

Still Jesus asks: Do you love me more than these?

Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.

Feed my lambs.

Follow me

Such simple words

Challenge and invitation

Loving Jesus means following him to the sheep.