

On our back lot (*by the preschool playground*) is a single, tall Star Pine. Focus on it alone...how lonely and stark it is. From a distance, walk around it. From some places, it looks straight while from another place it has grown at a slant. When are we straight and tall? When have we gone off in the wrong direction?

Then take a wider view...rather than all alone, nearby is a row of trees, all of different varieties. Look across the canyon to see many trees in the community. Consider how we can shut out all other people when our focus is only on ourselves. But when our vision is expanded, we discover others near and far. How blessed we are to be created as individuals with strength but also that we find ourselves in community with family, friends, co-workers, and strangers.

"Serra Mesa Community Garden and Orchard", next to the Preschool play yard, is a cooperative venture of Gethsemane, Mission Village Christian Fellowship, and gardeners from the Serra Mesa community. From the beds and trees, vegetables and fruits are grown for the Serra Mesa Food Pantry and for individual families. Beyond that is Shawn Canyon, a dedicated space that provides a mildly strenuous hike in God's wilderness even in the midst of the city. How magnificent is God's creation and our invitation to be good stewards.

"Prayer Walk"

in the 'Garden of Gethsemane'

A self-directed experience of discovery and reflection. We invite anyone who takes this Prayer Walk to give us insight into additional places for reflection on our grounds.

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"Prayer Walk"

At a place called "Gethsemane", one might expect that our grounds would be a full-of-prayer place as we remember Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Let us go on a walk...

(As you begin, consider what you bring to this walk today? What is happening in your life? Are you deeply resting in God's amazing grace or is God silent or are you moving between these two? We have left space in this folder for you to record thoughts, prayers, or commitments.)

On our front lot, we have stones laid out in what looks like a maze ...it is not a maze but a labyrinth...you will not get lost. Simply enter and follow the path to the center and then follow the same path back to where you entered. There is no "right" way to make the journey...use the time for prayer or meditation, for pondering a complexity in your life, or for counting joys and thanksgivings.

Under the cross on the outside wall of the Chapel we have our "Sin and Grace" Garden of plants with beautiful blooms and potentially dangerous sharp edges. But look closely...some of the thorny plants have blooms and the beautiful roses have thorns...just as in "life", joy may come in sorrow and order surprises us in the midst of chaos. Is your life "mixed?"

There are two benches in the front lot for those who want to sit and linger in "the Garden of Gethsemane". Our trees and plants can be enjoyed for their own beauty or lead you to these (or other) reflections...

...the three palms in the corner are different varieties to invite us to reflection the mystery of the Holy Triune God who is in our midst...

...the two Yucca trees outside the fence invite us to ponder the mystery of the humanity and divinity of Jesus in whom God shares our life and shapes the call to faith...

...the olive trees in the garden remind us that the Garden of Gethsemane was on the Mt. of Olives where Jesus entered Jerusalem to the acclaim of the crowd, "Hosanna" ("save us").

...for Jesus, the garden of Gethsemane on the Mt. of Olives was a place of intense prayer, sorrow at the limitations of his sleepy disciples, and a place of submission to God ("not my will but your will be done"). Unlike at his Baptism or Transfiguration, Jesus had no vision nor did he hear the voice of God. After an intense time of prayer, he simply needed to get up and face the next experience which for him was arrest, trial, and crucifixion.