

Welcome to The Way!

Water of Life: A Worship Service for the New Year

January 4, 2009



Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship: Isaiah 12:2-6

Opening Song

Opening Prayer

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hidden. Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Call to Give

Offertory Song

Prayer of Dedication

“Water of Life”: An Interactive Prayer Experience

Instructions for the prayer stations are printed on back.

Prayers of the People with Sung Response

Sung Response: Rain down, rain down, rain down your love on your people.
Rain down, rain down, rain down your love, God of life.

Passing the Peace of Christ

Join in greeting your brothers and sisters in Christ with this ancient Christian ritual of community. We say to each other, “The peace of Christ be with you.” We respond, “And also with you.”

The Great Thanksgiving: “Within the Reign of God”

The Lord’s Prayer (using “sins and sins against us” with motions)

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Prayer After Communion

Invitation to Discipleship

Closing Song

Sending Forth

Now go get real with God, with others, with life through Christ!

“Water of Life” Prayer Stations

Water of Chaos (Genesis 1:1-2)

In the beginning, before God began to create, there was only chaos. Water symbolizes that chaos in the creation story, but the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters brought order into being. Our world today is filled with chaos still—made manifest in the newspaper each day. Take a moment to consider the chaos of our world. Pray. As you pray, “paint” the newspaper mandala-style with only water on a paintbrush and consider how the Spirit of God can bring order out of our chaos.

Water of Destruction (Genesis 6:11-17)

Just as water brings life, it also destroys it. The flood in the time of Noah makes this very clear. At the start of this new year, consider what needs to be destroyed in you—what self-destructive behaviors, what counter-productive thoughts, what toxic relationships need to change. Pray. Then draw a cup-full of water from the basin, go to the door, and throw the water outside. Release the destruction inside you. (Please return the cup to the prayer station when you are finished.)

Water of Redemption (Mark 1:9-11 and Romans 6:1-11)

Baptism is the sign of God’s redemptive work upon us and within us. Come to the altar table and kneel if you are able. Take a mirror. (If you are unable to kneel, take a mirror from the table and experience this prayer in your seat.) Hold the mirror so that you can see your reflection. Consider how God has redeemed you; consider the newness of life that you walk in because of God’s grace. Pray. When you are finished praying, drop your mirror into the basin on the altar table.

Water of Healing (Ezekiel 47:1-12 and Revelation 22:1-2)

Scripture tells us that the water of life is healing water. And oh, do we need God’s healing presence in our lives. We each bring wounds into the dawning of this New Year. Some of our wounds are very old; others are more recent. They all cause pain. Take a moment to consider the wounds you bear and how God’s healing touch can work in your life. Pray. Pray for God’s healing touch to make you whole. Dip your fingers into the water and then touch your head, your heart, your hands—wherever your healing needs are—and receive the water as a sign of God’s healing in you.

Water of Presence (John 4:7-26)

The Samaritan woman was in the presence of the Holy One at the well, but she didn’t know it. When Jesus revealed himself to her as the Messiah, she received the gift of his presence. She received the gift of a wellspring of life flowing through her. In prayer, we know that wellspring life too; in prayer we know Christ’s presence. Use this time of prayer to write prayers of thanksgiving, petition (for self), or intercession (for others) and place them in the basin. These prayers will be shared aloud later in tonight’s worship service.

Water of Discipleship (Matthew 25:35 and Mark 9:41)

Jesus calls us to give drink to the thirsty, to share a cup of cold water with another in his name. Consider all of the ways you have been served by others in this way. Who has shared a cup of cold water—or a meal, or shelter, or a word of encouragement—with you? Now pray for God to show you opportunities to do the same for others. As you pray, drink a cup of cold water and let it fill you with a thirst for living out your discipleship more fully.