

**The Presque Isle Congregational Church**  
**United Church of Christ**  
**March 5, 2023 - Second Sunday in Lent**

**Prelude** Barbara Merryman

**Gathering Music** *You Are Welcome Here*

**Words of Welcome** Jennifer Gillis-White

**Introit** *Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley* Daniel Fowler

**Call to Worship**

From the safety and comfort of home, God called Abram to go from all he knew to embrace a future yet to be revealed.

**“Go from,” God says, and trust God with the unknown.**

By night, Nicodemus came seeking greater insight into the teachings of God for the journey set before him. Jesus called him out of the shadows and towards a life born anew.

**“Go towards” God says, and offers a salve that can heal all wounds.**

God’s call is one that urges us to go with our whole self into that unknowing, trusting that God will provide a way.

**Let us worship the One who will show us the way.**

**Opening Prayer** (unison)

God of calls and courage, you draw us towards your loving embrace even as we face what seems like impossibility. We experience heartache and grief, injustice and cruelty, fear and anxiety as daily teachers on this path of faith. As you call us to go into an uncertain and unknown future. Grant us the courage needed to let go of all that we have known so that we can take hold of the new life you are bringing about even now. Amen

**Opening Hymn** *Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine*

**Prayer of Confession:** (unison) Ginette Rivard

God, we all too often wish to go our own way, maintain control, and rely on our own strength rather than trust that you will provide. Forgive us in our unwillingness to live by faith or to not trust you with providing all that we need for the journey. May your mercy surround our weaknesses with grace for restoring us to hope everlasting.

**Assurance of Pardon**

Friends, the call of God does not leave us isolated and condemned on a road of uncertainty, fear, and mistakes made. God’s unending love and compassion is for all whose burdens are heavy and whose weary journey brings tears. May the tender arms of God carry us forth in strength.

**Two-Minute Message** Jennifer Gillis-White

**Children’s Hymn** *I Want to Walk As A Child of the Light*

3 Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. <sup>2</sup> He came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with that person.” <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered him, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.” <sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to him, “How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?” <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. <sup>6</sup> What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Do not be astonished that I said to you, ‘You[c] must be born from above.’ <sup>8</sup> The wind[e] blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

<sup>11</sup> “Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen, yet you[i] do not receive our testimony. <sup>12</sup> If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? <sup>13</sup> No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.] <sup>14</sup> And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

<sup>16</sup> “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

<sup>17</sup> “Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him.

**Choral Anthem***In the Silence of This Moment*

PIUCC Choir

**Proclamation**

Meg Hegemann

**Service of Holy Communion****Communion Hymn***Bread of Life, Feed My Soul***Prayer of Confession: (unison)**

Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love, we have not loved our neighbors, and we have not heard the cry of the needy. Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Prayers of the People and the Lord’s Prayer**

Our **Creator\***, 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 **sins** as we forgive those who **sin** against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

**\*Please use whatever name is most familiar/comfortable when you pray to God.**

**Closing Hymn***Love Divine, All Loves Excelling***Community News and Announcements****Benediction****Postlude**

Barbara Merryman