

Sunday Service: March 7, 2028 (Third Sunday of Lent)
“What type of soil are you?”
.... a new perspective on the Parable of the Sower.”



Zoom service starts promptly at 10 am:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84841981079?pwd=OG1TMThyZFFQZ1Q0dStpZlJCdURUUT09>

Lent–Easter 2021 Theme: Going Deep

Nearly a year ago we entered the world of isolation and virtual connection with which all of us are now familiar. Suddenly the wilderness of Lent has become all too real, as we were stripped of our usual resources, surroundings, activities, and circles of relationship. During this time our world has experienced both deep grief and invitations to a new spaciousness of time, as we needed to release so much of what usually fills our lives.

In the Scriptures and the traditions of Lent, we see a scrubbing away of the excess to get to the core of our Christian journeys and of ourselves. The call to go deeper can be frightening or overwhelming when we feel we are not ready and do not know what we will find. We keep much of our pain in our depths. But only from these depths can the voice of God reach us and transform us.

FOCUS for Third Sunday of Lent

Deep in the earth, called to deep growth: Like a seed that falls deep into the dark, rich earth, we are called to deep growth, releasing our attachments that prevent us from bearing and offering fruit.

1. GATHERING

Musical Prelude



Call to Worship

One: The days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with Israel. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Many: God, teach us wisdom in our secret hearts. Put a new and right spirit within us. Restore to us the joy of salvation, and sustain in us a willing spirit.

One: We trust you, God, to forgive our iniquities and remember our sin no more.

Many: There is a time for everything, and sometimes, the hour is upon us.

One: Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, knowing that those who love their life will lose it.

Many: “The hour has come. Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”

All: *We call out to you, as you call us to deeper growth.*

“Seeds of faith are always within us; sometimes it takes a crisis to nourish and encourage their growth.” — Susan L. Taylor

Opening Prayer

Opening Song

Prayer of Confession and Assurance

Many: Deep calls to deep. We call to you from the depths of our hearts.

One: We confess our resistance to being planted into your aching earth, into the way of your covenant.

We confess our need for you to plant within us the joy of your salvation, a willing spirit.

(Silence. Or name the forces that keep us from deep growth.)

Deep calls to deep. You call to us from the depth of your love.

Many: Calling us to deep growth. We come to you, God.

2. HEARING GOD'S WORD

Scriptures (Jeremiah 31:31-34, John 12:23-26)

Jeremiah 31:31 The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the Lord. 33 But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the Lord," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

John 12:23 Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. 24 Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. 25 Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. 26 Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

"Growth is the only evidence of life." — John Henry Newman

Message: *"What type of soil are you?*

.... a new perspective on the Parable of the Sower."



(photo of plant seed on the left and nerve cell on the right)

Join Liz as she shares a little personal background and storytelling about her journey into farming, along with some Lenten reflection on the ground beneath our feet and the soil 'within' us.

"What we perceive as a failure may simply be our inner being's way of telling us that we are ready to move to a new level of growth."

— Anne Wilson Schaefer

3. RESPONDING TO GOD



Response

Joys and Concerns

Sending Song

Sending Blessing

Only when a seed “lets go” does new life arise from it. And here is the secret planted deep within the earth—this change happens not once for us but many times over. Go into this week aware of the times of letting go that have allowed for new life to come. Go, aware of the deep growth stirring within you. Amen.

“Growth begins when we begin to accept our own weakness.” — Jean Vanier

“Growth is painful. Change is painful. But, nothing is as painful as staying stuck where you do not belong.” — N. R. Narayana Murthy