



March 2025

Yucca Breeze

THE UNITED CHURCHES OF HOT SPRINGS, SOUTH DAKOTA

Pastor's Pulpit

Advent (Christmas) and Easter (Lent) tend to be synonymous with March weather ... "In like a Lion, out Like a Lamb." There is so much build-up to the celebration of Christ's Birth, and in comparison, so little emphasis on Christ's Resurrection. Maybe because Santa offers so much more than the Easter Bunny? I don't know. But there really is something to be learned in this seeming paradox.

You would think that St. Francis' Peace Prayer would fit more into the Christmas season ... if nothing more than to just bring some sanity back to our lives in the midst of the hustle and bustle! But to tell you the truth there are seasons in life that are just as mind-numbing and draining as any Christmas season.

Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen



Let's consider the peace prayer and its teaching for the Easter Season as well. Because let's face it, now is a good time to remind ourselves who and Whose we are and the Great Hope that is ours because of our relationship with the One who is both the Babe of Bethlehem and the Crucified Savior of Calvary.

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace:

We do need to start at the beginning. Only those who know ... not know about, but know ... Jesus can really address Him as *Lord*. For us, we know that we have been bought with a price—His precious blood. We know that He has a perfect plan for our lives. We know that all things do eventually work for the good for those who love Him. We know that in reality all of our lives are lived before Him with an awareness that we really do love Him, and we love Him because He first loved us. We also know that we can and will be used by Him for Him. We are called to be His spokesperson. In fact, as believers, we already “speak” for Him whether or not we actually use words. Can we not like Francis sit back and consider our high calling and look at the myriads of people all around us, and see the frazzled looks as people go by and whisper to Him, *make me an instrument of your peace*. I’m willing. Just guide me and remind me daily who I am and what I promised You I would be about.

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

Not too hard to find *hatred* in our world. Hatred, prejudice, anger, resentment, inequality, class segregation, being a Chief’s fan or a MAGA enthusiast. You know all those things that can just really rub us the wrong way. Then of course when we think about it, issues are one thing, but anger, when elevated gets personal awfully fast. And personal anger oftentimes simply lumps groups together and our shared humanity seemingly gets buried under the hatred we oftentimes don’t even know we are displaying.

I’ve often thought that God made people to speak different languages, to have different skin colors, and to display certain cultural characteristics to simply test us all. But more, to test believers in Him the most. The *other* really does become the *other*. Exclusivity becomes so ingrained that we don’t recognize it. Too often to be the one who sees the anger and to bring the opposite into any situation is well, too dangerous in most people’s minds. You could get hurt that way! What if we really did live up to the promise we made to Christ about being an instrument of His peace? Would we be more willing to try to diffuse situations, correct people, and call things what they are despite what it may cost or the emotion it may give rise to? *Love “sowers”* are few and far between. But then again it depends on your perspective about who and what Christ came to do and be.

where there is injury, pardon;

Ironically, an injury that needs to be pardoned has to be a personal injury. Lots of folks have the “Peter syndrome” who asked Jesus just how many times he actually had to forgive another person if they asked for it ... to which his seven times answer earned him the Lord’s ... seventy times seven. I honestly think that Peter did some quick math and thought to himself ... ok 490 times. I’ll forgive someone 490 but one more time and watch out! .. 491 is my limit! There really is more of a call to be a forgiving person than any other quality we might want to develop. Why? Because that is the essence of the reason why Jesus came to be born, to live, and to eventually be put to death. It was for us. It was meant to be seen as personal.

God took our need to be forgiven so personally that He sent His only Son, not just to teach us *about* forgiveness ... but to *show what it cost*. **Pardon** is a lifestyle that is usually developed in folks who have taken deep stock and probed all if their past actions in light of how much it might have hurt someone, and really how much it hurt themselves. Thus, to be a forgiving person is also part of the promise to be that ***instrument of peace.***

where there is doubt, Faith

I hope you do see a pattern emerging from the text. To have the peace **of** God, you first have to settle the question ... do you have peace **with** God? That peace only comes when you find the Mediator between you and God: the Man, the Savior, the Resurrected One, the Alpha and Omega, the Eternal **Lord**.

Ah yes, there is that word ... **Lord** again. Francis found that only when the Savior issue is settled, can we and do we, have peace with God ... and experience the peace of God. Then and only then, can we be the instruments that He uses to spread His peace to others. In our individual salvation experience, we find our overall mission and life purpose ... to simply be heralds proclaiming the message and the life that truly is encapsulated in one short phrase—***Instrument of your Peace.***

The remainder of the Peace Prayer is below and on the next page. I have provided spaces between each phrase for you to do some soul searching about how Francis's prayer should be not only understood ... but also put into practice. Take your time. Let some thoughts come in like a Lion ... and others just kind of go out like a Lamb.

Blessings, Pastor David

Where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master,

grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console,

to be understood as to understand,

to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.



SEASON OF LENT AT THE UNITED CHURCHES



Lent
Soup
Lunches

WEDNESDAYS
AT THE UNITED CHURCHES
12:00-1:00 PM
in the Fellowship Hall
Soups, Breads, Desserts, Beverage
March 12, March 19, March 26
April 2, April 9

WEDNESDAY EVENING **LENTEN WORSHIP SERVICES**

6:45-7:30 PM / IN THE CHURCH SANCTUARY

"SAVIOR — SERVANT — FRIEND"

March 5 — Ash Wednesday

March 12 — Week 1 — "Healer"

March 19 — Week 2 — "Listener"

March 26 — Week 3 — "Encourager"

April 2 — Week 4 -- "Protector"

April 9 — Week 5 — "Comforter"

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

April 17th

6:45-7:30 pm

In the Church Sanctuary

Watch for more details.

No Spaghetti Supper or Boutiques that evening.

MARCH MISSION EMPHASIS HOT SPRINGS MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION NEEDY FUND

This mission emphasis is separate from our Food Pantry emphasis.

The Hot Springs Ministerial Association supports people in need. This fund assists with emergency housing, rent, utilities, transportation and other emergency needs. They are a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.

Our Loose Change offering for March will go toward this mission and will be gathered on Sunday, March 9th.

If using a giving envelope,
please write **NEEDY FUND** on the line designated for mission.

"The Hot Springs Ministerial Association was formed by local churches. Our mission is to partner as Christian ministries in Fall River County to follow Jesus' command to love God and love others through: Helping the needy (food pantry, assistance vouchers); Serving our community (finding ways of supporting our entire community); Meeting together as ministry leaders for mutual support (monthly meeting, prayer times); Announcing the good news of Jesus Christ (occasional combined worship services, other events)."

For more information see the HSMA Website at:
<https://www.hsministerial.org/>

It's that TIME again!
Time to ...
SPRING FORWARD!
Be sure to turn your
clocks ahead one hour
before you go to bed on
Saturday, March 8th!!



FIFTH SUNDAY MUSIC CELEBRATION

MARCH 30TH — 10:00 AM
CHURCH SANCTUARY



FOLLOWED BY:

Fifth Sunday All Church Potluck

11:15 am — Fellowship Hall

***Bring an entrée or
salad or dessert to share!***



3 Sue Trobee	25 Jim Zwetzig
5 Nolan Humbracht	25 Mary Jane Cape
9 Carla Johnson	27 Thor Swift
12 Sean Cape	27 Kevin Cape
12 Joann Walker	30 Carol Posthumus
13 Delores Hickman	

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

None listed

If your name is not included on the Birthdays and Anniversaries list and you would like it to be added, please contact the church office by email: uc@gwtc.net or call 745-5640.

THIS AND THAT

PLEASE NOTE!!!

The Adult Sunday School class will pause from the Survey of Church History during the Lenten Season and will resume after a special 6-week Lent series. From March 9—April 13, the Sunday School classes will focus on the study: "Savior, Servant, Friend" which is a companion to the Wednesday Lenten worship services.

LENTEN PRAYER TO PLACE GOD FIRST

Father,

It is You who rides on the clouds and holds the reign on thunder and lightening. You, alone, sit over all of creation. Creator of the universe, everything and everyone in it, You have named each star and knit each heart. Your knowledge of every creature in creation is intricate, as only one's creator could possess. Any idol I have set before You in my life, I pray to be revealed, knocked down, and crushed. So many priorities, people, and pursuits threaten to grab my attention and steal my time from You. But it's You, and my time in Your presence, that fills me with exclusive joy! Make me aware of the off ramps I'm tempted to navigate; the shortcuts that detour and derail me from the life and light of Your presence. I sing to, and for You. You are my Author, Father, and Friend. There is no one or nothing I love more than You, God. Search my heart, and set it right (Psalm 139:23). Cleanse me from my hidden sin (Psalm 19:12). Restore and renew me this day, as I pray.

In Jesus' Name, Amen. by Meg Bucher