

# LENT 2025 PURVEYORS OF AWE



*Serve & Enrich*  
Zion United Church  
of Christ

## *The Second Sunday of Lent: Meaning*

### **Prelude**

### *Supplication*

### **Gathering**

*with song “Purveyors of Awe”*

Mystic, author, and Benedictine monk Brother David Steindl-Rast said this: “It is through wholehearted living that meaning flows into our lives... You see the sandpiper and something in you says a wholehearted yes, or you hear the rain and your whole being says yes to it. It’s a special kind of yes; it’s an unconditional yes.”

*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!*

We continue our journey through Lent taking on a special lens, that of a deep and profound sense of awe. This is a spiritual journey in the tradition of ancient biblical poets, of mystics from yesteryear or today. In our scientific day, researchers are confirming what these poets and mystics knew all along—awe is essential for a life of wellbeing. In a time when we are flooded with a culture of competing soundbites, we are slowing down and spending time on a journey that leads to a precious stream of the deeper meanings of ordinary life.

*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 good news is that we humans are “meaning-makers.” Our brains are wired to interpret the ordinary stuff of life in metaphorical ways so that we can make some sense of it all. We long for meaningful lives in which we are more sure about the direction of our lives and about what we are to bring to this world. We yearn for experiences that leave us feeling more fulfilled. When we are “on the lookout” for meaning in our lives, we live at a deeper level, and mere existence turns into purpose.

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

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

**\*\*Gathering Song**

*When Morning Gilds the Skies, 113*

**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 deeper meaning. Too often, we write off the ordinary days of our lives as a drone of time passing through the mass of media messages about what life is supposed to be about. Open us to perceive anew. Inspire us to receive our surroundings with awe. Forgive us when we are distracted by the droll of the scroll rather than lifting our senses to that which is right in front of us. 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**— Know that your life is inherently meaningful because of the One who gave you life. 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 wonder last week? Be on the lookout for meaning this week.

**We Hear God's Word**

*Paula Prange*

**Psalm 19:1-11**

The heavens herald your glory, O God,  
and the skies display your handiwork.  
Day after day they tell their story,  
and night after night they reveal

the depth of their understanding.  
Without speech, without words,  
without even an audible voice,  
    their cry echoes through all the world,  
    and their message reaches the ends of the earth...  
Holding you in awe, YHWH, is purifying; it endures.  
Your decrees are steadfast, and all of them just.  
They are more precious than gold,  
    than the purest of gold,  
    and sweeter than honey,  
    than honey fresh from the comb.  
In them your faithful people find instruction;  
    there is great reward in keeping them.

**Luke 9:35**

<sup>35</sup> Then from the cloud came a voice that said, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”

**Meditation**

*Meaning*

**Hymn**

*Great Is Thy Faithfulness, 72*

**We Respond to God’s Word with Our Giving**

**Invitation**— In gratitude for what we have received, and for the joy of giving and sharing, let us offer our gifts to 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, use our offerings of our resources and of our lives. Bless them, multiply them for your purposes in the world.+ May they bring meaning to our ministry and the lives you touch through this work.  
Amen.

**Hymn**

*Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart, 13*

**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 of that the world is rife with meaning, 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 Brother Steindl-Rast's words: "It is through wholehearted living that meaning flows into our lives."

Be a purveyor of awe this week. Live wholeheartedly and expectantly each day, keeping watch for the deeper meaning surrounding you. Say an unconditional "yes" to the simplest of moments as you invite awe 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**

*In the Cathedral*

*Service adapted from [worshipdesignstudio.com/awe](http://worshipdesignstudio.com/awe). +UCC Worship Ways.*