

Epiphany

January 8, 2006

Welcome and Announcements

Poem -- "Guest House" by Rumi

"This being human is a guest house
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out for some new delight.
The dark thought, the sham, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond."

Opening Song ~ "Brightest and Best"

Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our pathway and lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Shall we give Jesus our costly devotion,
fragrance of Edom, and off'rings divine,
gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine.
Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
vainly with gifts Jesus' favor secure.
Richer by far is the heart's adoration.
Dearer to God are the gifts of the poor

Interfaith Responsive Reading

Reader: We gather here as an Interfaith Community
To share and celebrate the gift of life together

*All: Some of us gather as the Children of Israel
Some of us gather in the name of Jesus of Nazareth
Some of us gather influenced by each*

Reader: Howsoever we come, and whomsoever we are
May we be moved, In our time together
To experience that sense of Divine presence in each of us
Evoked by our worship together

*All: And to know in the wisdom of our hearts
That deeper unity in which all are one.*

Sharing Joys

Scripture Reading -- Isaiah 60:1-7 and Micah 5:2-4

Reflection -- Larry Bostian

Concerns of the Community & Meditation

Reading -- "Prayer for Understanding"

Reader: In my times of greatest self-doubt, whenever I torment myself...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever my mistakes loom large, or the future seems bleak...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever my ego ignores reason, when immediacy dictates my every decision...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever I am patient with injustice, when I look to others to do the work that is mine...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever I deny the worth of others or ignore my worth to God...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever I allow stereotypes to shape my beliefs, or allow my ignorance to cause harm to others...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever, overwhelmed and frustrated, I say nothing can be done because the problem seems too big for me alone...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever I lack the courage to change my direction or participate in creating new life around me...

All: God, grant me new understanding.

Reader: Whenever I rush to judgement, whenever I value law over grace...

All: *God, grant me new understanding to honor what is true, to value myself while trusting others, and to always place my hope in you. Amen.*

Benediction and Charge

All: *May we go out into the world carrying with each of us the love and blessing of this Interfaith Community*

Reader: May we continue to hold on to what is good
and to stand as beacons of light and understanding for all people.

All: *May God's spirit and peace be with us each now and forever.*

Reader: May the Lord bless you and keep you and bring you peace. Amen.

Closing Song -- "We Three Kings"

We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.

Chorus: O..... star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Glorious now, behold him arise; Christ and God and sacrifice:
Alleluia, alleluia, sounds through the earth and skies

Chorus.

Blessing over Snack

Baruch atah adonai elohaynu melech ha-olam hamotzi le-chem
min ha-aretz.

*Blessed art thou o Lord, ruler of the universe, who has brought
forth the fruit of the earth*

We thank thee, God, for happy hearts, for rain and sunny weather.
We thank thee, God, for this our food, and that we are together.

— *Emilie Fendall Johnson*