**PREPARATION FOR THE WORD**

(**\*** those who are able are invited to stand)

**PRELUDE**

**GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE** The Lord be with you! **And also with you!**

(Greetings and Announcements)

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Leader: Whenever we light this candle we proclaim:

**People: Christ is the Light of the world and the center of our lives.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: What is it like to begin again?

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

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

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

Leader: It is like a Sunday morning, starting our week anew. So may we find God in our seeking.

**People: May we learn as we go.**

Leader: May we be brave enough to begin again.

**People: Let us worship the God of new beginnings.**

**\* HYMN** *O God, Who Gives Us Life*  GTG #53

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

Leader: One of the things I love about the prayer of confession is it offers us a new beginning. In the prayer of confession, we lay our cards on the table. We speak honestly with God about who we are and who we long to be. And in response, God wraps us in grace and lets us begin again. So together, with God’s grace, let us wipe the slate clean. Together, with God’s grace, let us pray the prayer of confession:

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

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

**People: And we bury our heads in the sand.**

Leader: You promise all the stars in the sky,

**People: And we doubt it can be true.**

Leader: You speak of new life in the Spirit,

**People: And we tell ourselves we’ve missed our chance.**

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

**People: Show us the way. Forgive our mistakes. Give us the courage to begin again with you. Amen.**

**SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

**RESPONSE** *O Lord, Hear My Prayer* Tune #471 (vs. 1, sing twice)

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer. O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and listen to me.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Leader: 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 anew. Join me in saying:

**All: We belong to God. We are held in God’s love. We are made new. Amen.**

**\* MUSICAL RESPONSE OF PRAISE** *Come, Thou Almighty King* Tune #2 (vs. 4)

 To thee, great One in Three, eternal praises be, hence evermore!

 Thy sovereign majesty may we in glory see, and to eternity love and adore.

**\* THE PEACE** The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

**\*** **RESPONSE** *Here I Am, Lord*

 Here I am, Lord, Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

 I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

**THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Holy God, we come to you today with our biggest questions: Who are we called to be? What do you need from us? Where are you in our midst? How can we follow you more closely? As we read your Word today, we ask that you weave answers into the text. Speak to us through these ancient stories that we might find what we are seeking in you. With gratitude and open hearts, we pray, Amen.

**FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON** *Genesis 12:1-4a*OT Page 9

**SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON** *John 3:1-17*NT page 88

**SERMON** *How Do We Begin Again?*Rev. Becca Price

**THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

**\* HYMN** *Begin Again* (see insert)

**THE COMMUNION OF GOD’S PEOPLE**  (see insert)

**OFFERTORY** *Be Still* by Lewis

**\*** SONG OF THANKS *Lord of All Good*  Tune #711 (vs. 1)

Lord of all good, our gifts we bring to you; use them your holy purpose to fulfill,

Tokens of love and pledges brought anew, that our whole life is offered to your will.

**\*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**\* HYMN** *Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness* GTG #291 (vs. 1 & 4)

**\* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Leader: As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking.

**People: We will seek out the hungry, the weary, the good in every person we pass.**

Leader: Go to seek out the hopeful, the faithful, the God in each of us.

**People: We shall seek and wonder.**

Leader: And so, may we find what we are looking for. In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, let us go in peace. Amen.

**\* UNISON AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**

**Springfield Presbyterian Church (USA)**

7300 Spout Hill Road, Sykesville, MD 21784 410-795-6152



 **March 5, 2023 - 10:30 am**

**WELCOME VISITORS!**

We're glad you are here! Cards at the ends of each pew are for you to fill out and drop in the Offering Plate. Please let us know you are visiting, and join us for refreshments and fellowship following the service. The Sanctuary has an induction loop system to assist the hearing impaired. The system will also work on the telephone setting of hearing aids. A head set is available upon request.

Springfield Presbyterian Church is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, and called to loving relationships through vibrant worship and service. Valuing all people, we are committed to developing disciples and fostering stewardship.