

Offertory: "God of the Sparrow" J. Cook, C. Courtney

Doxology UMH # 94

Offering Prayer:

Generous God, in light of your extravagant blessings— no matter what the state of the world or our imperfect lives— we offer our gifts and ourselves, and know that you transform what we plant into the produce of love. Amen.

A Blessing for Slowing Down

"...blessed are we who stop—okay, maybe not stop entirely, who are we kidding—but who slow down. We who discover rest and new life and renewal when we step off the treadmill (or at least turn it down). We who remember that the world keeps spinning without us. And thank God for that. We who remember we are loved, loved, loved. Just being us."

***Hymn:** "God of Grace and God of Glory" UMH #577

Benediction

Postlude: "Voluntary in C" L. Dean Bye

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"A Blessing for Slowing Down [excerpt]" from [Good Enough: 40'ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection](#) by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. Used with permission.

We thank those who participated in today's service:

Accompanist: Steve Hays

Acolytes: Felix, Fiona, and Meriel Everett

Altar Flowers: In loving memory of John Bennett, Jr.

Altar Guild: Kathy Hathaway and Beverly Ratté

Carillonneur: Thomas St. Marie

Fellowship Hour: Vera Baker and volunteers

Liturgist: Andrew Berke

Soloists: Lynette Varnon, Holly Joy Pearson

Ushers: Head Usher, Sheila Womble; Asst. Head Usher, Don Cushing; Ushers, Andrew, Jacob, and Lisa Bakowski, Ray Miller

Video Team: Nicole Baker, Brian Crawford, Nic Odell, Jack Rust, Eric Wing



Celebrate God's love

Nurture relationships with God and one another

Serve our community and world, as we share the light of Christ

Trinity United Methodist Church

361 Sumner Avenue, Springfield, MA 01108

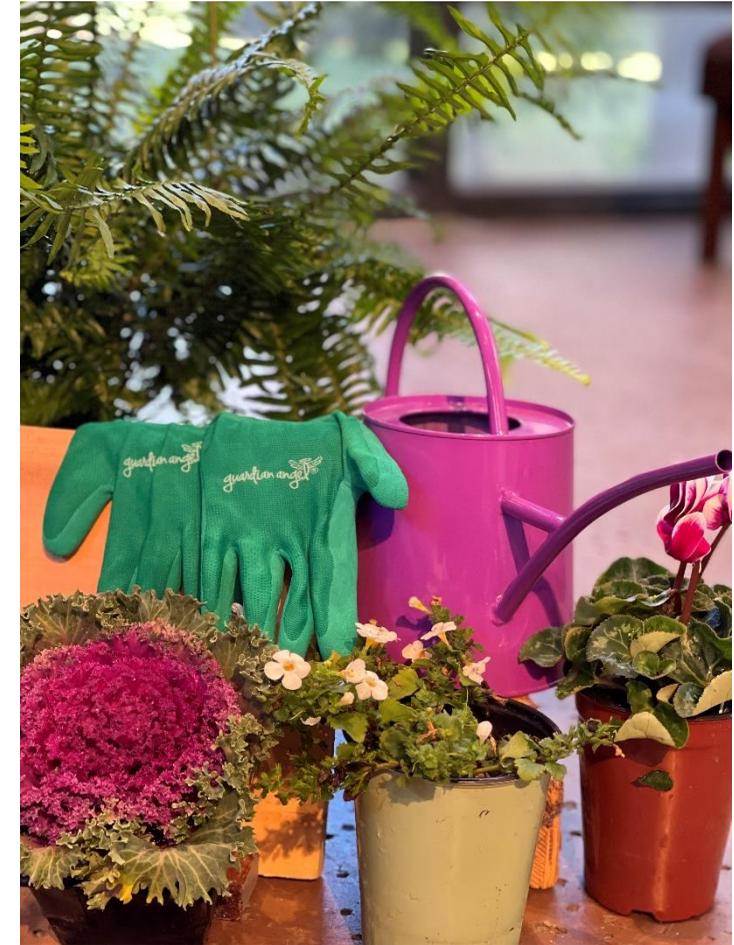
www.trinityspringfield.org

Pastor, Rev. René Perez

Director of Music Ministry, Michael Carney

Director of Family Ministries & Connections, Rob Powell

Spiritual Director, Cathy MacGovern



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Believing that all persons are created in God's image and are of sacred worth, that Jesus' message was one of inclusion of those rejected by mainstream society, and that each member makes inherent and valuable contributions to the Body of Christ, we of Trinity Church welcome into this congregation people of every age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic condition, family structure, and physical or mental ability.

GOOD ENOUGH:

Embracing the Imperfections of Life and Faith

Third Sunday in Lent

March 20, 2022

10:30 a.m.

Bold items are the congregation's part. * Stand if you are able

Music for Gathering: "Pastorale" C. Wesley ed. L. Dean Bye

Welcome and Announcements

(Visitors/members please sign & date the red folder & pass it on. Please remember late comers.)

Introit: "Laudate Omnes Gentes" Taizé community

***Call to Worship:**

Leader: As we continue our look at what it means to release oppressive expectations about perfection in our lives and in our faith, this week we turn to a harmful idea that the prescription for our fear of failure is to simply work harder. "We might feel we are climbing an 'endless staircase' of achievement, for high grades or success...[in] caregiving, work, or social pressure."

People: This Lent, we will take time to stop climbing ladders and staircases, to tend our souls slowly and lovingly, tilling the soil and fertilizer, and embracing our holy, "good enough," lives. Sometimes life will disappoint us and yet, God is still here with us.

***Hymn:** "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" (vv. 1-4, 7) UMH #57

Extinguishing the Third Candle and Prayer: (*Process and Faith*)

There is so much during the day that clamors for our attention. Friends, family, work, classes, household tasks. And the noise! We are bombarded with sound, from the clock that awakens us to the telephone, the radio, the television, the conversation that we have or overhear. Where is the time and place to listen for the still, small voice of God? Listen now. There is a place of quiet rest, and it is the place where God dwells within you. Close your eyes... In Lent we journey to the parts of ourselves known only to God. Let the story of Jesus reach us there. Let it teach us wisdom in our secret hearts. As we extinguish this light, we acknowledge the darkness and pain of violence in the world and to the Earth. (A candle is extinguished.)

Let us pray: **Holy One, Our Balm, Our Feast we lift our hands and call your name, in need of healing—thirsting and hungry. Your steadfast love is better than life. Open us this day to your nourishment in the songs of the land, in the beauty of the sky— in the simple and good enough moments that fill our days. Amen.**

***Special Music:** "Shepherd Me, O God" (Psalm 23) M. Haugen arr. M. Hayes

***Waving the Peace of Christ**

A "Good Enough" Procession

Children's Moment

Honest Questions, Compassionate Response:

Leader: In our Gospel scripture today, we will hear about the unproductive fig tree. Oh, the shame of being unproductive! Cut it down! Make room for a more dedicated and hard-working fig tree! Who among us is living up to our fullest potential? The productivity experts these days can diagnose what's wrong and sell us the antidote in 3 amazing sessions for a low-low price that is guaranteed to turn our lives around. But the gardener offers an alternative medicine— nurture it slowly. Lying fallow and getting fertilized with laughter and tears at the ugly stuff of life can help heal what ails us. Is this not sometimes productive enough? What productivity expectations are holding you captive? Let us take a moment of silent reflection... *Silent Reflection*

Leader: Hear this compassionate word from Isaiah: "Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Know that already, God is offering us love enough no matter how much we attain or achieve. We are invited to release oppressive expectations of ourselves and others so that we might recognize true worth afforded to all.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Glory to God! Amen.

Joys, Concerns and Prayers for the People

Moment of Silence

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Prayer Response

***The Word in Music:** "Just as I Am, Without One Plea" (vv. 1, 4-6) UMH #357
(At the start of this hymn children ages 7-12 are invited to go to the Chapel for Chapel Kids.)

Gospel Reading: Luke 13:1-9 (NRSV)

Thoughts About an Imperfect Life and Faith:

"Lots of Things Can Be Medicine"

Invitation to Offering:

This week we have affirmed that God's love and grace come without price and making ourselves sick with overwork is not the answer to what ails us. And yet, God does call us to work together to alleviate the suffering of others. *As the offering plate comes around, respond in openness to all we've been given.*