

**A Dedication of the
Remembrance Garden of Union Church**

Moment of Silence

Leader: Today, we dedicate this garden for the comfort of all who mourn, and as a place of peace and refuge for those who seek solace and comfort.

Congregation: We dedicate this garden. For the beauty of Your creative hand revealed in nature. We dedicate this garden in faith that all people will be inspired by love and compassion.

Leader: We dedicate this garden in gratitude for the labors of all who love and serve Your church, in loving remembrance of those who have finished their pilgrimage here on earth

Congregation: We dedicate this garden. We now, the people of Union Church, dedicate this garden in the hope that its beauty will comfort us and be a witness to the Hope that is ours.

Leader: May this garden say, "Come," to those who find their way here. May it be a place where the gift of laughter will rise above our troubles, where treasured stories will be shared to make us wiser, where the pain of loss will be embraced with arms of hope and trust.

Congregation: Amen.

In Gratitude

With gratitude to Rev. Jan Hryniewicz, Karen Barbee, Bob and Carol Sherman, Peter McPheeters, Heather Davis, Dotti Butler and all who shared a vision of making this Remembrance Garden a special place for Union Church. We thank Ed and Jan Hryniewicz, Cris Hudson, Nancy Bancroft and others who have cared for this spot and we thank all who have served on the various committees to bring this to reality.

Prayer for a Garden

God, we need peace – so we come to the garden for quiet.

We need joy – so we come to the garden for our senses —

the green of leaf,

the rich crumbling smell of soil,

and the scent of pine needle,

the sounds of small life, of chipmunk and bird,

that come and go in all places natural,

the rough texture of gravel, the delicacy of a flower petal.

We need to let things go – so we come to the garden for rest,

and we need to let people go,

so we come to the garden to remember them.

We need hope – so we come to the garden to watch things grow

reminding ourselves to be planters

and to enjoy what others have planted.

We need benches where we can begin to let Sabbath in our lives.

We need paths to help us recognize our own journeys. We need a justice commitment to environment, a global commitment that calls us to action, but we also need a small square of real earth to root our speeches and to get our hands dirty.

We need community – so we come to this garden to give and receive a shared blessing (not the result of our personal winter catalogues, spring compost, summer weeding)

to give and receive a shared blessing

from the hand of the Sower of seeds. Amen

Rev. Maren Tirabassi