

Third Sunday in Lent – *Unfinished: Called by God*
March 12, 2023

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.

Greeting

The Grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.
And also with you.

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who journeys with us these forty days,
and sustains us with the gift of grace.

Amen.

Let us acknowledge before God and one another
our need for repentance and God's mercy.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy God,

we confess to you our faults and failings.

**Too often we neglect and do not trust your holy
word;**

we take for ourselves instead of giving to others;

**we spoil rather than steward your creation;
we cause hurt though you call us to heal;
we choose fear over compassion.**

**Forgive us, renew us, and lead us,
as we seek to follow in your way of life.**

Amen.

Hear the good news:

God so loved the world that God gave the only Son,
so that all may receive life.

This promise is for you!

God embraces you with divine mercy,

† forgives you in Christ's name,
and revives you in the Spirit's power.

Amen.

Gathering Song

“Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross”

#335 vs. 1,2,4

Prayer of the Day

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.

Reading: Psalm 95: – We will read responsively by verse

¹Come, let us sing to the LORD; let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation.

²**Let us come before God's presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to the LORD with psalms.**

³For you, LORD, are a great God, and a great ruler above all gods.

⁴**In your hand are the caverns of the earth; the heights of the hills are also yours.**

⁵The sea is yours, for you made it, and your hands have molded the dry land.

⁶**Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the LORD our maker.**

⁷For the LORD is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's hand.
Oh, that today you would hear God's voice!

⁸**“Harden not your hearts, as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert.**

⁹There your ancestors tested me, they put me to the test, though they had seen my works.

¹⁰**Forty years I loathed that generation, saying, ‘The heart of this people goes astray; they do not know my ways.’**

¹¹Indeed I swore in my anger, ‘They shall never come to my rest.’”

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Children's Message – Shepherd's Kids sing today

Gospel: John 4:5-42

[Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city.

She said to the people, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" They left the city and were on their way to him.

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

The Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to You, O Christ

Sermon

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. AMEN

Unfinished: Discovering God's Call in the Not Yet, our Lent theme for this year has Jesus today showing us what it means when he says "God so loved the world," and in this text we hear God in Jesus calling to this woman, whom he shouldn't even be talking to, to realize something more.

From our Lent resource we hear:

"It would be impossible to count the number of voices - both literal and metaphorical - that call to us everyday of our lives. Family and friends, Co-workers and neighbors, Digital media and print media

(yes, some still does exist!). Voices both present and past. On and on the list goes. Of all of the voices that call to us on a daily basis, which ones do we listen to? Which do we say “no” to? Which ones are like a pesky Jiminy Cricket sitting on our shoulders that we would silence if we could? And how do we discern what is the voice of God amid all of this? In the story of the Woman at the Well, we meet a woman who literally hears the voice of Jesus and discovers a new call for her unfinished life. God promises that Jesus does the same for us.”

Again, just before this, in an encounter with Nicodemus, Jesus gives us the famed readily recited verse, “For God so loved the world...” In this story, Jesus shows us what that means.

In his encounter with a Samaritan woman at the well, he shows us what it means to love the world...and all that is in it.

This woman literally hears the voice of Jesus calling to her, and it is life changing for her. She is seen. She is given worth. She is given a place in the larger story, when society would have, if it hasn't already, discarded her.

She likely thought her story was over and done with. Her pages in the history books were written. But Jesus changes that.

And this encounter calls us to think about our own call and where we hear the voice of Jesus. We are called and urged to reflect on the following in our own discernment:

- All of our stories are unfinished
- We might not even know what is “unfinished” in our lives
- Jesus meets us in our unfinished places
- Jesus calls us in everyday life
- Call and discernment are connected
- The call of Jesus is life-giving and life-changing

In our pondering these realities, and coming to our own understanding and grasp of our own openness, we ask ourselves these questions:

- How do I typically decide which voices I listen to?
- What voices called to me today?
- Which ones did I listen to?
- Which ones did I not listen to?
- What do I need for tomorrow?

People of God, in this season of Lent we are reminded again and again that we do not go it alone. The woman at the well was in her routine of daily life. She came to the place that she always came to to get the water that she always got. And that is where Jesus meets her. It wasn't in some extraordinary fashion. It was in the normal mundane of daily life and routine. And he reminds her that her story is not over.

Each and every day we, too, experience this. The voices all around us are innumerable, but the voice of God is there. It is the constant. We are called into a deeper discernment of what it is that God's voice is calling us to do and be.

Thanks be to God. AMEN

Song of the Day

“Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters”

#445

Baptism of Chase Taylor Schellfeffer, son of Taylor Schellfeffer and Karli Schellfeffer-Peterson. He is the grandson of Mark and Sue Schellfeffer and the great grandson of Verne and Kathy Schellfeffer.

The Apostles' 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

Sustained by God's abundant mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

We pray for your church. Bless partnerships with other Christians and inter-religious dialogue. Guide the daily work of denominational and congregational leaders. Strengthen our combined witness for the sake of the gospel, that all experience your life-giving love. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for the universe. All creation teems with life, from the depths of the earth and seas to the skies above. Fill us with awe and reverence for the diversity and preservation of life. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for the nations of the world. Topple the dividing walls that separate us from our neighbors. Form us into your beloved community where diversity of gender, race, language, ability, and ethnic origin is celebrated and affirmed. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit. Be present with all who are lonely, and give courage to all who are afraid. Comfort those who live with chronic illness or other sickness (*We pray especially for Peyton, Matt, David, Verna, Irene, Connie, Clarice, Steve, Kathy, Val, Jacob, Keith and JoJo, Bob and Joanne, Bill and Bonnie, Frank and Heather, Bob and Sonja, Bill and Betty, Tom and Kay, Sherm and Mary, Sandy*). Give them your living water always. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We pray for this congregation, especially those preparing for baptism (*at the Vigil of Easter/on Easter Day*). Nurture their faith and pour your love into their hearts. Inspire our community by their testimony to God's grace in their lives. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We give thanks for the lives of all your saints (*especially Gregory the Great, whom we commemorate today*). Their hope in you sustained lives of faith and service. Encourage us with the hope they shared in you. Merciful God,
receive our prayer.

We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your steadfast love and your promise to renew your whole creation; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Offering

Offertory Prayer

God of good gifts,
receive these and all our offerings
as we present them in faithful service
for the sake of your gospel.
Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal
as you pour out your very presence
through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life.

Amen.

Words of Institution

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

Communion

Prayer

Embodied God,
at your table, we have tasted the goodness of Jesus.
With the eyes of our hearts open to your promise,
empower us to hear the needs of our neighbors
and touch the world with your love.

Amen.

Blessing

God, the giver of love,
✠ Christ, the resurrection and the life,
and the Holy Spirit of rebirth
bless you in this Lenten journey.

Amen.

Sending Song

“Beneath the Cross of Jesus”

#338 vs. 1,3

Dismissal

Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

Okay! We will! Thanks be to God!

And all of Good Shepherd said,

AMEN!

March Financial Snapshot

The numbers as of 3/8:

Total Revenue **\$7,320**

March '22 Revenue \$21,340

Total Expenses **\$6,513**

March '23 Projected \$27,000

Current Difference **\$808**

What's to come:

3 more Sunday Offerings

1 more payroll

\$6,200 XCel Energy bill

What we've learned:

We've pinpointed the source of high XCel bills of recent months.

We hope to have fixed the issue.

**GOOD SHEPHERD ~ GOOD FRIDAY
FISH FRY**

**APRIL 7TH
4:30 - 6:00**

FISH, POTATOES,
GREEN BEANS, COLE
SLAW, DINNER ROLLS,
DESSERT

2 OR 3 PIECE MEAL
KIDS MEAL INCLUDES
CHICKEN

QUILT RAFFLE

SPONSORED BY: LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD ENDOWMENT



It's Culver's night for Roosevelt Elementary

Please join Roosevelt families and staff at the Folsom Street Culver's from 4-7 p.m. The Roosevelt PTA will receive 10% of all sales. These funds will go into their general fund to help support all the programs the PTA offers.



Mark your calendars for next week, March 14!