



GATHERING TIME

Lent is a communal time and so critically important now. Let's check in and see where we are.

TIME OF GROUNDING

INVOCATION AND OPENING PRAYER

PRAYERS OF JOY AND THANKSGIVING

Psalm 16:11

You show me the path of life.

**In your presence there is fullness of joy;
in your right hand are pleasures for evermore.**

*(Time for prayer offering our gratitude to God and
delighting in God's presence)*

PRAYERS OF PETITION

Psalm 139:8

**If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my
bed in the depths, you are there. even there your
hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me
fast. even the darkness will not be dark to you; the
night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light
to you.**

*(Time for prayer offering our petitions to God for us and
our neighbors)*

MUSIC AND TIME OF REFLECTION

During this time you are invited to contemplate one way Jesus
is calling for you to follow in these days.

BRINGING OUR FULL SELVES BEFORE GOD

Together we confess with this prayer from the Disciples
of Christ.

Gracious and loving God

**We come to this season of Lent with sorrow & hope.
We want to begin again, to follow your way of life.
Grant us new and honest hearts to change
destructive ways of being.**

**Show us with the healing power of forgiveness so
that we might be transformed into the
fullness of Christ.**

*(Time for prayer offering our confession to God and
finding peace.)*

ASSURANCE

LORD'S PRAYER

SENDING BLESSING

*Brothers and sisters,
since we are surrounded
by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith,
let us rid our lives of every weight that slows us down,
especially the sin that so easily hinders our progress.*

*And let us run with endurance the race that God has
set before us,
knowing that the grace of God,
the love of Jesus Christ,
and the presence of the Holy Spirit
goes with us.*

Amen



Not There

As we drive past Benedict pond, you make me stop
the car.

Listen, you say, *a loon*. But it is only the day

lifting out of its surfaces -- yellow lilies

floating on the water, shade occupying the trees,

the kind of clarity that comes when there is no more

to say and we invent other sounds.

What do we need to hear beyond our stories

to make this afternoon singular among the ones that
go

so un-oracled they become the same

repeated notes? It is always dangerous to move

deeper into that forest of listening, always easy

to get lost in what is not there. The loon's song

sounds like laughter when it means alarm,

but we imagine happiness -- a mistake we can't help
stopping for.

Michelle Gillett

Opening the fullness of our lives

LENTEN MORNING PRAYER

to the fullness of God's love.

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

Stockbridge, MA

stockbridgeucc.org

413-298-3137