



Photo by James Gardner

Sunday, June 25, 2023

Culmore
United Methodist Church

Welcome and
Good Morning!

Happy Birthday

Once again it's your birthday. Once again the time is here.
What a loving gift from Jesus, He has given you one more year.
Happy time is your birthday, happy time this year.
What a loving gift from Jesus, He has given you one more year.
Oh happy birthday to you, oh happy birthday to you.
For you have Jesus Christ everyday of your life.
Oh happy birthday to you, oh happy birthday to you.
The Lord bless and keep you.
Happy birthday to you. And to Jesus with you.
God bless you and keep you. Happy birthday to you.





Encountering God

by James Gardner

God is always here, but we sense Him only when we search.
He teaches, but only when we are ready to learn.
He speaks, but only when we listen.

The question is never, “*Where is God?*” It is always,
“*Where are we?*”

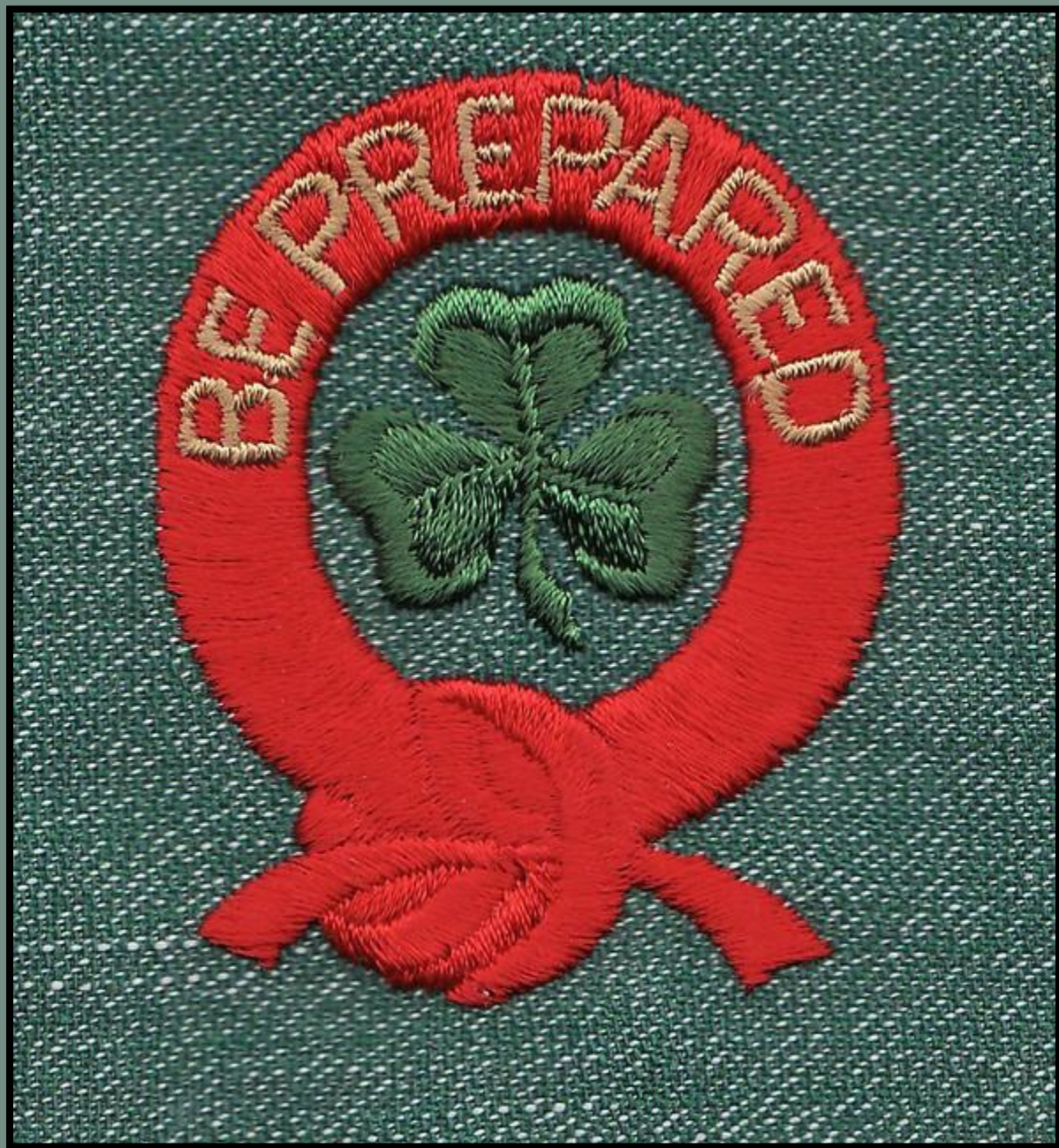
God lives where we let Him in.

— Menachem Mendel



Prepare





Opening Prayer

Loving God,

We know **PREPARATION** matters, but it's so hard to do. Just when we think we're on the right track, something happens that shows us ...yet again... that we've gone off the wrong way.

Lord, help us get prepared, just as John the Baptist did, just as Jesus did, just as so many saints have done before us. Lord, prepare us to be a sanctuary, pure and holy, tried and true. ***AMEN***

Lord, Prepare Me to Be a Sanctuary – TFWs 2164



Lord, prepare me to be a sanctuary

Pure and holy, tried and true.

With thanksgiving, I'll be a living sanctuary for You



Luke 1:11-17 (selected verses)

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him,
standing at the right side of the altar.

When Zechariah saw him, he was startled
and was gripped with fear.

But the angel said, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah.
Your prayer has been heard."



The angel said, "Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord.

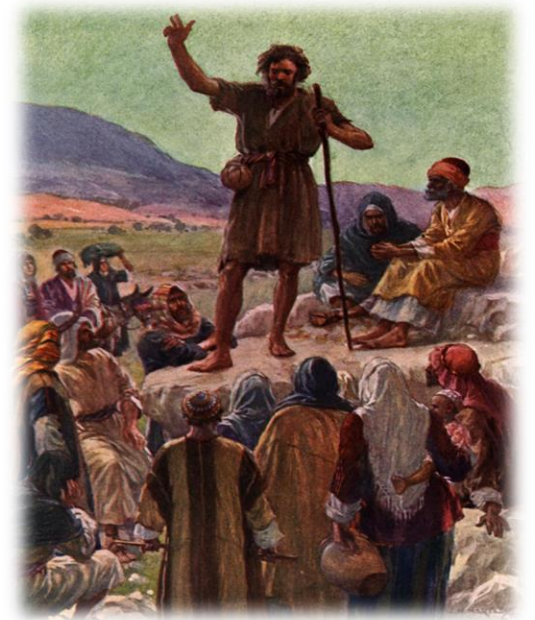
He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born."





He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah...to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.



Luke 1: 76-80: Song of Zechariah

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the
forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our
God...

.

And the child grew and became strong in spirit,
and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared
publicly to Israel.



Matthew 3: 1, 4

In those days John the Baptist came,
preaching in the wilderness of Judea...

John's clothes were made of camel's hair,
and he had a leather belt around his waist.
His food was locusts and wild honey.



He is never to take wine or other fermented drink,
and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before
he is born.



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Psalm 17: 6-8; Psalm 63: 7-8

I call on you, my God, for you will answer me.

Turn your ear to me and hear my prayer.

Show me the wonders of your great love, you who save
by your right hand.

Keep me as the apple of your eye.

Hide me in the shadow of your wings.

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek you...

**I have seen you in the sanctuary
and beheld your power and your glory.**



Photo by James Gardner

For you have been my help.

**In the shadow of your wings
I sing for joy.**

My soul clings to you.

**Hide me under the shadow
of Your wings.**



God is present to us and loves us all the time,
but we are often not quiet and alert enough
to be aware of it.

~Irma Zaleski



Photo by James Gardner



Be STILL
....and know that I am God.
--Psalm 46: 10

STILL



Hide me now under Your wings
Cover me within Your mighty hand.
When the oceans rise and thunders roar
I will soar with You above the storm.
Father, you are King over the flood.
I will be still and know You are God.

Find rest, my soul in Christ alone
Know His power in quietness and trust
When the oceans rise and thunders roar
I will soar with You above the storm.
Father, You are King over the flood.
I will be still and know You are God.



Community Prayer

LORD Jesus,

We see in the life story of John the Baptist how our gracious Father carefully prepares His children for His service. This is something He always does for each of us.

Then what is our role to be? Help us see You at work in our lives, how You call us, and the ways You prepare us. You want us to offer ourselves freely to Your service.

Help us to listen intently and study Your Word thoroughly and regularly for enlightenment about what You want us to do. Thank You for all the ways You give meaning to our lives, LORD! ***Amen***

Offering and Doxology

UM Hymnal 95



We give thanks for this wonderful,
generous community of faith.

Benediction



Painting by Kim DeGroat