

Creative Worship Resources

ENGAGEWORSHIP.ORG

THE MUSIC AND WORK FOUNDATION

<http://engageworship.org/>

Here is a source of searchable resources for local churches to encourage and enable innovative worship with the goal of *facilitating increased engagement with God, each other and the local and global world.*

The project hopes to be a channel for *ideas springing up from local churches, leaders and artists who are pushing forward into innovative worship.... to inspire participative worship ... to take people broader and deeper into all that worship can be... committed to excellence and breadth in music, but also exploring other forms of worship and creativity in church.*

The site's producers have provided resourcing to conferences and events, such as Youthwork the Conference, London School of Theology, Spring Harvest, the Baptist Assembly alternative venue 'Prism', Music and Worship Foundation events, Greenbelt, New Wine and local church initiatives, leading musical worship with the engageband and/or creative worship.

Some of the site is a 'Gathering' type facilitation of free shared resources. There are also video resources for a small fee, and free access to articles on subjects such as:

- Percussion and Junk Drumming in worship
- How inclusive is our 'All Age' worship?
- Ideas for Prayer and Intercession
- Only God makes things grow
- When the band calls in sick - Leading worship without music
- Worship Tech
- What is God doing in worship right now?



A Study for an experienced group

MIDRASH:

Reading the Bible with Question Marks

By Sandy Eisenberg Sasso. (Paraclete, 2007)

In an extensive but necessary introduction, the author, a rabbi herself, introduces her readers to the ancient rabbinic tradition of midrash.

She then begins to delve into ancient midrash focused around the Genesis and Exodus stories to help us learn how to 'read the bible with question marks' and gain some understanding of this tradition. She seeks through this reading to help us to wrestle with the life questions that the midrash attempts to illuminate from these scriptures.

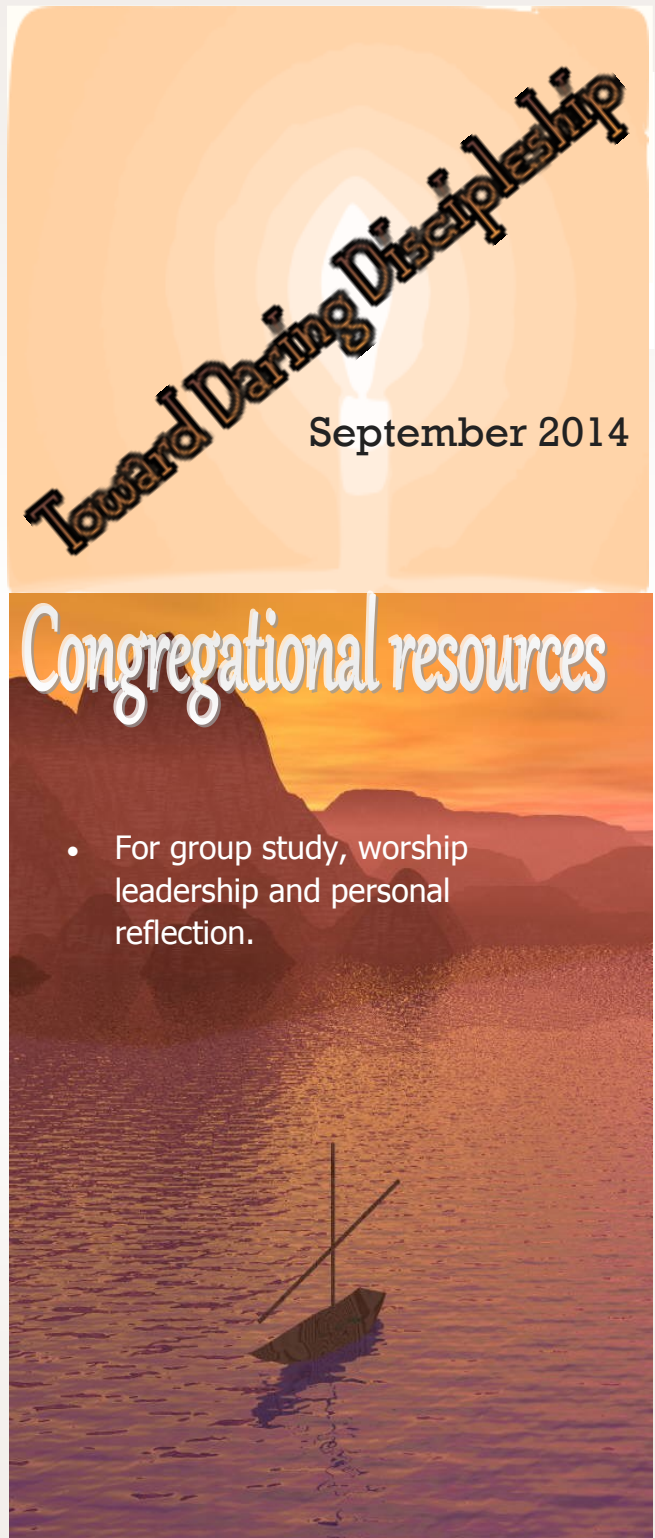
This would probably *not* be a helpful book study for a new or inexperienced group. It would be suitable, however, for those prepared to read *more* than a few pages a week, who have some practice in doing theology in a group, and are comfortable with new ways (for us) of approaching scripture through the voices of Jewish teachers who illuminate the Hebrew Scriptures in that tradition.

In the afterward, Joan Chittister writes: *This book is as much about us and our lives as it is about the historical nature of midrash. By allowing us to see the connections between the reading of Scriptures and the development of her own spiritual life, Rabbi Sasso gives us all the courage to do the same.*

This book might also be a good resource for a series of sermons rooted in these stories.



From the Desk of Lorna MacQueen
Conference Minister
Faith Formation for Discipleship



- For group study, worship leadership and personal reflection.

A Study

We Make The Road by Walking

A Year-Long Quest for SPIRITUAL FORMATION, REORIENTATION, and ACTIVATION

By Brian D. McLaren (Jericho Books, 2014)

The Fifty-two plus chapters in the book are organized around four seasonal quarters in a simplified church year. The book opens with pre-advent readings and an overview of the Hebrew Scriptures and moves into NT readings.

The Chapters are designed to be read aloud in 10-12 minutes and conclude with a simple set of questions to allow for and encourage thoughtful response and discussion. It includes a spiritual practice through a suggested action for the week, and a meditation.

This is a resource that might be used for public worship or for group study and helpful for those new to church and scripture, or those wishing to reframe old Sunday School stories. It has been designed to be user friendly with children present, but might be challenging for most intergenerational groups and is more accessible for adults or young adults. It is also a possible resource for personal study.

Each reading invites you to: (front book flap)

- *Cultivate an honest, intelligent understanding of the Bible and of Christian faith in the 21st century*
- *Engage with discussion questions designed to challenge, stimulate, and encourage*
- *Re-imagine what it means to live joyfully and responsibly in today's world as agents of God's justice, creativity, and peace*



An Ecological Engagement

Watershed Discipleship

<http://watersheddiscipleship.org/>



Many of our church communities are convinced of the need for greater ecological responsibility, but do not know what to do next. After addressing some changes in our buildings...then what?

Here is an opportunity for significant engagement.

For the creation waits patiently but anxiously for the unmasking of the children of God... (Romans 8:19)

Watershed discipleship recognizes that *...It is time to embrace the vocation envisioned by the Apostle Paul: the "children of God" must take a stand of passionate solidarity with a Creation that is enslaved to our dysfunctional and toxic civilizational lifeways, and commit ourselves to the liberation to the earth and all its inhabitants (Rom 8:20f).*

They propose to orient the churches toward greater engagement in the issues that we are facing in the (watershed moment regarding the) environment through bioregionally-grounded education, planning and action focused on the local watersheds that we inhabit.

These watersheds can teach us about interrelatedness and resiliency and allow us to address the larger issues as we also focus on local issues. *We won't save places we don't love. We can't love places we don't know. And we don't know places we haven't learned.*

They propose a *Watershed Alliance* - to promote and nurture the ecological reading of scripture, critical theological reflection in our congregations, populist pedagogy and organization, and local and global learning around social, food and environmental issues.

A Spiritual Practice

Naked Spirituality:

A Life with God in 12 Simple Words

With movement

By Brian D. McLaren and Suzanne Jackson

More and more of us are seeking an authentic spiritual life - practices that can help us connect with our Creator, develop an inner sense of character, balance, and well-being, and enhance our relationships with others. By living a more deeply spiritual life, we hope to do our part in building a more just and peaceful world.

This book seeks to offer an overview of the spiritual life in a framework of four stages: simplicity, complexity, perplexity, and harmony. In each stage, there are also three *practices, moves, or soul-postures*. Each practice is housed in one simple word with guidance for working with that word.

The book includes a Group Discussion and Study Guide.

TWELVE SIMPLE WORDS

has been adapted for movement in partnership with Suzanne Jackson. Jackson offers simple accompanying movement taken from Yoga, Tai Chi and Chi Gong and rooted in the Christian Tradition. A resource CD which provides a program of meditation and movement has been produced for purchase or download.

<http://wordlessprayer.com/store.html>

