

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David
September 8, 2013

Early Morning Service

Chaim Potok, *'In the Beginning'*

**"ALL BEGINNINGS ARE HARD...TEACHING THE
WAY I DO IS PARTICULARLY HARD, FOR I
TOUCH THE RAW NERVES OF FAITH, THE
BEGINNING OF THINGS..."**



**I SAY TO THEM WHAT WAS SAID TO ME, 'BE
PATIENT. YOU ARE LEARNING A NEW WAY...
ALL BEGINNINGS ARE HARD.'**

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.***

Prayer of Confession: For all the things we have done wrong in the past against God and against others, we now ask the Lord and one another to forgive us. (silence)

*Lord Jesus, yours are the seasons and the ages. Give us a new heart and a new spirit: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.***

*Jesus Christ, you are the beginning and the end of all that is, including our lives. Make a new beginning with all of us: Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.***

*Lord Jesus, you breathe your Spirit on all creation. Make our old world new again: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.***

*Have mercy on us, Lord, and let your forgiveness and love come down on us day after day. Lead us to everlasting life. **Amen.***

Assurance of Pardon: *God blesses you with new beginnings and new life. Put aside your old ways and become new! **God gives a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning. Sing, dance, rejoice! Never forget the gift of God's redeeming grace.***

Hymn: In the bulb

674

Focus Readings **Genesis 1: 1-5** In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 2 the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Silent reflection

Romans 8: 18-23 18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

Silent Reflection

Hymn: One more step **641**

John 16: 21-24 21 When a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come. But when her child is born, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy of having brought a human being into the world. 22 So you have pain now; but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. 23 On that day you will ask nothing of me. Very truly, I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. 24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete.

Silent Reflection

Reflect on the three readings (4 when you also look at John 1: 1-5) and consider what a new beginning might look like in your context – starting school, joining a new group, changing jobs, retiring and do it in the context of the quote from Potok.

Hymn: I hunger and I thirst (1-3) **534**

Invitation: God loves us and has a place for us, wherever we are on the journey of faith. Jesus still welcomes and blesses us and offers us new beginnings. Jesus still welcomes and engages those with honest questions. Jesus still, challenges and equips us to take up our crosses and follow him with joy. So come to the table that has been prepared. Come with your love, questions, and commitment.

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord is here. God's spirit is with us. Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give thanks and praise.* (Continue in prayer)

Pour out your Holy Spirit on all gathered here, that we might be your light in the world. Pour out your Holy Spirit on these gifts of bread and wine, that we might be infused with the gift of your nourishing guidance. Take us to the place of new beginnings in your love. Enable us to begin yet again even as we eat of this bread and drink of this wine. Let us be the new creation in this broken world even as we are redeemed and reclaimed by your great love.

Communion

Hymn: For the bread vs 1-2 **549**

Prayer after communion *God of Love, God of Peace*

**Create within me
A heart for people
A desire for change
For new beginnings
To start this day**

Hymn: I'm gonna live **648**