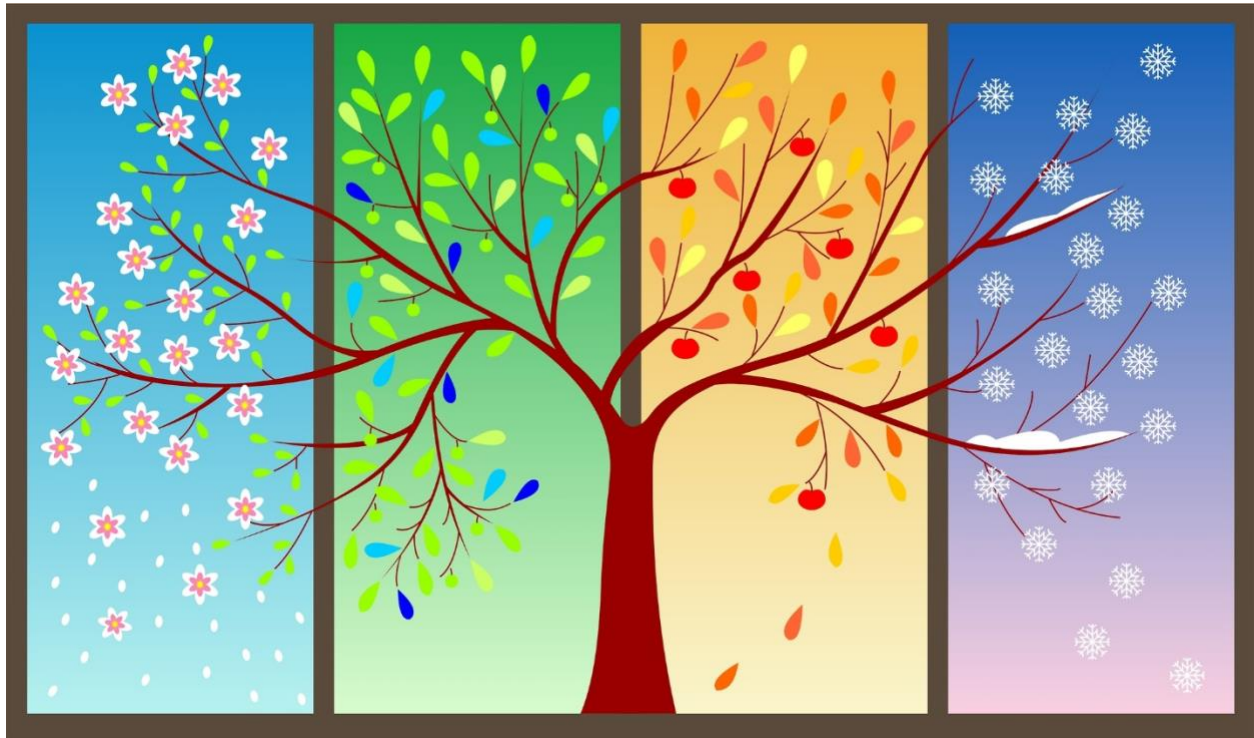


# Changing Seasons...



## Changing Times

### Leader Guide

Compiled & Written by Rev. Kimberly Weir

## Script

1. Intro - Tell us your name and then what your favorite season is and why. Maybe share a specific memory from that season.
2. Explanation – Each year we set aside a time like this before the holidays because we know that while the holidays are a joyful time (some people's favorite), at the same time, the holidays can be difficult.

So today we are going to look at 1) what we think and feel about change, 2) how the different seasons of the year impact our emotional and spiritual states. 3) We are going to look also at the changes we have all been through and how that has impacted us...especially during the holidays. And 4) we are going to look at some ways to cope with and process change in a healthy way.

3. So let's think a little about change. Did you notice any of the music as we entered? Each song had to do with change. Let's read the handout "**Quotes about Change**." We will go around the room and read them aloud. Be thinking of which ones you agree with and which ones you don't. When we are done we will take our favorites (or least favorites) and talk about them.
4. Now let's look at some interesting information about the **change of seasons**. (Handout)
5. Lets also add what we have all been through with the changes in our world. Let's name one or two things that have changed for us.
6. Now let's wrap up with ways to cope. (handout Managing Stress as the Seasons Change)
7. Name your favorite holiday tradition or song.
8. What's one thing during the holidays you can do to help you cope with change?
9. What is one hope you have for yourself for the New Year?

## Quotes about Change

1. "I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change. I am changing the things I cannot accept." — Angela Y. Davis
2. "Words are where most change begins." — Brandon Sanderson
3. "In any given moment we have two options: to step forward into growth or step back into safety." — Abraham Maslow
4. "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." — Nelson Mandela
5. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead
6. "Only I can change my life. No one can do it for me." — Carol Burnett
7. "You will find that it is necessary to let things go; simply for the reason that they are heavy." — C. Joybell C.
8. "We must be willing to let go of the life we planned so as to have the life that is waiting for us." — Joseph Campbell
9. "Grief does not change you, Hazel. It reveals you." — John Green, "The Fault in Our Stars"
10. "Time may change me, but I can't trace time." — David Bowie, "Changes"
11. "Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change." — Wayne W. Dyer
12. "It's not about standing still and becoming safe. If anybody wants to keep creating they have to be about change." — Miles Davis
13. "Some of us think holding on makes us strong but sometimes it is letting go" — Hermann Hesse
14. "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." — James Baldwin
15. "Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change." — Stephen Hawking
16. "Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything." — George Bernard Shaw
17. "Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced." — James Baldwin
18. "Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change." — Stephen Hawking
19. "Those who cannot change their minds cannot change anything." — George Bernard Shaw
20. "Growth is painful. Change is painful. But nothing is as painful as staying stuck somewhere you don't belong." — Mandy Hale

## SCRIPT – Change of Seasons

Skin changes - Cooler weather affects us physically, specifically our skin. “This means that every seasonal shift and change in weather acts like a shock to the system, disrupting the typical chemical balance of our skin and causing dryness and sometimes severe acne.” This happens less in Florida with our warmer weather and humidity, but it can still be an issue. With the yo-yo weather where it is cold one day and warm the next, or cold in the morning and warm in the afternoon, our physical bodies can be even more confused and stressed.

Suggestions: Check the weather before heading to bed (thermostat) and then before heading outside. Try to be prepared for those changes. Use moisturizing products (chapstick and lotion) to keep skin from drying out.

Weight gain – Not only is there more food around due to the celebrations happening during fall and winter months, but “during the seasonal change between late summer and early fall, our bodies increase their insulin resistance. This causes our livers to increase fat production so that we can store fat in our tissues and be better prepared for the winter.”

Suggestions: Exercise and try to moderate what and how much you are eating. Get out there and walk! Schedule time in the exercise room to use the bike, treadmill, or pool. Be sure to eat those veges and cut back on the carbs.

Sleep increase - You may feel sleepier during the day due to an increased release in melatonin. A study found in the Journal of Psychosomatic Research shows that people on average sleep three more hours a day in the month of October than any other month.

Suggestions: Pay attention to how much sleep you are getting. Recognize you may need more rest in these winter months, but try not to overdo it.

Emotional changes –Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is depression that is based on the seasons and is more common in winter months. This is often related to the fact there is less light during day as the days get “shorter.” We also “fall back” with daylight savings time. This increased darkness during our waking hours can affect our mood and appetite. The other reasons SAD is more often found in winter months is due to the stress of obligations (including family dynamics during gatherings) and the often difficult emotions of the holidays (due to grief and loss).

Suggestions: Get outside and soak in some light. There are light boxes and sun lamps you can get for this purpose as well. Think ahead about what events and circumstances might trigger anger or grief and have a plan.

Bottom Line: Take care of your body. See your doctor if needed. Medication may help. Get your flu and pneumonia vaccines.

[How Do Bodies Respond To Seasonal Changes? | Premier Medical Group \(premiermedicalhv.com\)](https://www.premiermedicalhv.com/How-Do-Bodies-Respond-To-Seasonal-Changes/)

[5 Ways the Change of Seasons Might Affect Your Mental Health | Psychology Today](https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/articles/2019/10/5-Ways-the-Change-of-Seasons-Might-Affect-Your-Mental-Health)

Things in our world are constantly changing. What are some of the changes you have been dealing with recently?

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What changes in your emotions do you usually feel this time of year? (think of at least one good thing and one bad thing) Is this year different in any way?

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What are some good things you are looking forward to?

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From “5 Ways the Change of Seasons Might Affect Your Mental Health”  
Psychology Today

Managing [Stress](#) as the Season Changes

Stress is not an inevitability of seasonal changes. It's a product of the way many of us choose to live. This means it's changeable. For people overwhelmed by seasonal affective disorder, painful stress, or family conflict, therapy can be a powerful ally. Medication may also help, particularly when minor stress turns into major depression. Some other strategies that can help you make it through:

- Making a list of priorities for the season. Don't give into pressure. Do the things you really enjoy and forget about the rest.
- Getting access to plenty of natural light by spending some time outside or sitting under a sun lamp.
- Maintaining a regular schedule, even when cold temperatures tempt you to sleep in.
- Starting your own family traditions, particularly if you have a conflict with your family of origin.
- Taking care of your body. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, at least five days per week. Eat plenty of healthy foods and get enough sleep.

Even if every seasonal change in years past has been difficult for you, this one can be better. Take time to protect your mental health and watch the transition to autumn and winter become your favorite time of year.

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/when-your-adult-child-breaks-your-heart/201710/5-ways-the-change-seasons-might-affect-your?msockid=2cae1e43767469671e690edd774f68be>

I'd like to know what you like most about the holidays.

Do you have a favorite tradition or Christmas song?

What is one thing you can do during the holidays to cope with change?

Closing: What is one hope you have for the world around you and for yourself for the new year?  
(Feel free to write and/or draw your hope!)

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