

## *In Nature at LCOC*

Dear LCOC Family Member ~

If you've never spent time in any of the outside sanctuaries surrounding our church, you are missing an opportunity to feel God's awesome peace and His presence. Join me as I stroll through nature at LCOC during the latter part of April. The first full month of spring has been somewhat of a roller coaster and as we take our walk today, it is starting to sprinkle. We offer thanks for the rain as we know that April Showers bring May Flowers!

- We start our exploration by the patio where we see Bleeding Heart and Vinca Major in full bloom. In that same garden, lots of plants are emerging and looking fresh and beautiful.
- Rounding the corner to the main entrance to the Inner Sanctuary, we see cute little Grape Hyacinths alongside white Alyssum – partnering to make passersby smile. The pansies look bright and cheerful, appreciating the warmth of the sun, yet happiest in cooler temperatures.
- The Japanese Maples have put on their crimson foliage and appear ready for the Spring Gala.
- What a beautiful sight to behold as we pass the beds along the sidewalk. The Daffodils and Hyacinths were in their glory earlier, and have stepped aside for the Tulips and Dwarf Irises to put on a spectacular show. They seem to say "stop by and spend time with me".
- Across the driveway, we encounter more Tulips and other spring bloomers under the window of "Jesus and the Children" and in the Children's Garden. In the garden nearby, the white Dogwoods stand in line representing the three trees that took center stage on Good Friday.
- But wait, as we near the Memorial Garden, we see bright Pink tulips and Giant Snowdrops (Leucojum). They are surrounded by Summer flowers rising up to keep them company.
- A few steps further, we come across lots of birds flitting to and from the feeder. We now know that spring is officially here as the Juncos (snowbirds) have moved on to cooler areas. We will look forward to their return in early winter.
- As we near the end of our walk, we are excited to see Ferns "Fiddleheads" emerging from one of the shade gardens. Equally awesome to experience are the Virginia Bluebells, May Apples and other beauties in the Meditation Garden.
- We stop by to check the progress in the Bluebird Box and discover one BB egg!
- Pink Azaleas greet us as we head back toward the patio area. We pause to enjoy the last few blossoms from the cherry trees as we see Mr. Grey Squirrel scurrying toward the bird feeder. We're sure that he got a signal from one of his cousins that the sunflower seed has just been replenished.

You are encouraged to take a self-guided tour through our wonderful landscape here at LCOC. But be ready – you are going to experience God's peace and presence – so enjoy this special time with our Creator! Next month we look forward to seeing the Irises in full bloom and anticipate what else is happening in nature at LCOC.

*"If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere".*

**Vincent van Gogh**