



seeking:

*How do we
begin again?*

March 8, 2023 + Lenten Midweek Worship

*An asterisk * invites you to stand in body or in spirit, and you are invited to read aloud responses found in **bold**.*

We welcome you to First Lutheran Church!

we **GATHER** here

Opening Liturgy — p. 1

Words of Welcome

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.

we **LISTEN** and **RESPOND**

Evening Psalm — p. 2

***Gospel Acclamation** — p. 3 (*use Lenten text*)

***Gospel** — John 3:1-17

Before the reading: The Gospel of John, the 3rd chapter.

Glory to you, O God.

After the reading: The Gospel of Jesus.

Praise to you, O Christ.

***Gospel Canticle** — p. 4

Sermon

Poem — “How Do We Begin Again?”

by Rev. Sarah Speed

Do we slide into something new?
Do we make a formal announcement? Dearest reader,
I have decided to begin again. Do we turn gradually, a
gentle yield
in a new direction; or like a wave,
do we crash onto the shore of a new day?
Do we grieve the change? Are there breadcrumbs on
the path?
Will Nicodemus be there?
Will it ever be easy?

I'm not sure exactly how we begin again,
but I know that moths wrap themselves in silk,
and after quite some time,
after many long nights,

after days spent alone,
they break out of their shell.
They pull themselves out under open sky,
and they spend the rest of their days chasing
the light.

Maybe it's always that way with beginnings.
Maybe it feels like the protective
layer falling away.
Maybe we have to go it alone at first.
Maybe it feels like pulling and dragging
yourself into something new.
Maybe there's always open sky at the other
end.

***Affirmation of Faith**

You are invited to share in this affirmation of our 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.**

***Prayers — p. 3**

we DEPART to serve the world

***Blessing & Dismissal**

As you leave this place, may God bless you with seeking.
Seek out the hungry. Seek the weary. Seek the good in every person you pass.
Seek out the hopeful. Seek the faithful. Seek God in each of us.
As you seek and as you wonder, may you find what you are looking for.

***Sending Song — p. 5**

In the name of our loving God, who is always seeking us, go now in peace. **Amen.**

Acknowledgements

Words for Worship (Words of Welcome, Poem, Affirmation of Faith, Blessing and Dismissal) used and/or adapted from “Seeking” by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed
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