

Prelude & Welcome

Anthem

"God So Loved the World," arr. Levitt

Call to Worship

One: What is it like to begin again?

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

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

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

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

One: May we find God in our seeking.

ALL: May we learn as we go. May we be brave enough to begin again.

Gathering Hymn

"Weary Seekers"

(tune: 720 Jesus Calls Us)

4. We are seekers, drawn together, flawed but touched by spirit fire.
We will seek God with one another, seek to love, seek God's desire.
5. Seekers, hear God's invitation, for this purpose we are called.
Act with justice and compassion, we proclaim God's love for all!

Invitation to Reconciliation

Prayer of Reconciliation

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.

-Quiet Reflection-

Assurance of Grace

Share the good news with one another:

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

Our Response to Grace #447

"We Are Forgiven"

Time for Wonder *children are invited forward*

We Bless Each Other *Kids: God be with you as you stay. Adults: God be with you as you go.*

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Readings

Genesis 12:1-4a; John 3:1-17

Sermon

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 our beginnings return us to this foundation, and that no matter how many times we lose our way, God always welcomes us home. Amen.

March 5, 2023
Lent 2

Service of Worship
SEEKING: How Do We Begin Again?

First Presbyterian Church
Cedar Falls

Response to the Word Proclaimed

“Begin Again”

tune: DIX

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 moment, 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

Offering Invitation

Gifts may also be given online at firstprescf.org

Sung Dedication #710

“We Lift Our Voices”

COMMUNION

Invitation to the Table

The Great Thanksgiving

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.** *[celebrant continues]*

Sharing the Meal

One: The bread of heaven. **ALL: We are one in the bread we share.**

One: The cup of salvation. **ALL: We are one in the cup we share.**

Prayer

Our Life Together

Sending Hymn

“For God So Loved the World”¹

tune: (363 Rejoice, the Lord is King)

1. For God so loved the world, God gave God’s only son,
that through him life is found and our salvation won.
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good! May all rejoice!
2. For Christ did not descend upon us to condemn,
but that we might be saved and live to follow him.
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good! May all rejoice!
3. Let’s celebrate the news that God has conquered sin,
that evil forces all around no more may win.
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good! May all rejoice!
4. All praise to God above for we are God’s design.
Christ wins the fight; let’s share the light; may justice shine!
With gladsome voice, give thanks to God for God is good! May all rejoice!

Blessing and Charge

Postlude

Go in peace and boldness to love and serve the Lord!

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