

Trinity United Methodist Church

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Prayer Ministries of TUMC offers this monthly brochure to our congregation and a circle of interested others as a compact source of daily meditations. We hope the language and the images—the articulations both ancient and modern—will bless you, awaken you, stir your imagination, open you to Sacred Mystery, help you commit to the kind of wholeness that Jesus taught and modeled, and equip you for the daily living of our church's mission statement:

Know God. Be transformed. Love.

April 2018

Easter:

Always We Begin Again

Season of the church year:

Easter: April 1 – May 19

Colors: white or gold

Easter Sunday, April 1

Now let the heavens be joyful!
Let earth the song begin!
Let the round world keep triumph,
and all that is therein!
Let all things seen and unseen
their notes in gladness blend,
for Christ the Lord has risen,
our joy that hath no end.

UM Hymnal # 303 "The Day of Resurrection,"
John of Damascus, Syrian monk and priest, 675-749

Monday, April 2

My lover spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me. See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come."

Song of Solomon 2:10-12a

Tuesday, April 3

The rumor in the deep places of our souls is that there is a party going on, and we can scarce trust our invitation. Could there ever be a toast raised to us? Might a hand reach out and lead us into the divine dance, whispering in our ear that we were always made for this? And so we wait for the kiss, the breath in and out that awakens our sleeping hearts to life. We were made for this, utterly found within Relentless Affection!

William Paul Young

Wednesday, April 4

Human strength admires autonomy;
God's mystery rests in mutuality.

Richard Rohr

Thursday, April 5

We have to keep letting go, and slowly and surely the great full life of God will invade us in every part, and men will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus.

Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

Friday, April 6

The decision to set the mind on the higher things of life is an act of the will. That is why celebration is a discipline. It is not something that falls on our head. It is the result of a consciously chosen way of thinking and living. As we choose that way, the healing and redemption in Christ will break into the inner recesses of our lives and relationships, and the inevitable result will be joy.

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*

Saturday, April 7

You no more need a holiday from spiritual concentration than your heart needs a holiday from beating. You cannot have a moral holiday and remain moral, nor can you have a spiritual holiday and remain spiritual. God wants you to be entirely his, and this means that you have to watch to keep yourself fit. It takes a tremendous amount of time. Some of us expect to "clear the numberless ascensions" in about two minutes.

Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

Sunday, April 8

If you keep "guard," like two cherubim, over the dangerous, open-ended space of your transient feelings and thoughts, you will indeed be seated on the mercy seat, where God dwells in the Spirit.

Richard Rohr, *The Divine Dance*

Monday, April 9

The freedom after sanctification is the freedom of a child; the things that used to keep the life pinned down are gone. But be careful to remember that you are freed for one thing only—to be absolutely devoted to your co-Worker... "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*

Tuesday, April 10

Celebration gives us the strength to live in the other Disciplines. The other Disciplines faithfully pursued bring us deliverance from those things that have made our lives miserable for years, which in turn evokes increased celebration. Thus is formed an unbroken circle of life and power.

Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*

Wednesday, April 11

Have enough courage to trust love one more time and always one more time.

Maya Angelou

Thursday, April 12

To be certain of God means that we are uncertain in all our ways; we do not know what a day may bring forth. This is generally said with a sigh of sadness; it should be rather an expression of breathless expectation.

We are uncertain of the next step, but we are certain of God. Immediately we abandon to God, and do the duty that lies nearest, he packs our lives with surprises all the time.

Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest

Friday, April 13

If we are only certain in our beliefs, we get dignified and severe and have the ban of finality about our views; but when we are rightly related to God, life is full of spontaneous, joyful uncertainty and expectancy.

Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest

Saturday, April 14

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:17

Sunday, April 15

I would love to live
Like a river flows,
Carried by the surprise
Of its own unfoldings.

John O'Donohue

Monday, April 16

For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind.

Isaiah 65:17

Tuesday, April 17

He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him.

Psalms 40:3

Wednesday, April 18

Who has performed and done this, calling generations from the beginning?
I, the Lord, the first,
and with the last;
I am he.

Isaiah 41:14

Thursday, April 19

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end.

Lamentations 3:22

Friday, April 20

The thief comes only to kill and destroy. I came that they could have life. Indeed, so that they could have life to the fullest.

John 10:10

Saturday, April 21

The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts. And in this place I will give peace, declares the Lord of hosts.

Haggai 2:9

Sunday, April 22

So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

Psalms 90:12

Monday, April 23

The Rule [of St. Benedict] teaches that if we take control of our lives, if we are intentional and careful in how we spend the hours of each irreplaceable day, if we discipline ourselves to live in a balanced and thankful way, we will create from our experiences, whatever they may be, the best possible life. Surely this knowledge is as invaluable now as it was in the sixth century.

John McQuiston II,

Always We Begin Again: The Benedictine Way of Living

Practice: To be read aloud each morning, Tuesday, April 24 – Monday, April 30

[A contemporary interpretation of St. Benedict's rule "Each Day"]

At the beginning of each day,
after we open our eyes
to receive the light
of that day,

As we listen to the voices
and sounds
that surround us,

We must resolve to treat each hour
as the rarest of gifts,
and be grateful
for the consciousness
that allows us to experience it,
recalling in thanks
that our awareness is a present
from we know not where,
or how, or why.

When we rise from sleep let us rise for the joy
of the true Work that we will be about
this day,
and considerately cheer one another on.

Life will always provide matters for concern.
Each day, however, brings with it
reasons for joy.

Every day carries the potential
to bring the experience of heaven;
have the courage to expect good from it.

Be gentle with this life,
and use the light of life
to live fully in your time.

John McQuiston II,

Always We Begin Again: The Benedictine Way of Living