

Stewardship 2026 Join the Journey

*"Trust in God from the bottom of your heart;
don't try to figure out everything on your own.
Listen for God's voice in everything you do,
everywhere you go." Proverbs 3:4-6*



WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Third Sunday in Lent

March 8, 2026

8:00 AM Traditional Worship

Pastor: Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman

Organist/Pianist: Linda Kunz

Lector: Sandy Grant

Acolyte: Lauren Koch

Ushers: Jim Lunde, Gary Gullickson & Myron Sime

Technical Support: Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

In today's gospel the Samaritan woman asks Jesus for water, an image of our thirst for God. Jesus offers living water, a sign of God's grace flowing from the waters of baptism. The early church used this gospel and those of the next two Sundays to deepen baptismal reflection during the final days of preparation before baptism at Easter. As we journey to the resurrection feast, Christ comes among us in word, bath, and meal—offering us the life-giving water of God's mercy and forgiveness.

CALL TO WORSHIP: "As the Deer" by Nystrom

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS:

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin before God, who removes our guilt and blots out all offenses.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For failing to recognize your coming reign, and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition, and for disdain the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For disregarding voices from the margin, and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent, and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life: Gracious God,

C: have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.

P: God's steadfast love, grace, and forgiveness abound. Through faith, the free gift of God, you have been clothed in the righteousness of Christ. In the name of † Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. The Spirit of the One who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you, pours God's love into your hearts, and gives you life and peace.

C: Amen.

Stand

HYMN: "Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty" #777 ELW vs 1-3

GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you.

KYRIE: page 147 ELW (*front of the hymnal*)

CANTICLE OF PRAISE: page 148 ELW (*front of hymnal*)

SALUTATION

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: Let us pray.

C: **Merciful God, the fountain of living water, you quench our thirst and wash away our sin. Give us this water always. Bring us to drink from the well that flows with the beauty of your truth through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

Sit

ANTHEM: “Let Everyone Who Is Thirsty, Come” Kyla Betts Soloist

FIRST READING: Exodus 17:1-7

¹⁷¹⁻² Directed by God, the whole company of Israel moved on by stages from the Wilderness of Sin. They set camp at Rephidim. And there wasn't a drop of water for the people to drink. The people took Moses to task: "Give us water to drink." But Moses said, "Why pester me? Why are you testing God?" ³ But the people were thirsty for water there. They complained to Moses, "Why did you take us from Egypt and drag us out here with our children and animals to die of thirst?" ⁴ Moses cried out in prayer to God, "What can I do with these people? Any minute now they'll kill me!" ⁵⁻⁶ God said to Moses, "Go on out ahead of the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel. Take the staff you used to strike the Nile. And go. I'm going to be present before you there on the rock at Horeb. You are to strike the rock. Water will gush out of it and the people will drink." ⁶⁻⁷ Moses did what he said, with the elders of Israel right there watching. He named the place Massah (Testing-Place) and Meribah (Quarreling) because of the quarreling of the Israelites and because of their testing of God when they said, "Is God here with us, or not?"

P: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: “Return to the Lord?” page 151 ELW

The Gospel is announced...

P: The Holy Gospel according to John the 4th Chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: John 4:5-28

Narrator: To get there, Jesus had to pass through Samaria. He came into Sychar, a Samaritan village that bordered the field Jacob had given his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was still there. Jesus, worn out by the trip, sat down at the well. It was noon. ⁷⁻⁸A woman, a Samaritan, came to draw water. Jesus said, “Would you give me a drink of water?” (His disciples had gone to the village to buy food for lunch.) ⁹The Samaritan woman, taken aback, asked, **Samaritan Woman (All) How come you, a Jew, are asking me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?**

Narrator: (Jews in those days wouldn’t be caught dead talking to Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered, “If you knew the generosity of God and who I am, you would be asking *me* for a drink, and I would give you fresh, living water.

Samaritan Woman (All:) Sir, you don’t even have a bucket to draw with, and this well is deep. So how are you going to get this ‘living water’? Are you a better man than our ancestor Jacob, who dug this well and drank from it, he and his sons and livestock, and passed it down to us?

Narrator: ¹³Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst—not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life.”

Samaritan Woman (All): Sir, give me this water so I won’t ever get thirsty, won’t ever have to come back to this well again!

Narrator: ¹⁶He said, “Go call your husband and then come back.”

Samaritan Woman: I have no husband,

Narrator: “That’s nicely put: ‘I have no husband.’ You’ve had five husbands, and the man you’re living with now isn’t even your husband. You spoke the truth there, sure enough.”

Samaritan Woman (All): Oh, so you’re a prophet! Well, tell me this: Our ancestors worshiped God at this mountain, but you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place for worship, right?

Narrator: “Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you Samaritans will worship the Father neither here at this mountain nor there in Jerusalem.

You worship guessing in the dark; we Jews worship in the clear light of day. God's way of salvation is made available through the Jews. But the time is coming—it has, in fact, come—when what you're called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter. ²³⁻²⁴ It's who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That's the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly *themselves* before him in their worship. God is sheer being itself—Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration.”

Samaritan Woman: I don't know about that. I do know that the Messiah is coming. When he arrives, we'll get the whole story.

Narrator: ²⁶“I am he,” said Jesus. “You don't have to wait any longer or look any further.” ²⁷ Just then his disciples came back. They were shocked. They couldn't believe he was talking with that kind of a woman. No one said what they were all thinking, but their faces showed it. ²⁸The woman took the hint and left.

P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON: A Visit from the Samaritan Woman

Stand

HYMN: “Bless Now, O God, the Journey” #326 ELW

APOSTLE'S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

**the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Reconciled by God's mercy and sustained by God's presence, let us pray for the world and its needs.

A brief silence

P: O God, when suffering arises, preserve your church. Give to pastors, deacons, bishops, and all servants of your gospel the endurance that produces character and the hope that will never disappoint. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: When the waters run dry, sustain this earth. Send water to places languishing with drought, and bring relief to places damaged by floods. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: When quarrels ensue, soften our hearts. Quell hostilities between nations and peoples, and reconcile all humans across the lines of race, class, nationality, moral conviction, religion, and all else that divides or oppresses. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: When your people thirst, satisfy their needs. Send water and food to all who need nourishment. Grant welcome to all who are excluded. Show your mercy to any in need. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: When we gather to worship, send us your Spirit. Renew our hearts through the joyful noise we make and bless the work of our church musicians and musical ensembles. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: O God, when death draws near, we rejoice in the promise of life with you.

We remember all who have entered eternal rest, and we pray that you bring us the hope of sharing in your glory. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

C: Amen.

THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C: And also with you.

Sit

OFFERTORY: “Come to the Water of Life” by Makeever

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P: O God, maker of heaven and earth,

C: your steadfast love embraces all creation. You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth and bring forth its bounty. Through your Word, draw us into the death and life of your Son, who calls us to bear witness to his saving work. We ask this in Jesus’ name. Amen.

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 trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass 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 and ever. Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Stand

BLESSING

P: Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity: God, who calls all things into existence, Jesus Christ, who redeems us, and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation, † bless you now and always.

C: Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: Go in peace. Believe the good news.

C: Thanks be to God.

SENDING HYMN: “Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer” #618 ELW

POSTLUDE: “As Rivers Flow From a Distant Spring” by Beckstrand