

March 12, 2023
Third Sunday of Lent

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness" DAN FORREST Tune:Germany By WILLIAM GARDINER
Birthdays, Celebrations, and The Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Moment of Silent Reflection

Hymn: VU 222 "Come, Let Us Sing"

Come, let us sing to the Lord our song,
we have stood silently too long;
surely the Lord deserves our praise,
so joyfully thank God for our days.

O thirsty soul, come drink at the well;
God's living waters will never fail.
Surely the Lord will help you to stand,
strengthened and comforted by God's hand.

You dwell among us and cause us to pray,
and walk with each other following your way;
our precious brothers and sisters will grow
in the fulfilling love they know.

Deserts shall bloom and mountains shall sing
to the desire of all living things.
Come, all you creatures, high and low,
let your praises endlessly flow.

Lenten Candle Liturgy

*Written by Won Hur. **Gathering**, Lent/Easter 2023, pages 66-69. Used with permission.*

We live in a world of many divisions: class, gender, religion, race, and politics.

It is not easy to risk our vulnerabilities in order to get to know someone who seems different.

Though God welcomes all people, invites the gifts of all nations, and celebrates the uniqueness of each culture, we live in poverty when we remain separated.

Our lines of separation diminish our togetherness and diminish our humanity.

Like the Samaritan woman at the well, we are thirsty for a drink that will quench our deepest yearnings.

We long to drink deeply at that well.

Yet, we remain thirsty and we live a life of quiet desperation.

The third candle is extinguished.

MV 90 "Don't Be Afraid"

Don't be afraid. My love is stronger, my love is stronger than your fear.


Don't be afraid. My love is stronger and I have promised, promised to be always near.

Prayer (*unison*)

O Christ, you said, "Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you." Therefore, O God, we pray that you will quench our deepest thirst for acceptance, love, and peace. Fill our cup with your spirit till it overflows. May we drink to our heart's content at your well. May we live a life of blessing by giving to others what you give to us with generosity, courage, and hope. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Anthem: "Spirit of God" Lyrics – George Croly, Music – Frederick C. Atkinson
Arranged by Carl Strommen

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn VU 316 "Praise Our Maker" vss. 1-2

Praise our Maker, peoples of one family:

God is love, God is love!

Praise our Maker, peoples of one family:

God is love, God is love!

Love our Saviour, followers of Jesus:

God is love, God is love!

Love our Saviour, followers of Jesus:

God is love, God is love!

Psalm 95

Refrain: Come, let us bow down and worship; let us kneel before God our maker.

O come, let us sing to God,

let us shout with joy to the rock of our salvation.

Let us come into God's presence with thanksgiving;

let us joyously shout to God with songs of praise.

Refrain: Come, let us bow down and worship; let us kneel before God our maker.

For you are a great God,

high sovereign above all gods.

In your hand are the depths of the earth;

to you belong the heights of the mountains.

The sea is yours, for you made it;

your hands also formed the dry land.

You are indeed our God;

we are your people, the flock that you shepherd.

Refrain: Come, let us bow down and worship; let us kneel before God our maker.

O that today you would listen to God's voice;

'Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah,

as on that day at Massah in the wilderness;

when your forebears tried me, and put me to the test,
though they had seen my works.

Forty years I loathed that generation, and said,

'They are a people whose hearts are perverse,
for they give no heed to my ways.'

Then, I vowed in my anger:

they shall not enter my rest.'

Refrain: Come, let us bow down and worship; let us kneel before God our maker.

Scripture: John 4:5-42

He 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." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 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."

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?" 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.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. 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. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

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 other readings for this week are: **Exodus 17:1-7; Romans 5:1-11**

Hymn VU 766 "As the Deer Pants for the Water"

As the deer pants for the water,
so my soul longs after you;
you alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship you.

You alone are my strength, my shield
to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you.

I want you more than gold or silver,
only you can satisfy;
you alone are the real joy-giver
and the apple of my eye.

You alone are my strength, my shield
to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you.

You're my friend and you are my brother,
even though you are a king;
I love you more than any other,
so much more than anything!

You alone are my strength, my shield
to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart's desire,
and I long to worship you.

Meditation: "Water we missing?"

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

Our thirst for God is relieved every time we come together as a church to pray and praise and listen and learn. Let us give generously today to make it possible for us to continue to come to this well for refreshment and renewal. Let us give generously today, both through our local offerings and through the Mission and Service Fund, as a way of sharing a cup of water from our bucket with other thirsty wayfarers.

Offertory Hymn VU 218 "We Praise You, O God"

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;
in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.
We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;
we bless your holy name, glad praises we sing.

Prayer of Dedication

Strike the rock, O God, and let your living water flow from the hard cash we offer. Let these gifts become your living word, food, and drink in ministries in this community and around the world. In the name of Jesus, whose living water brings us life. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer (VU 959)

O Rock of our Salvation, O Wellspring of hope, O Living Waters that give eternal life: help us to break through the dry surface of our parched lives to find the love that flows beneath, quietly, deeply, cool with refreshment – that living water for our souls which is the Spirit of Christ your Son. To you we lift our prayers:

May Lent bring a return to the covenant in which we love God and our neighbour as Jesus teaches, especially we pray for Darrel S. Moffat United Church in Tilbury, and their minister, Rev. Derek Parry

May Lent be a time for truth, justice, and peace in the decisions of state, national, and world governments, especially we pray for the people of Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden...

May Lent be a time for each household to strengthen bonds of love and communication,
.....

May Lent lead to a time of comfort for those who mourn the loss of loved ones, especially we remember the friends and family of John Broomfield, Patsy Sherriff, Lyle Quackenbush, and Doreen Snow.....

May Lent be a time of healing to those who are ill, especially: Yvonne Grieve, Mac Toner and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts....

May Lent be a time of deepening of our faith for all of us,
God of mercy, eternal source of life renewed and abundant, rise up and flood with loving care every withered life and every heart that thirsts for you. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, the Living Water, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, and who taught us to pray, singing:

**Our Father, in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil
for the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and forever.**

Amen.

Hymn VU 710 "Shall We Gather at the River"

Shall we gather at the river,
where bright angel feet have trod;
with its crystal tide for ever
flowing by the throne of God?

Yes, we'll gather at the river,
the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river
that flows by the throne of God.

Ere we reach the shining river,
lay we every burden down;
grace our spirits will deliver,
and provide a robe and crown.

Yes, we'll gather at the river,
the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river
that flows by the throne of God.

Soon we'll reach the shining river,
soon our pilgrimage will cease,
soon our happy hearts will quiver
with the melody of peace.

Yes, we'll gather at the river,
the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river
that flows by the throne of God.

Commissioning and Benediction

God of the wilderness, be with us as we wander through the desert of our lives.

**Keep us from running back to the safety of old assumptions,
and walk with us as we learn to live the life abundant,**

and may the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,
the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit go with us all.

Amen.

Response: VU 961 "Let Us, O God, Depart In Peace"

Let us, O God, depart in peace,
who in your name are gathered here.
Disclose the brightness of your face,
and be forever near.

Postlude: "Jesus Paid It All" JOHN T. GRAPE. Arr. by Cindy Berry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL:

You're invited to a free screening of 'SAFE' on Monday, March 6 at the Hyland Cinema in London, or Monday, March 13 at the Galaxy Cinemas in St. Thomas. 'SAFE' is a documentary that features Indwell tenants and their stories with hope-filled solutions to homelessness.

You'll be inspired! Reserve your seat at indwell.ca/events.

Warning: some strong language and mature subject matter.

In response to the devastating earthquakes in Türkiye and northern Syria, The United Church of Canada is working with partners in the Middle East Council of Churches, ACT Alliance, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, and the Humanitarian Coalition to show tangible support for the people of Türkiye and Syria. To contribute to the United Church response, you can mail a cheque to:

The United Church of Canada

Philanthropy Unit - Emergency Response

3250 Bloor Street West, Suite 200

Toronto, ON M8X 2Y4

Please be sure to note "Emergency Response—Türkiye" on the face of your cheque.

Or, go online to:

<https://www.gifttool.com/donations/Donate?ID=1955&AID=2274&PID=6564>

Part Two of our study "The Heart of Christianity" runs Tuesdays at Two for the seven weeks of Lent, from February 21 until April 4 inclusive. We will plan to meet in person at Dorchester United Church, with a zoom link for those not comfortable or able to attend in person. If you are interested in joining this study, please contact Rev. Mark. (Please read Chapter 9 Sin and Salvation: Transforming The Heart, for the 14th)

UNION:

Broadview subscriptions are to be renewed by March 31. Please let Roberta Gillard know if you do not wish to continue receiving this magazine. The group rate for each subscription is \$25.

Outreach for March – Inn Out of the Cold.

personnel hygiene products...shaving cream, deodorant, combs, brushes.

art supplies...paper, markers, crossword puzzles.

snack food - individually packaged....water, drink boxes, cereal bars, pudding/fruit cups.

tea, coffee, hot chocolate

paper cups - no lids

Lectionary Readings for next week:

(March 19, Fourth Sunday of Lent)

1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41