

March 19, 2023 9:00am
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



ENTRANCE

** indicates to please stand as able*

Gathering & Greeting

*Introit

Wellspring of Wisdom¹
Hymn by Miriam Therese Winter

UMH #506

Wellspring of Wisdom, hear our cry.
The way ahead is parched and dry.
We seek a source to satisfy our thirst for sanctifying waters,
wisdom for your faith-filled sons and daughters.

Garden of grace, your gifts abound.
The sacred signs are all around.
The whole of earth is holy ground.
We learn from all of life expressing
how to grow in sowing seeds of blessing.

Call to compassion, help us bring
our burning need for nurturing,
the emptiness of everything to your embrace, as we endeavor
to proclaim your holy name forever.

***Call to Worship²**

ONE: Come, you are welcome here!

Today remember God wants you to flourish like a well-tended garden.

ALL: Even with our rough edges and thorns, God is doing something new in us.

ONE: Gardens teach us that cutting away what has lost its usefulness can lead to new possibilities.

So come and seek God on this spring day.

ALL: We know God invites us to let go of what's holding us back.

ONE: Come and see what God can do if we allow it.

ALL: Here we find ourselves shaped and ready for new growth, thanks be to God!

***Hymn of Praise**

Joyful, Joyful

UMH #89

Hymn by Henry Van Dyke; Tune: HYMN TO JOY by Ludwig von Beethoven

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee, opening to the sun above.

Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
drive the dark of doubt away.

Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

All thy works with joy surround thee,
earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.

Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother,
all who live in love are thine;
teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

Mortals, join the mighty chorus which the morning stars began;
love divine is reigning o'er us, binding all within its span.
Ever singing, march we onward,
victors in the midst of strife;
joyful music leads us sunward, in the triumph song of life.

PROCLAMATION & RESPONSE

Prayer for Illumination

**Oh Holy Spirit, let your Word be planted in our hearts,
take root, and grow this day. Make us like a well-watered
garden, by which your kingdom is nourished. Amen.**

The Word in Song

Prayer of St. Francis
Music by Sebastian Temple

Shirley Olenik, soprano
Kim Spivey, piano

*Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.*

*The Gospel Lesson

John 15:1-5, NRSV

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower. 2 He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit. 3 You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

This is the Word of God for the people of God:
Thanks be to God

Small Talk

a special message for children

Jodi Gutierrez

The Message

From Garden to Garden:
PRUNING

Rev. Bob Clark

*Hymn of Response O Blessed Spring³

Hymn by Susan Palo Cherwien; Tune: O WALY WALY

TFWS #2076

O blessed spring where Word and sign
embrace us into Christ the Vine:
Here Christ enjoins each one to be
a branch of this life-giving Tree

Through summer heat and youthful years,
uncertain faith, rebellious tears,
sustained by Christ's infusing rain,
the boughs will shout for joy again.

When autumn cools and youth is cold,
when limbs their heavy harvest hold,
then through us warm, the Christ will move,
with gifts of beauty, wisdom, love.

As winter comes, as winters must,
we breathe our last, return to dust;
still held in Christ, our souls take wing
and trust the promise of the spring.

Christ, holy Vine, Christ living Tree,
be praised for this blest mystery:
that Word and water thus revive
and join us to your Tree of Life.

PRAYER & THANKSGIVING

Prayer of Confession, Grace and Pardon²

Leader: For the times we've effused to change old habits,

All: Have mercy on us, O God.

For the times we've failed to make room for your grace to
work,

Have mercy on us, O God.

For the ways we've ignored your invitation to cut away what
no longer gives us life,

Have mercy on us, O God.

Merciful God, you shape us gently with your love and correc-
tion. You call us to let go of our sinful habits. Forgive us for the
complacency that hold us back. Today we take a step in turn-
ing back to you as we confess the ways we've fallen short...
(*silent prayer*)

Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

Glory to God! Amen.

Offering

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

Giving Options

Mobile App: Schertz UMC available on all platforms

Online: www.schertzumc.com/give

Text: 210-361-9146

Mail: 3460 Roy Richard Drive, Schertz, TX 78154

March Altar Rail Offerings support [UMCOR Sunday](#)

Offertory

Kim Spivey

*Doxology

tune: OLD 100th

UMH #95

SENDING FORTH

Invitation to Discipleship

*Hymn

Christ Beside Me⁴

TFWS #2166

Words from St. Patrick's breastplate; adapt. by James Quinn; Tune: BUNESSAN

Christ beside me, Christ before me,
Christ behind me King of my heart
Christ within me, Christ below me,
Christ above me, never to part.

Christ on my right hand, Christ on my left hand,
Christ all around me, shield in the strife;
Christ in my sleeping, Christ in my sitting,
Christ in my rising, light of my life.

***Dismissal with Blessing**

***Closing Song** The Garden Song (Inch by Inch)
by David Mallett

March Daily Prayer

*God, may your light guide my day, and your Spirit bring me
peace! Amen!*

1. Wellspring of Wisdom

Miriam Therese Winter

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2, Call to Worship and Prayer of Confession, Grace and Pardon

from the Garden to Garden resources made public by the North Texas Annual Conference

<https://ntcumc.org/lent-2023>

3. O Blessed Spring

Susan Palo Cherwien

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4. Christ Beside Me

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