

RCL January 2008 Themes and Concepts

**RCL–The Epiphany of our Lord
Sunday, January 6th, 2008
“The Light: Receive It, Reflect It!”
Text: Isaiah 60:1-6**

Other Assigned Scripture for RCL: Isaiah 60:1-6, Ephesians 3:1-12, and Matthew 2:1-12

Today Isaiah calls for Israel to stand up and shine because Jesus, their light has come. They are to first receive Light in order to reflect it! Just as Israel was called to shine, so each of us has been called to stand up, stand out, stand firm and sound out. Your calling is to receive the light and to reflect it brightly. Epiphany is about shining light in all directions. By the way, how's your receiving and reflecting going?

**RCL–The Baptism of Our Lord
Sunday, January 13th, 2008
“The End and the Beginning”
Text: Matthew 3:13-17**

Other Assigned Scripture for RCL: Isaiah 42:1-9, Acts 10:34-43, and Matthew 3:13-17

As Jesus was baptized by John it is the end of His “private life.” At His baptism the Father through the Spirit declares Him the Messiah, and this is John’s confirmation that Jesus indeed is the Lamb of God. Jesus, the beginning and the end (alpha and omega), is now seen as more than just Mary and Joseph’s son and He begins His public journey to the cross as the Lamb of God. In His baptism He is called “beloved son;” in our baptisms we are declared “beloved sons and daughters!” At His baptism it is the end of His being seen as just a “carpenter’s son” and the beginning of being seen as the “Son of God...the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.” At our baptism we come to the end of our sinful selves and we begin life as “new creations” on the road to eternal life! Christ’s baptism was filled with meaning and so was yours. So, how is your beginning ending up?

**RCL–2nd Sunday after the Epiphany
Sunday, January 20th, 2008
“What Do You Want?”
Text: John 1:29-42**

Other Assigned Scripture for RCL: Isaiah 49:1-7, I Corinthians 1:1-9, and John 1:29-42

Today two of John’s disciples follow behind Jesus. John the Baptist had told them that Jesus was in fact the Messiah. As the disciples follow Jesus, He turns around and asks them, “What do you want?” In essence He was asking them what they thought they would “get” if they followed Him. They answered His question with a question because they understood what He had asked them. Do you understand His question? It was a question to them; but it is also a question to each of us... “What do you expect to get from following me?” “What do you want?”

RCL-3rd Sunday after the Epiphany
Sunday, January 27th, 2008
“Change of Address: A Prophecy Fulfilled”
Text: Matthew 4:12-23 and Isaiah 9:1-4

Other Assigned Scripture for RCL: Isaiah 9:1-4, I Corinthians 1:10-18,
and Matthew 4:12-23

After John the Baptist was imprisoned, Jesus moved from Nazareth to Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee. This simple change of address fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy recorded in Isaiah 9:1-4. It was a strategic move for the Kingdom because Jesus moved to the “Galilee of the Gentiles,” indicating the universal significance of His ministry. Besides fulfilling prophecy and confirming that Jesus truly is the Messiah, this news is hope for us today as a people also “living in darkness,” under the very “shadow of death” – our desperate moral and spiritual condition living in America. God says the darkness will be dispelled with the “dawn” of a great light which will shine upon us through the life and ministry of Jesus – a ministry which continues among us today through His Holy Spirit.