Sunday, March 8, 2026
Third Sunday in Lent
SUNDAYS AND SEASONS 2026 – ELW SETTING # 10.

INTRODUCTION TO THE DAY

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.

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

RINGING OF THE CHIMES

GATHERING
Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS
All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.
Amen.

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

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For seeking worldly delights that deceive us and dishonor you:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For desiring self-reliance instead of hungering for your word:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For failing to recognize your coming reign,
and for hindering the work of the Spirit: Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For drawing from the well of self-serving ambition,
and for disdaining the living water Christ offers: Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For disregarding voices from the margin,
and for distrusting signs of your healing and hope in the world:
Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
For dwelling in tombs of self-pity and discontent,
and for disregarding Christ's call to come forth to life:

Gracious God,
have mercy on us according to your steadfast love.
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.
Amen.

GATHERING SONG: ELW #617 "We Come to You for Healing Lord"

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

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.

Please be seated while the children come forward.

Children's Time

THE WORD – READINGS

FIRST READING: Exodus 17:1-7
Because the thirsty Israelites quarreled with Moses and put God to the test, Moses cried out in desperation to God. God commanded Moses to strike the rock to provide water for the people. The doubt-filled question—"Is the LORD among us or not?"—received a very positive answer.
1 From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as
the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. 2 The
people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you
quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" 3 But the people thirsted there for water, and the people
complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and
livestock with thirst?" 4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do for this people? They are
almost ready to stone me." 5 The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the
elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. 6 I will be
standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that
the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 He called the place Massah and
Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 95 ***(Read Responsively)***
Let us shout for joy to the rock of our salvation. (Ps. 95:1)

1 Come, 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.
3 For 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.
5 The 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.
7 For 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.
9 There 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.'
11 Indeed I swore in my anger,
'They shall never come to my rest.' "

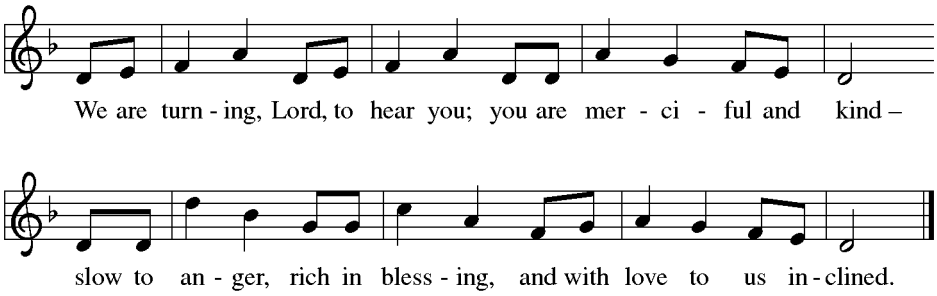
SECOND READING: Romans 5:1-11
Though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, here Paul tells us that through Jesus' death God helps utterly helpless sinners. Since we who had been enemies are reconciled to God in the cross, we now live in hope for our final salvation.
1 Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, 4 and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, 5 and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

6 For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. 8 But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. 9 Much more surely, therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. 11 But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

Gospel Acclamation for Lent – ELW Setting #10 – S205b



GOSPEL: John 4:5-42

The Gospel according to John, the 4th Chapter, beginning at the 5th verse. **Glory to You, O Lord.**

Jesus defies convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith..

5 [Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son
Joseph.6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about
noon.
7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." 8 (His disciples
had gone to the city to buy food.) 9 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.) 10 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." 11 The woman said to him, "Sir, you
have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? 12 Are you greater than our
ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" 13 Jesus said to her,
"Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 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." 15 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."
16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." 17 The woman answered him, "I have no
husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' 18 for you have had five
husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" 19 The woman said
to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the
place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is
coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You worship what
you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 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. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and
truth." 25 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." 26 Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."
27 Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one
said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" 28 Then the woman left her water jar
and went back to the city. She said to the people, 29 "Come and see a man who told me everything I have
ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" 30 They left the city and were on their way to him.
31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." 32 But he said to them, "I have
food to eat that you do not know about." 33 So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has
brought him something to eat?" 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and
to complete his work. 35 Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look

around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. [36] The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. [37] For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' [38] I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

[39] Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." [40] So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. [41] And many more believed because of his word. [42] 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.**

Please be seated.

SERMON **Pastor Steven Kuhl**

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

HYMN OF THE DAY: ELW #611 "I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"

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

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

A brief silence.

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.
Your mercy is great.

When the waters run dry, sustain this earth. Send water to places languishing with drought (*especially*), and bring relief to places damaged by floods (*especially*). Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

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.
Your mercy is great.

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, *especially those we name aloud or in our hearts. (A brief silence)*. Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

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 (*especially*). Hear us, O God.
Your mercy is great.

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.
Your mercy is great.

Pastor: Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace and may say, "Peace be with you" or similar words. The assembly is seated.

OFFERING – Collection of our offerings.

Background music will be played during this time. (ELW # 685 "Take My Life, That I May Be")

Please rise as you are able in body or spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER
Let us pray:

O God, maker of heaven and earth,
your steadfast love embraces all creation.
You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth
and bring forth its bounty.
Through these gifts of bread and wine,
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 MEAL

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

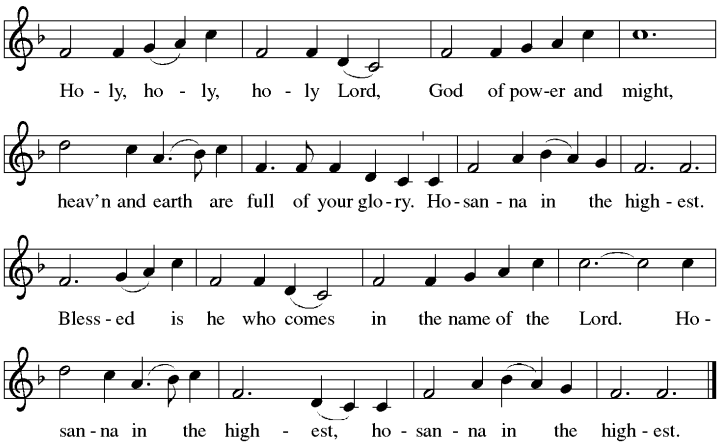
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE for LENT

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You call your people to cleanse their hearts
and prepare with joy for the paschal feast,
that, renewed in the gift of baptism,
we may come to the fullness of your grace.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Sanctus: Holy, Holy, Holy – ELW Setting #10 – S207



THE WORD'S OF INSTITUTION

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let us pray as Jesus taught us:

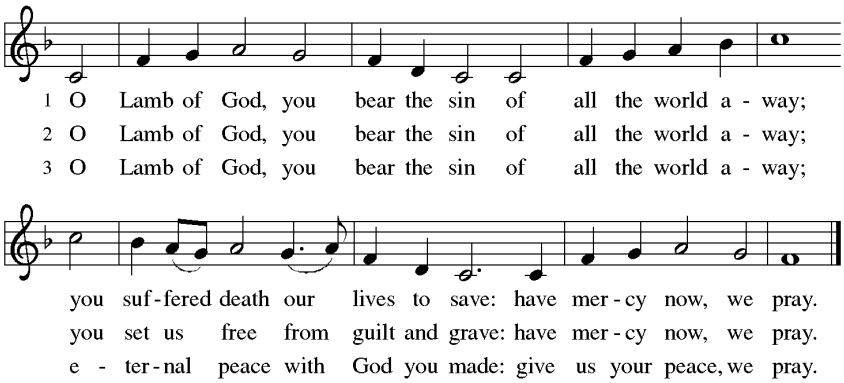
Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table. Feast on God's goodness and mercy. Come.

Please be seated and wait to come forward for Holy Communion after the singing of The Lamb of God song.

Lamb of God – ELW Setting #10 – S208



Hymn During Communion: ELW #474 "Bread of Life from Heaven"

BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION

After all have returned to their places, the assembly stands. The presiding minister may say a table blessing; the assembly responds **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray, together.

God of our salvation,
we give you thanks for this meal that restores our souls,
reconciles us to you, and strengthens us for the journey.
Through the body and blood of your Son,
may we become Christ's body in the world,
bearing witness to your love for all creation,
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

SENDING BLESSING

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.
Amen.

Sending Song: ELW #334 "Tree of Life and Awesome Mystery" Verses 1, 2, 3 & Lent 3

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Believe the good news.
Thanks be to God.

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Today's Lay Leaders

Lector: Sandy Young

Ushers: Linda Kolar-Wood and Deanna Posig

Communion Assistant: Sandy Ringwall

Altar Guild: Deanna Posig

Music & Worship Coordinator: Barb Regent

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