

LENT 2025 PURVEYORS OF AWE



Serve & Enrich
Zion United Church
of Christ

The Third Sunday of Lent: Curiosity

Prelude

Chanson Triste

Gathering

with song “Purveyors of Awe”

The 13th century Christian mystic, Meister Eckhart, said this: “Be willing to be a beginner every single morning.”

*Open my eyes that I may see
glimpses of truth thou hast for me.
Place in my hands the wonderful key
that shall unclasp and set me free.*

*Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.
Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

As we continue our worship series this Lent and consider what it means to be a “purveyor of awe,” we focus on one of the most important elements for curating a life of spiritual depth: curiosity. The ancient poets of our faith and the mystics of old wrote prolifically about “seeking” as a spiritual attribute. Faith is not about certainties; instead, it is about taking the stance of humility that we cannot know everything and that the spiritual quest is what it means to be faithful: to be on a quest to discover more and to experience more of the holy in our lives. In a time when so much emphasis is on what we *know*, we remember in our Lent journey that it is what we *don’t know* that is most valuable, for discovery and staying curious is a condition for awe.

*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord
Open the eyes of my heart,
I want to see you
I want to see you*

*Open the eyes of my heart, Lord
Open the eyes of my heart,
I want to see you
I want to see you*

The element of curiosity is linked to wellbeing of all kinds—spiritually, mentally, creatively. Awe-filled experiences are curiosity-boosters. Play, imagination, experimentation, and even simply slowing down to “linger longer” as we engage with the sights and sounds and smells of our ordinary surroundings can add to the amount of awe in our lives. Curiosity resists easy labeling and classifying; rather, it invites us to deeper discovery about life, faith, and each other.

*Silently now I wait for thee,
ready, my God, thy will to see.*

*Open my eyes, illumine me,
Spirit divine!*

****Gathering Song**

Be Thou My Vision, 502

Prayer of Transformation

Our focused time of prayer together this Lenten season will be a bit different. Rather than a more pastoral prayer of joys and concerns, our prayers will be more confessional. We'll seek forgiveness and we'll find grace.

Awe-inspiring God, we come together this day because we need to be reminded to see through the lens of curiosity. Too often we focus on being right instead of being curious, and this closes the door to deeper relationship and understanding. Open us to perceive anew. Inspire us to receive our surroundings with awe. Forgive us when we allow fear to curb our quest for greater understanding. Be with us on this journey as we seek again to marvel at your works.

The Lord's Prayer (unison)—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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Declaration of Grace—The path is ever unfolding before us. We are invited into the seeker's journey at any moment. God forgives us. Jesus embraces us. The Spirit enlivens us. We are whole. With awe, we accept this belovedness. Amen.

Sung Prayer Response

*You are a great and awesome God,
your wonders we proclaim.
You are our Rock, our Strength, our
Shield, from age to age the same.*

*You forgive us all our sins,
you transform us with your love.
In joyful, grateful, hearts we sing
you are a great and awesome God.*

Exploring Together: Where did you see meaning last week? Be on the lookout for curiosity this week.

We Hear God's Word

Debi Hamblet

Proverbs 2:2-5

Incline your ear to Wisdom,
and take her truth into your heart.
For if you yearn for insight
and cry out for understanding,
if you search for it as you would for silver,

and dig for it as you would for buried treasure,
you will understand what [awe] of YHWH is,
and discover how to truly know God.

Luke 15:1-3

¹Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ²And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, “This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.” ³So he told them this parable:

Meditation

Curiosity

Hymn

Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service, 575

We Respond to God’s Word with Our Giving

Invitation—From the abundance that God has given us, let us return a portion to be used for God’s work through this church.+

March Benevolence—One Great Hour of Sharing & Our Church’s Wider Mission

****Doxology**

*Praise God, Creator of us all,
Praise Christ, by whom we hear our call,
Praise Spirit, that which sets us free,
Our awe is yours, the One-in-Three. Amen.*

We Give Thanks—Dear God, take these offerings of treasure, and our lives, to use for your purposes in the world.+ Through this ministry, may these gifts allow us to get to know our neighbors better as we serve your beloved. Amen.

Hymn

They’ll Know We Are Christians, 595

Benediction—Benedictions are blessings. And blessings are all around us. So for this season, instead of bowing your head as I offer a Benediction blessing, I invite you to open your palms in a position of receiving, and hold your head high, imagining a radiant stream of light from above shining upon you and everything else around you. And this week when you need to be reminded to be curious and open to discovery, take this stance again. Open your palms to receive, look around to perceive, and notice one small thing that can light up your heart for a moment.

And now may you go forth remembering Meister Eckhart’s words: “Be willing to be a beginner every single morning.”

Be a purveyor of awe this week. Inspire others with your insatiable desire to know them beyond the surface. Know that the reward of awe is yours as you invite curiosity to live and breathe new life in you.

Be a “purveyor of awe,” curating a life of spiritual depth that inspires others to join you on the journey.

May the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of Awe, the Holy One-in-Three, be with you now and throughout these days, Amen.

Postlude

Madrigale

Service adapted from worshipdesignstudio.com/awe. +UCC Worship Ways.