

SJUMC Online Worship Guide

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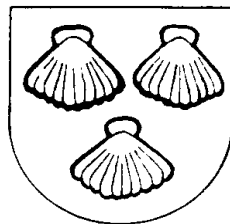
March 5, 2023

9:30 am

“How do we begin again?”

ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICE

Administrative Assistant: Kenna Haj | Bell Choir Director: Laural Clark
Director of Music Ministry: Antuan Hairston | Organist: Clarice Snyder
Pastor: Rev. Patricia Abell



Saint James United Methodist Church

Marriottsville, MD

WE GATHER

Prelude "I call to Thee, Lord Jesus Christ" J. S. Bach *Offered by Clarice Snyder*
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Welcome *Rev. Patricia Abell*

Introit "What Wondrous Love Is This?" *UMH 292*

1. What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
what wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul, for my soul,
to bear the dreadful curse for my soul.
2. What wondrous love is this, O my soul, O my soul,
what wondrous love is this, O my soul!
What wondrous love is this, that caused the lord of life
to lay aside his crown for my soul, for my soul,
to lay aside his crown for my soul.
3. To God and to the Lamb, I will sing, I will sing,
to God and to the Lamb, I will sing.
To God and to the Lamb who is the great I AM,
while millions join the theme, I will sing, I will sing,
while millions join the theme I will sing.
4. And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
and when from death I'm free, I'll sing on.
And when from death I'm free I'll sing and joyful be,
and through eternity I'll sing on, I'll sing on,
and through eternity I'll sing on.

Music: USA folk hymn; harm. by Paul J. Christiansen, 1955 (MH harm by Carlton R. Young)
Harm. © 1955, renewed 1983 Augsburg Publishing House

Call to Worship *Barbara Cook*

ONE: What is it like to begin again?

ALL: 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.

Call to Confession *Barbara Cook*

Prayer of Confession

Barbara Cook

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

ALL: 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.

Words of Forgiveness

Barbara Cook

ONE: Family of faith, hear and believe this good news:

There is a grace to God's love that is bigger than we can imagine.

No matter what we did or didn't do yesterday, we have been forgiven.

Today, the slate is wiped clean. Today, we are made new.

Join me in saying:

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

Passing the Peace : The Peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

Opening Hymn

"Begin Again" DIX ("For the Beauty of the Earth")

1. In the deep night of the soul
Rich in questions, yearning for
Life that matters far beyond
Picket fences and front lawns
When we tire of life mundane
We can still begin again

2. In the sunset of our life
After years of joy and strife
As we ponder legacy
Wondering what we will leave
When the lights are growing dim
We can still begin again

3. Every morning, every hour
Spirit gifts us with the power
To begin our life anew
What then will we choose to do?
Close a chapter, lift the pen
To once more begin again

Text: Anna Strickland (2022) | Music: Conrad Kocher (1838)
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Time for Children

Edie Candee

Scripture

Genesis 12:1-4a (CEB)

Barbara Cook

The LORD said to Abram, "Leave your land, your family, and your father's household for the land that I will show you. ² I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and you will be a blessing.

³ I will bless those who bless you,
those who curse you I will curse;
all the families of the earth
will be blessed because of you.”^[a]

⁴ Abram left just as the LORD told him, and Lot went with him.

John 3:1-17 (CEB)

Barbara Cook

1 There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a Jewish leader.

2 He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one could do these miraculous signs that you do unless God is with him."

3 Jesus answered, "I assure you, unless someone is born anew, it's not possible to see God's kingdom."

4 Nicodemus asked, "How is it possible for an adult to be born? It's impossible to enter the mother's womb for a second time and be born, isn't it?"

5 Jesus answered, "I assure you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, it's not possible to enter God's kingdom.

6 Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 Don't be surprised that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.'

8 God's Spirit blows wherever it wishes. You hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It's the same with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

9 Nicodemus said, "How are these things possible?"

10 "Jesus answered, "You are a teacher of Israel and you don't know these things?"

11 I assure you that we speak about what we know and testify about what we have seen, but you don't receive our testimony.

12 If I have told you about earthly things and you don't believe, how will you believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

13 No one has gone up to heaven except the one who came down from heaven, the Human One.

14 Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so must the Human One be lifted up

15 so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

16 God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won't perish but will have eternal life.

17 God didn't send his Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

Anthem

“Lenten Meditation” arr. by Jay Althouse

Chancel Choir

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Message

SEEKING: How do we begin again?

Rev. Patricia Abell

Response to the Word – Affirmation of Faith

Rev. Patricia Abell

**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.**

Lord's Prayer

*Doxology

"Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow"

UMH 95

Offering Prayer

Holy Communion

*Closing Hymn

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

UMH 526

1. What a friend we have in Jesus
 All our sins and griefs to bear
 What a privilege to carry
 Everything to God in prayer
 O what peace we often forfeit
 O what needless pain we bear
 All because we do not carry
 Everything to God in prayer

2. Have we trials and temptations
 Is there trouble anywhere
 We should never be discouraged
 Take it to the Lord in prayer
 Can we find a friend so faithful
 Who will all our sorrows share
 Jesus knows our every weakness
 Take it to the Lord in prayer

3. Are we weak and heavy laden
 Cumbered with a load of care
 Precious Savior still our refuge
 Take it to the Lord in prayer
 Do thy friends despise forsake thee
 Take it to the Lord in prayer
 In His arms He'll take and shield thee
 Thou wilt find a solace there

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*Benediction

Postlude

"God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) John Stainer arr. by Robert W. Thygerson

Offered by Clarice Snyder

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Questions for Reflection

Consider a time when you felt uncertain. Can you see how God was at work in your life at that time? What from Abraham and Sarai's story, or from Nicodemus's story, is a help to you as you look for evidence of God's presence in your own life?

Household Prayer: Morning

Loving God, you have given me the gift of this new day, and you send me out to live it fully and well. Help me to be attentive to your direction and leading. If you should call me to go in some direction, give me courage to try this new thing. If you present me with a mysterious truth or grace, help me to understand, or to seek understanding, with a sense of wonder and faith. Whatever this day may hold, I trust that you will keep me in all my comings and goings. In your Son's name, I pray. Amen.

Household Prayer: Evening

Gracious God, as the evening comes and the light fades, I look for you even in the shadows. Your love and protection stay with me through the night hours, and I rest in your promises. For the day as it has been, I give you thanks. For the gift of rest, I offer a hymn of praise. You love me and the whole world so greatly that you offer us salvation. After a night of rest, bring me into the light of a new day. In gratitude, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

RESOURCES:

Feasting on the Word Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1 © 2012 Westminster John Knox Press. Used with permission.

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