

Old First Presbyterian Church

Seeking:

How do we begin again?



“to be a blessing” by Hannah Garrity
Inspired by Genesis 12:1-4a, paper lace and pencil over oil paint on paper

Second Sunday in Lent March 5, 2023

Worship Through Praising God

Please fill out a guest card found in the pew rack and place it in the offering plate or give it to an usher.

Silence is requested as we prepare our hearts for worship.

** At the asterisk, please rise in body or spirit.*

Prelude Air

Gerry Hancock (1934-2012)

Welcome and
Church Life

Introit

George W. Doane (1799-1859)

Thou art the Way, the Truth, the Life,
Grant us that way to know,
That truth to keep, that life to win,
Whose joys eternal flow.

***Call to
Worship**

Pastor Henderson

Leader
People

What is it like to begin again, to start a new, how do we change?
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 adults learning to walk again after surgery.
It is like a Sunday morning, starting our week anew.
It is like learning how to be church
when it seems everything has changed.

Leader

May we find God in our seeking.
May we learn as we go.

People

May we be brave enough to begin again.
Let us worship the God of new beginnings.

***Hymn**

In the Deep Night of the Soul © A Sanctified Art LLC
Sung to DIX ("For the Beauty of the Earth," *Glory to God*, Hymn 14)

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 begin once more again.

Prayer of
Confession

Pastor Henderson

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.

Silence is kept.

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.

***Assurance of
Forgiveness**

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 new.

So join me in saying:

People

We belong to God.

We are held in God's love.

We are made new. Amen.

***Hymn 205**

Jacques Berthier (1923-1994)

**Ubi caritas et amor,
Ubi caritas Deo ibi est.**

Where love and affection are -

Where love is, God is there.

Offering

Ushers will receive the offering during the anthem. You may also make your offering electronically using the kiosk in the narthex.

Anthem

Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847)

He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps.

Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish, he will quicken thee.

***Doxology**

DUKE STREET

Arranged by Hal H. Hopson (born 1933)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,

Praise God, all creatures here below,

Praise God above, ye heavenly host,

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**Time with
Our Children**

***The Peace**

Leader

Peace be with you.

People

And also with you.

Worship Through Hearing God's Word

**Prayers of the
People**

Sarah Taber

Prayer Partners

Tanner and Julia Highlen, Kristi Hoerauf, Sidney Hollar, Camryn Hollarsmith, Jordan Hollarsmith, Logan Hollarsmith, Roseanne Hoo, Connie Johnson

**The Lord's
Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven,

**hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Scripture Genesis 12: 1-4, Psalm 121
Leader For the Word of God in scripture,
For the Word of God within us,
For the Word of God among us,

People **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Lech L'cha

Maggie Harmon
Ministry Relations Officer, Southwest Region
Presbyterian Foundation

**Affirmation
of Faith**

We believe in a God
who meets us in the shadows,
who welcomes our questions,
who invites us to begin again,
who knows we can change, begin anew.
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.

Worship Through Responding to God's Word

***Hymn 69** Here I Am, Lord

1 I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?

Refrain 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.

2 I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love to them. They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone,
give them hearts for love a lone.
I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?

3 I, the Lord of wind and flame,
 I will tend the poor and lame.
 I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.
 Finest bread I will provide
 till their hearts are satisfied.
 I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Today we install new officers.

Elders: Chris Burt, Harriet MacLean (Class of 2026)

Deacon: Jan Hammock (Class of 2026)

The constitutional questions are asked of those to be installed. Then these questions are asked of the people.

To the People

An Elder Do we, the members of the church, accept Chris and Harriet as ruling elders and Jan as deacon, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

People We do.

An Elder Do we agree to pray for them, to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?

People We do.

Prayer of Installation

Statement You are now deacons and ruling elders in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

People Amen.

*Charge and Benediction

Choir

Swee Hong Lim (born 1963)

May the love of God rest upon your soul.
 May God's love dwell in you, through-out every day.
 May God's countenance shine upon you, and be gracious unto you.
 May God's Spirit be upon you as you leave this place.

Maria Ling (born 1961)

Postlude

Festival Postlude

Gilbert Martin (born 1941)

Old First Presbyterian Church

Sharing God's Love, Welcome, and Justice on Our Corner, in Our City, and in the World

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Today's Preacher: Maggie Harmon

Maggie Harmon serves as the Presbyterian Foundation's Ministry Relations Officer for the Southwest region of the U.S. including California. She works with congregations to create a culture of generosity, offers seminars and workshops, develops gifts and fundraising plans for ministries and provides coaching to leadership, finance, stewardship and endowment committees. "I believe that philanthropy is much more than just giving, it is our opportunity to respond to God's commandment to care for each other, for this planet, and to ensure that our values live on for generations."

The Presbyterian Foundation gathers, stewards and distributes funds for the mission of the church. The Foundation works to strengthen congregations – and related mission and ministry efforts – by developing gifts and managing funds on their behalf. It provides all Presbyterians an avenue to realize their philanthropic goals through a variety of giving and investment options. And it remains focused on the Reformed values that have guided its stewardship and investment for more than 200 years.

Today's Liturgy and Art: A Sanctified Art

This Lent we are using "Seeking: Honest Questions for Deeper Faith," creative resources for Lent and Easter from A Sanctified Art, a collaborative offering support to worshiping communities in integrating art and creativity into their spiritual practices.

The first hymn, call to worship, prayer of confession, and assurance of forgiveness are adapted from prayers by the Reverend Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | www.sanctifiedart.org

The cover art "to be a blessing" is by Hannah Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | www.sanctifiedart.org. Of the image, Garrity says:

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. 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.

"I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:2-3)

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.

Devotionals for Lent, Fishboxes for OGHS

Devotionals for Lent and fishboxes for Easter's One Great Hour of Sharing annual offering are available in the narthex.

We Staff the Food Pantry, Saturday, March 18

We need your hands! Without your hands, Old First won't have enough hands for the Interfaith Food Pantry on Saturday, March 18, but you can sign up so easily by visiting our website – www.oldfirst.org – and then clicking on the link in the sidebar column.

Concert for Turkey/Syria Earthquake Relief, March 25

A concert to raise funds for relief in the earthquake-stricken regions of Turkey and Syria will be held at Old First on Saturday, March 25, at 3:00 pm. Plan to hear the many voices – choirs, soloists, ensembles from various San Francisco houses of worship – and to support relief efforts in the regions of Turkey and Syria hit by two earthquakes in a row.

This Week at Old First

Sunday March 5, Second Sunday in Lent

12:30 pm Officers Workshop with Maggie Harmon, Presbyterian Foundation
7:15 pm Friendly Circle AA Meeting, Social Hall

Saturday March 11

9:00 am Interfaith Food Pantry, Social Hall
8:00 pm O1C: Gabriele Baldocci, piano, new works plus Liszt's transcription of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5.

Sunday March 12, Third Sunday in Lent

11:00 am Worship
1:00 pm Board of Deacons Meeting, On-Line
4:00 PM O1C: Ives Collective, strings and winds, works by Grażyna Bacewicz, Amy Beach, and Antonín Dvořák.
7:15 pm Friendly Circle AA Meeting, Social Hall

Old First Presbyterian Church Staff

The Reverend Maggi Henderson	Pastor
The Reverend Erwin C. Barron	Parish Associate
The Reverend Lisa Robecheck	Parish Associate
Larry Marietta	Music Director
Jarron Carlson	Composer in Residence
Brad Peterson	Office Admin
Kiristi Hoerauf	Wedding Coordinator