Welcome and Congregational Updates

*Rev. John O'Neal*

**The Community Gather**

***Prelude***

Netleton

Michael Burkhardt

Greg Nunn, organist

**Gathering Meditation**

"Martin Luther King once used the story of Nicodemus to talk about being born again. He said that Jesus hadn't given Nicodemus easy instructions or said 'stop doing this' or 'stop doing that.' Instead, Dr. King said, 'your whole structure must be changed.' This was nothing less than a total shake-up, Dr. King was talking specifically about how America had to be 'born again' and deal with injustice. And that's a good example of how we as people, and as institutions and communities, must also sometimes be born again, and do what is right and what is good, for the love of God and for the love of the world."

—Heath, Emily C. "Born Again. And again. And again. Sermon for March 12, 2017."

Published on emilycheath.com March 12, 2017

**Responsive Call to Worship**

*Gary Springer*

**One:**

God hovered over the void and breathed life into dust.

**All:**

God created in the wilderness.

**One:**

The Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years.

**All:**

The Israelites found God in the wilderness.

**One:**

Jesus said "no" to the tempter time and time again.

**All:**

Jesus claimed his identity in the wilderness.

**One:**

We grow in the wilderness. We learn in the wilderness.

**All:**

For God is with us—before, through, and after the wilderness.

**One:**

Let us worship God!

**All:**

Amen.

**Opening Hymn 655**

Community of Christ

*LEOUN*

**Hymn 519**

Create in Me

Create in me a new heart,
So that I'll give you more than part
Of this, the life you've given me,
Create in me a new heart,
Then will I teach, and others know,
And I will learn, my faith will grow.

With you I can create new dreams,
With you I can change lesser schemes,
O God, new joy and a new start!
Create in me a new heart.
The Community Proclaims God’s Word

The First Reading
Psalm 121
Gay Gilmore

Anthem
A Psalm of Ascents
MHCC Choir, Nancy Caldwell, oboe
Gregory Pysh

The Second Reading
John 3:1-17
Rev. John O’Neal

Sermon
“The Wilderness of Not Knowing”
Rev. John O’Neal

The Community Responds

Prayers of the People
Rev. John O’Neal

The Lord’s Prayer
Rev. John O’Neal

Call to Giving
Kathy Leslie

Offertory
Chanson
Greg Nunn, organist
Gordon Young

*Response
OLD HUNDREDTH

Prayer of Dedication
Kathy Leslie

The Community is Empowered at the Table

Invitation to the Table and the Community
Rev. John O’Neal

*Hymn 386
We Come as Guests Invited
WIE LEIBLICH IST DER MAIEN
During the hymn, those desiring to join as members are welcome to come forward and let one of our ministers know so that we might formally welcome them to our table and ministry here at Midway Hills.

Welcome to the Table
Rev. John O’Neal

Hand sanitizers are available at the table and in the back of the sanctuary. Gluten-free crackers are available for communion in the white cups. The elders, deacons and ministers are served last to symbolize our being servants in leadership.

Prayers at the Table
Martha Johnson

Communion
Pastorella. BWV 590
J. S. Bach

Meditation
Greg Nunn, organist

The Community is Sent to Restore God’s World

*Closing Hymn 633
Lead On, O Cloud of Presence
LANCASHIRE

*Charge and Benediction
Rev. Kyle Walker

Postlude
March
Greg Nunn, organist
Henry Purcell

*Please rise in either body or spirit.

Opening Meditation and Call to Worship
by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org
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“...Jesus mentions in John 3:5-8: the idea of being born of the Spirit. It is not a profession of faith that allows one to live like the wind. Plenty of people who believe do not live such a life. Rather, it is a moment-by-moment intention to be aware of God’s presence. It is a minute-by-minute appreciation for the amazing life we have been given. It is a deep breath and a slower-paced walk. It is a freedom unparalleled. It is an ability to see the forest and the trees. This space in the Spirit is deep and wide. It is fleeting and ever-present. Come, live a life born of the Spirit.”