

Our Journey through the Seasons of Life
“For every season there is an Autumn”

August 8, Monday - Autumn - Season of thanksgiving
August 12, Thursday - Winter - Season of waiting
August 15, Monday - Spring - Season of becoming
August 18, Thursday - Summer & Graduation – Season of growing

*** If you are able, please have a candle at hand to light during the services***

Resources (prayers adapted from):

The Circle of Life by Joyce Rupp & Macrina Wiederkehr, Notre Dame, IN: Sorin Books, 2005.

The Weaver, the Word and Wisdom by Michaela Youngson, (London: SPCK, 2007).

“Here is Water,” by Alex Clare-Young, *Coracle* (magazine of the Iona Community, a charity registered in Scotland), Issue 1/2022, Glasgow, UK (www.iona.org.uk).

A Wee Worship Book, by Wild Goose Worship Group, Glasgow, UK: Wild Goose Pubs., 1999.

COSSO Spiritual Formation
Thursday, August 11

Summer 2-Week session, 2022

**Our Journey through the Seasons of Life
“For every season there is a Winter”**

PRELUDE God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale UMH 122

WELCOME Grace Wallace, COSSO Coordinator

INTRODUCTION Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples, COSSO Director of Spiritual Formation

CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O season of the wintering seed,

ALL: Come. Come and call us to new life.

Breathe on us through these long nights.

Remind us that each seed needs to rest.

Invite us to trust in your mystery.

Come. Come and call us to new life.

O wise season of waiting,
Come. Come and teach us to wait.
Nurture our spiritual longings.
Touch our lives with your love.
Surround us with faith in unknowing.
Come. Come and teach us to wait.

PRAYER

ALL: Spirit of wisdom, God of winter seasons, enter our wandering hearts with patience, that we may learn to wait. Greet us with the promise of new life and strength for this season. Protect us from what leads to despair. Speak to us of blessings to come, of hope that never dies. In the assurance of your love, we pray. Amen.

HYMN In the Bleak Midwinter UMH 221

SCRIPTURE **Mark 1:32-39**

That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases...

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: "Everyone is looking for you!" Jesus replied, "Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come." So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons.

WINTER SPEAKS...

Winter gives assurance that our spiritual seeds are being tended.

- *What does your spirit most long for now?*
- *Who or what will help you through challenging and disheartening times?*

(pause for reflection)

LISTENING TO WINTER

Leader: Winter is raging through the empty branches,

ALL: And I am listening.

I am listening to the roar and quiet of winter.

I am listening to the hidden beauty.

I am listening.

I am listening to the seed waiting in the earth.

I am listening to faith rising out of doubt.

I am listening.

I am listening to the sacred, winter rest.

I am listening in the comfort of long nights of darkness.

I am listening.

HYMN

Breathe on Me Breath of God

UMH 420

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF WINTER

We light this candle in honor of Winter, the season of faith that calls us into long nights of solitude. We honor all within us that invites us to wait for renewal. May all people and creatures of the world find hope in waiting and grow strong in learning ways of peace in Winter's silence.

PRAYER

ALL: O Great Spirit of winter wind, my heart is frozen, and my mind is wandering through empty space. In this wilderness time, awaken the seeds of hope that you secretly planted. I will listen to your songs of peace and hold your love in my heart. O Star of wonder, Star of night, lead me to your holy light. Amen.

HYMN

Star-Child

TFWS 2095

BLESSING OF THE SEASONS

Generous God, bless each of us.
Bless those we love.
Bless our homes, our communities and our world.
Inspire us with your Spirit, through the seasons of our lives,
that we might grow deeper in wisdom,
more passionate in faith, more committed to loving as you love.
In your Spirit we pray, Amen.

POSTLUDE What a Wonderful World