

OPENING VISUAL MEDITATION

"Where is the Love?" Music Video by the Black Eyed Peas (edited) 3:21 min

CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: Families are a gift; families are complicated.

ALL: Two parents. One parent.

No parents. Step parents.

One: Families are a gift; families are complicated.

ALL: Sisters. Brothers.

Half-sibling. Step-sibling.

The one and only child.

One: Families are a gift; families are complicated.

ALL: Crazy cousins. Wise elders.

Odd uncles. Gentle grandmothers.

One house. Two houses.

Connected by blood.

Connected by love.

One: Families are a gift; families are complicated.

ALL: Silliness. Laughter.

People who get us.

Separation. Resentment.

People who wound us.

One: Families are a gift; families are complicated.

ALL: You blended the world O God,

and continue to blend us.

One: As we worship You this night,
we bring along our families—

ALL: all their gifts and all their complications.

CALL TO CONFESSION

We do not always do what we are supposed to do.

Sometimes we hold onto things we need to let go.

Sometimes we let go of things we need to hold onto.

Let us talk to God about our lives,
confessing what needs to change.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**God of forgiveness,
we have not made time for You
and have put others before You.
We try to put you in our boxes,**

**but You so often exceed our expectations.
We struggle to embrace our be-you-ty and the be-you-ty in others.
Forgive us for failing to accept the differences of others
and for creating divisions in our society.
And we are sorry that we have not shown others
the forgiveness that You show to us unconditionally. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, there's something you need to know tonight:
God loves you. God accepts you. God thinks you're pretty cool.
You are a part of God's family.
And there's nothing you can do to get kicked out of that family.
Nothing you can do to make God stop loving you.
Let's celebrate this good, good news
by sharing signs of peace with one another.

PASSING THE PEACE

One: Peace be with you!
All: **And also with you.**

SCRIPTURE

John 9:1-12

The Voice Bible

Narrator:

While walking along the road,
Jesus saw a man who was blind since his birth.

Disciples:

Teacher, who sinned?
Who is responsible for this man's blindness?
Did he commit sins that merited this punishment?
If not his sins, is it the sins of his parents?

Jesus:

Neither.
His blindness cannot be explained or traced to any particular person's sins.
He is blind so the deeds of God may be put on display.

Narrator:

After He said these things,
Jesus spat on the ground and mixed saliva and dirt to form mud,
which He smeared across the blind man's eyes.

Jesus (to the blind man):

Go, wash yourself in the pool of Siloam.

Siloam means "sent,"
and its name reminded us that his healing was sent by God.

Narrator:

The man went, washed, and returned to Jesus, his eyes now alive with sight.
Then neighbors and others who knew him were confused
to see a man so closely resembling the blind beggar running about.

Townspeople:

Isn't this the man we see every day sitting and begging in the streets?

Others:

This is the same man.

Still Others:

This cannot be him.
But this fellow bears an uncanny resemblance to the blind man.

Formerly Blind Man:

I am the same man. It's me!

Townspeople:

How have your lifeless eyes been opened?

Formerly Blind Man:

A man named Jesus approached me
and made mud from the ground and applied it to my eyes.
He then said to me, "Go, wash yourself in the pool of Siloam."
I went and washed, and suddenly I could see.

Townspeople: Where is this man who healed you?

Formerly Blind Man:

I don't know.

OFFERING VIDEO

Living Waters for the World

<https://vimeo.com/81247292>