

January 29, 2012 - 9:15 am - Fresh Spirit - 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

"I see the God in you. I greet the God in you."

Bill Wallace, New Zealand

As you gather for worship,
please introduce yourself to those around you.
There are no strangers in God's house.

CALL TO WORSHIP *Open My Eyes, Lord* Jesse Manibusan

Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.
Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see.
Open my ears, Lord. Help me to hear your voice.
Open my ears, Lord. Help me to hear.
Open my heart, Lord. Help me to love like you.
Open my heart, Lord. Help me to love.
And the first shall be last, and our eyes are opened,
And we'll hear like never before.
We'll speak in new ways, and we'll see God's face,
In places we'd never known.
I live within you. Deep in your heart I live.
I live within you. Rest now in me.
Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see your face.
Open my eyes, Lord. Help me to see.
Help me to see your face. Help me to hear.
Help me to hear your voice. Help me to love.
Help me to love like you. Help me to see.

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WELCOME

REFLECTION FOR PEACE

GATHERING THE PEOPLE

One: Join me on the Way, and our eyes shall see a heavenly light.

All: *Lead us up the higher road, even if the light should blind us.*

One: Join me on the Way, and our ears shall hear a heavenly voice.

All: *Lead us up the higher road, even if the voice should deafen us.*

One: Join me on the Way, and our lives shall gain a heavenly cause.

All: *Lead us up the higher road, even if the cause should test us.
O Lord, appear to us in a vision, though the glory of your face
should make us shield our eyes. Speak to us a revelation,
though the power of your voice should make us cover our ears.*

One: Let us worship God!

OPENING SONG (see insert) *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*

Text Henry W. Baker; Tune St. Columba; arr. M. McClellan

RENEWING THE COVENANT

One: Open our eyes, O God,

All: *and we will be able to see the gifts and talents in ourselves,
which others can see.*

One: Open our eyes, O God,

All: *and we will enable others to see the gifts and talents in
themselves, which we can see.*

One: Open our eyes, O God,

All: *and we will be able to see the powerless in our neighborhoods,
and stand beside them.*

One: Open our eyes, O God,

All: *and we will be able to see those struggling and fearful in our
faith community, and give them compassionate support.*

One: Open our eyes, O God,

All: *and we will be able to see those in our world denied basic*

necessities and freedom, and understand their suffering.

---time of silent reflection---

One: God will break into our pattern of living.

All: *God will infiltrate our most hardened ways,
our most grooved attitudes, our most habitual responses.*

One: Trust God, and change is inevitable;
trust God, and we are enabled to start afresh.

All: *We are ready for a new phase of life!*

One: Pardon and peace are ours.

All: *Thanks be to God! Amen.*

PASSING THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

All: *And also with you.*

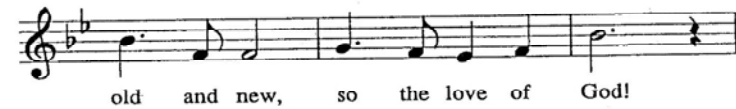
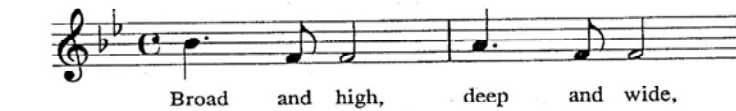
TIME WITH CHILDREN

(Afterward, children and youth through grade 8 are invited to hear God's Word
in Wee Worship in the Social Hall.)

OFFERING OUR GIFTS BACK TO GOD

OFFERING SONG *So the Love of God* Dan Schutte

Refrain:



Once we were lost, orphans of night,
Left but to wander, longing for the light.
Found by a love that would not let us go.
We are God's children – family forever.

Strong are the arms of your mercy
That have saved us from our sin.
Great is the gift of our growing,
Of our knowing such a love.

Who could believe what you've given us
By loving us in our longing!
Even death cannot hold our hearts,
So great the might of your love!

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DOXOLOGY

*We thank you God for all you have given.
Now we return a portion to you
For all that we have, and all that we are,
We bring our gifts, and thank you God for life.*

OFFERTORY PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING Acts 9: 1-20 Revised English Bible
Saul, still breathing murderous threats against the Lord's disciples, went to the

high priest and applied for letters to the synagogues at Damascus authorizing him to arrest any followers of the new way whom he found, men or women, and bring them to Jerusalem. While he was still on the road and nearing Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed all around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' 'Tell me, Lord,' he said, 'who you are.' The voice answered, 'I am

Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you have to do.' Meanwhile, the men who were traveling with him stood speechless; they heard the voice but could see no one. Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes he could not see; they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. He was blind for three days, and took no food or drink.

There was in Damascus a disciple named Ananias. He had a vision in which he heard the Lord say: 'Ananias!' 'Here I am, Lord,' he answered. The Lord said to him, 'Go to Straight Street, to the house of Judas, and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. You will find him at prayer; he has had a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him to restore his sight.' Ananias answered, 'Lord, I have often heard about this man and all the harm he has done your people in Jerusalem. Now he is here with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who invoke your name.' But the Lord replied, 'You must go, for this man is my chosen instrument to bring my name before the nations and their kings, and before the people of Israel. I myself will show him all that he must go through for my name's sake.' So Ananias went and, on entering the house, laid his hands on him and said, 'Saul, my brother, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on your way here, has sent me to you so that you may recover your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.' Immediately it was as if scales had fallen from his eyes, and he regained his sight. He got up and was baptized, and when he had eaten his strength returned.

He stayed some time with the disciples in Damascus. Without delay he proclaimed Jesus publicly in the synagogues, declaring him to be the Son of God.

SERMON *The Conversion of St. Paul* The Rev. Thomas D. York

FOCUS SONG (see insert) *Who Am I?* Mark Hall

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

CLOSING SONG (see insert) *Able* Sarah Hart

BLESSING THE PEOPLE

Sources for today's liturgy: Gathering - *Cole & Tilson, Litanies and Other Prayers, Year C.* Renewing the Covenant - David Sparks, *Prayers to Share, Year A.*

Thanks to confirmand Samantha Chun for serving as liturgist this morning.

If you feel called to serve God by researching, writing or speaking liturgy in future services, please feel free to talk with any of the worship leaders or drop a note in the offering plate.

Fresh Spirit Prayer Request cards and offering envelopes are available in the black fellowship pad folders. If you have a prayer request, concern or

