



seeking:

How do we
begin again?



"To Be A Blessing" by Hannah Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

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Memorial Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

2nd Sunday in Lent

March 5, 2023

SEEKING: How do we begin again?

GATHERING AROUND THE WORD

*God of grace and mercy,
Nicodemus came to Jesus at night,
seeking to know your truth.
We come in the day, still seeking.
Bring to light our questions our wondering,
and our hunger for you.
Speak to us,
that your Spirit may breathe through us today.
Amen.*

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

Prelude on Aberystwyth

Gerald Near

BRINGING THE LIGHT

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Nick Lindley

What is it like to begin again?

It is like flowers in the spring that push through frozen ground.

It is like babies learning to walk, one clumsy step at a time.

It is like Nicodemus in the night, asking Jesus for guidance.

It is like a Sunday morning, starting our week anew.

May we find God in our seeking.

May we learn as we go.

May we be brave enough to begin again.

Let us worship the God of new beginnings. Amen.

*SONG OF PRAISE

Begin Again

Bulletin p. 7

*CONFESSION AND PARDON

God of new life, you call us into unknown places,

and we bury our heads in the sand.

You promise all the stars in the sky,

and we doubt it can be true.

You speak of new life in the Spirit,

and we tell ourselves we've missed our chance.

Over and over and over again, you invite us closer to you.

Show us the way. Forgive our mistakes.

Give us the courage to begin again with you. Amen.

(Time of silent reflection)

Join me in saying:

We belong to God. We are held in God's love. We are made new.

Amen.

*THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

*SONG OF RESPONSE Glory to God Hymnal, No. 582

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen

World with-out end, with-out end. Amen (x3)
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen

TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING Melissa Gill

SCRIPTURE READING Page No. 8
Genesis 12:1-4a

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE PSALM Psalm 121 (a paraphrase)

I look up at these mountains I must cross.
Who will help me through?
**Our help comes from God,
who made these mountains, and knows them.**

God will not let your foot slip,
but will be watchful every step.
**The One who holds all of us close
will not lose interest or get distracted.**

The Holy One holds you close,
and is your shade in the hot sun.
**Neither the brutal heat nor the biting cold
will hurt us in the arms of the Beloved.**

The Loving One will guard you from all evil,
and will keep your life.
**God will hold in loving hands
our traveling and our resting,
each moment, now and always.**

ANTHEM Come to the Water

SCRIPTURE READING Page No. 863
John 3:1-17

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE How Do We Begin Again? Tracy L. Evans

*SONG OF FAITH Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters Hymnal, p. 490

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH
**We believe in a God who meets us in the shadows,
who welcomes our questions,
who invites us to begin again.
We believe that Jesus showed us a new way,**

**a deeper faith,
a more compassionate existence.
We believe that all of our beginnings should return us to this foundation,
and that no matter how many times we lose our way,
God always welcomes us home. Amen.**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

THE OFFERING
OFFERTORY

*DOXOLOGY God of All Living Hymnal, No. 713 vs 4
God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,
Teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,
Using us gently and making us one.

*DEDICATION PRAYER

SEALING THE WORD—CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT THANKSGIVING AND LORDS' PRAYER Hymnal, page 35
LORD'S PRAYER

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.
It is right to give God thanks and praise.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD
The gifts of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE
COMMUNION MUSIC

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING SONG Now There is No Male or Female Hymnal, No. 493

*TAKING LIGHT INTO THE WORLD

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

*POSTLUDE Wen nur den lieben Gott Arr. by John Behnke

*Please rise in body or spirit.

We invite anyone who wishes to consider membership in this church to contact the pastor or a member of the session. You may also indicate interest in membership by checking the appropriate column in the ritual of friendship booklet. Membership in this church is a step made by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or transfer of church letter.

Lectionary Readings for March 12: Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

The Food & Shelter items of the month for March **are crackers and peanut butter. Please place your donations in the box by the church information table. Hearing-assistance devices and large print hymnals are available from the head usher.**

Hearing-assistance devices and **large print hymnals** are available from the head usher.

THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT

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to be a blessing

by Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Genesis 12:1-4a

Paper lace and pencil over oil paint on paper

"I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing." —Genesis 12:2 (NRSV)

As I began to study this text, the motion we are in as a human species came to mind. God calls Abram. She tasks him with relocating; she's not really explicit as to why. Contemporary theologian Norman Wirzba speaks of our current ability to rely on global positioning systems, or GPS, to travel without needing to know where we are.⁴ What do people carry when they are forced to begin again? Medicine and technology, that's what people are carrying across borders right now as they sustain and navigate life through the journey ahead.

How did Abram begin again? He was wealthy. He was called, not forced. He traveled with his entourage. In this image, the globe subtly depicts the route that Abram and his wives, his children, his servants, and his animals took. The lines of countries are suggested as they ripple outward. Tools for navigation used to read the stars and the shadows are echoed below the globe. Stars in the corners represent the twelve tribes of Israel.

How do we begin again? Through the paper lace, the book of Genesis overlays a canvas. The text is hard to read, clouded by oil paint. How do we begin again? Listen through the haze, through the clouded reality, for God's call. God is calling as we begin again.

"In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." —Genesis 12:3 (NRSV)

Dear God, it doesn't feel like much of a blessing these days. We carry on in this journey, beginning yet again. We are called, like Abram—to navigate, to persevere, to be a blessing.

—Hannah Garrity

begin again

DIX ("For the Beauty of the Earth")

Text: Anna Strickland (2022)

Music: Conrad Kocher (1838)

In the deep night of the soul Rich in ques-tions, yearn-ing for
In the sun - set of our life Af - ter years of joy and strife
Ev - ery mo - ment, ev - ery hour Spir - it gifts us with the power

Life that mat-ters far be-yond Pick - et fen - ces and front lawns
As we pon - der le - ga - cy Won - der - ing what we will leave
To be - gin our life a - new What then will we choose to do?

When we tire of life mun-dane We can still be - gin a - gain
When the lights are grow - ing dim We can still be - gin a - gain
Close a chap - ter, lift the pen To once more be - gin a - gain

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Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters

Capo 3: (D) (Bm) (G)
F Dm B \flat

1 Wash, O God, your sons and daugh-ters, new - born crea - tures
2 Ev - ery day we need your nur - ture; by your milk may
3 O how deep your ho - ly wis - dom! Un - i - mag - ined,

(D) (Bm)
F Dm

of your womb. Num - ber them a - mong your peo - ple, raised like
we be fed. Let us join your feast, par - tak - ing cup of
all your ways! To your name be glo - ry, hon - or! With our

(G) (D) (A)
B \flat F C

Christ from death and tomb. Weave them gar - ments bright and
bless - ing, liv - ing bread. God, re - new us; guide our
lives we wor - ship, praise! We your peo - ple stand be -

(Bm) (F \sharp m) (Bm) (G) (A) (D)
Dm Am Dm B \flat C F

spark - ling; com - pass them with love and light. Fill, a - noint them;
foot - steps, free from sin and all its snares, one with Christ in
fore you, wa - ter - washed and Spir - it - born. By your grace, our

(Bm) (G) (D)
Dm B \flat F

send your Spir - it, ho - ly dove and heart's de - light.
liv - ing, dy - ing, by your Spir - it, chil - dren, heirs.
lives we of - fer. Re - cre - ate us; God, trans - form!

493 Now There Is No Male or Female



1 Now there is no male or fe-male; now there is no free or slave;
2 Cru - ci - fied with Christ the Sav-ior, bap-tized in his ho - ly death,
3 Death has no do - min-ion o'er him, so for us death holds no power;



now there is no Jew or Gen-tile in the earth Christ died to save.
and as Christ was raised to glo - ry we have new life on this earth.
life's own wa-ters now have marked us, born to God this ver - y hour.



Christ has set us free for free-dom: we no more sing slav-ery's creed;
Power of wa-ter and God's nam-ing, turn - ing us from dark to light,
From this mo-moment and for - ev - er dead to sin, a - live in Christ,



old sub - mis-sions can - not claim us; Christ has set us free in - deed.
joins us to those who, be - fore us, ran the race and fought the fight.
born of wa - ter and the Spir-it, now in Christ we find our life.

