

**Sunday Worship Service– March 8, 2026**  
**Third Sunday in Lent**  
*ELWB* (red book) – Holy Communion – Setting 8 (p.184-192)

**Welcome**

**Land Acknowledgement & Welcome Statement**

**Introduction\***

We thirst for God and God's presence is always with us, ready to quench our thirst. In today's Bible readings, God is ready and waiting, present and available. God's grace is right there – as it always is – ready and waiting to quench our troubled souls and nourish us with God's life-giving presence.

**Lenten Candle Liturgy<sup>1</sup>**

There is so much during the day that clamors for our attention. Friends, family, work, classes, household tasks. And the noise! We are bombarded with sound, from the clock that awakens us to the telephone, the radio, the television, the conversation that we have or overhear.

Where is the time and place to listen for the still, small voice of God? Sometimes it seems that God would have to speak in a whirlwind to be heard above the clamor!

Listen now. There is a place of quiet rest, and it is the place where God dwells within you. Close your eyes. Be aware of the place. In Lent we journey to the parts of ourselves known only to God, beneath the clamor. Let the story of Jesus reach us there. Let it teach us wisdom in our secret hearts.

As we extinguish these lights, we acknowledge the darkness and pain of violence in the world and to the Earth.

Let us pray:

**Draw us together in your love, O God. May our restless hearts not resist you, but continue to search until they find their rest in you. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.**

**Prayer of Confession\***

*Living water, flow through our hearts this day.*

**Meet us in our desert wanderings and quench our thirst,**

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<sup>1</sup> Written by Andrew Schwartz

that we may have strength for the hard times ahead.  
 Well up within us, and bathe us in the waters of eternal life,  
 that the spirit within us may flow with faith and love,  
 through the power of your Spirit. Amen.

### **Words of Assurance**

Christ, the Living Water, is here, washing over us with mercy,  
 And filling us with hope and renewal.

Rejoice and be glad, for we are renewed with love, made whole with grace,  
 and we are forgiven in the name of the + Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **#533 Gathering Hymn “Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty” (v.1-2,5)**

1. **Open now thy gates of beauty, Zion, let me enter there,  
 where my soul in joyful duty waits for God who answers prayer.  
 Oh, how blessed is this place, filled with solace, light, and grace!**
2. **Gracious God, I come before thee; come thou also unto me;  
 where we find thee and adore thee, there a heav’n on earth must be.  
 To my heart, oh, enter thou, let it be thy temple now!**
5. **Speak, O God, and I will hear thee, let thy will be done indeed;  
 may I undisturbed draw near thee while thou dost thy people feed.**

### **p. 184 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.**

### **#152 Kyrie**

**Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.**

**Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.**

**Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy, have mercy.**

### **Prayer of the Day\***

Living water, **flow through our hearts this day. Quench our thirst for your  
 wisdom and truth, that we may grow in faith and love. May your spirit  
 flow within us with faith and love, that we may know you more fully.  
 Amen.**

### **Scripture Reading: Romans 5:1-11**

*In the letter of the apostle Paul written to the church in Rome, though we often hear that God helps those who help themselves, 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.*

A reading from the letter of the apostle Paul to the Romans, the 5<sup>th</sup> chapter:

Therefore, since we have been made righteous through Jesus' faithfulness, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. We have access by faith into this grace in which we stand through Jesus, and we boast in the hope of God's glory. But not only that! We even take pride in our problems, because we know that trouble produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope. This hope doesn't put us to shame, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

While we were still weak, at the right moment, Christ died for ungodly people. It isn't often that someone will die for a righteous person, though maybe someone might dare to die for a good person. But God shows God's love for us, because while we were still sinners Christ died for us. So, now that we have been made righteous through Jesus, we can be even more certain that we will be saved through Jesus. If we were reconciled to God through the death of Jesus while we were still enemies, now that we have been reconciled, how much more certain is it that we will be saved by Jesus' life? And not only that: we even take pride in God through Jesus Christ, the one through whom we now have a restored relationship with God.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

### p.189 **Gospel Acclamation for Lent**

**Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.**

**Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.**

**Save us as you promised; we will trust your word.**

**Let your steadfast love come to us, O Lord.**

## Gospel Reading: John 4:5-42

*In the gospel reading from John, we hear Jesus defy convention to engage a Samaritan woman in conversation. Her testimony, in turn, leads many others to faith.*

The holy gospel according to John, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>5</sup> Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, which was near the land Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from the journey, so he sat down at the well. It was about noon.

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink." <sup>8</sup> The disciples had gone into the city to buy some food.

<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman asked, "Why do you, a Jewish man, ask for something to drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (Jews and Samaritans didn't associate with each other.)

<sup>10</sup> Jesus responded, "If you recognized God's gift and who is saying to you, 'Give me some water to drink,' you would be asking him and he would give you living water."

The woman said to Jesus, "Sir, you don't have a bucket and the well is deep. Where would you get this living water? <sup>12</sup> You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave this well to us, and he drank from it himself, as did his sons and livestock."

<sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I give will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life."

<sup>15</sup> The woman said to Jesus, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will never be thirsty and will never need to come here to draw water!"

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Go, get your husband, and come back here."

<sup>17</sup> The woman replied, "I don't have a husband."

"You are right to say, 'I don't have a husband,'" Jesus answered. <sup>18</sup> "You've had five husbands, and the man you are with now isn't your husband. You've spoken the truth."

<sup>19</sup> The woman said, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. <sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you and your people say that it is necessary to worship in Jerusalem."

<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you and your people will worship God neither on this mountain nor in

Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup>You and your people worship what you don't know; we worship what we know because salvation is from the Jews.

<sup>23</sup> But the time is coming—and is here!—when true worshippers will worship in spirit and truth. God looks for those who worship this way. <sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth.”

<sup>25</sup> The woman said, “I know that the Messiah is coming, the one who is called the Christ, and will teach us everything.”

<sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, “I Am—the one who speaks with you.”<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Just then, Jesus' disciples arrived and were shocked that he was talking with a woman. But no one asked, “What do you want?” or “Why are you talking with her?” <sup>28</sup> The woman put down her water jar and went into the city. She said to the people, <sup>29</sup> “Come and see someone who has told me everything I've done! Could this person be the Christ?” <sup>30</sup> They left the city and were on their way to see Jesus.

<sup>31</sup> In the meantime the disciples spoke to Jesus, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

<sup>32</sup> Jesus said to them, “I have food to eat that you don't know about.”

<sup>33</sup> The disciples asked each other, “Has someone brought him food?”

<sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, “I am fed by doing the will of the one who sent me and by completing his work. <sup>35</sup> Don't you have a saying, ‘Four more months and then it's time for harvest’? Look, I tell you: open your eyes and notice that the fields are already ripe for the harvest. <sup>36</sup> Those who harvest are receiving their pay and gathering fruit for eternal life so that those who sow and those who harvest can celebrate together. <sup>37</sup> This is a true saying, that one sows and another harvests. <sup>38</sup> I have sent you to harvest what you didn't work hard for; others worked hard, and you will share in their hard work.”

<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans in that city believed in Jesus because of the woman's word when she testified, “He told me everything I've ever done.” <sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. <sup>41</sup> Many more believed because of his word, <sup>42</sup> and they said to the woman, “We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this one is truly the savior of the world.”

The gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

### #335 Hymn of the Day *“Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross”*

1. Jesus, keep me near the cross, there’s a precious fountain;  
free to all, a healing stream flows from Calv’ry’s mountain.  
In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;  
till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.
2. Near the cross, a trembling soul, love and mercy found me;  
there the bright and morning star sheds its beams around me.  
In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;  
till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.
3. Near the cross! O Lamb of God, bring its scenes before me;  
help me walk from day to day with its shadows o’er me.  
In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;  
till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.
4. Near the cross I’ll watch and wait, hoping, trusting ever,  
till I reach the golden strand just beyond the river.  
In the cross, in the cross be my glory ever;  
till my ransomed soul shall find rest beyond the river.

### A Contemporary Creed

I believe that our lives are held within the encircling love of God,  
who knows our names and recognizes our deepest needs.  
I believe that Christ is the divine Child of the living God,  
and that his grace is like living waters that can never be exhausted.  
I believe in the bathing, refreshing, Spirit of God  
who yearns over our welfare as a mother yearns for her child.  
I believe that God is in the arid desert as well as in green pastures,  
and that hard times and disciplines are also loving gifts.  
I believe that our journey does have a purpose and a destination,  
and that our path leads to a final glory we cannot yet imagine.  
I believe that in the church we are fellow pilgrims on the road,  
and that we are called to refresh one another as God refreshes us. Amen.

### Prayers of Intercession<sup>2</sup>

Reconciled by God’s mercy and sustained by God’s presence, let us pray for the world and its needs. Prayer petitions will end with “Hear us, O God” and the congregation responds by praying **“Your mercy is great.”**

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<sup>2</sup> <https://members.sundaysandseasons.com/Home/DayTexts/2026-3-08/0>

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.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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, cancer, or other sickness (*especially*). Give them your living water always. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We pray for this congregation. Nurture our faith and pour your love into our hearts. Inspire our community by our testimony to God's grace in their lives. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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

## Sharing of the Peace

### Offertory Prayer\*

*Eternal Spirit, Source of healing and wholeness, bless these gifts, that they may be Christ's promise of living water for the world. May all who are touched by today's offering be bathed in the goodness of God's life, grace and hope. Amen.*

p.190 **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.**

It is a right, good and joyful thing, always and everywhere,  
 to give thanks to you.

You invite us to return to you with all our hearts and live with joy.  
 Renew our enthusiasm in faith and life and bring us to the fullness of grace  
 that belongs to all of us, your beloved children.  
 An so with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your  
 name and join your unending hymn:<sup>3</sup>

p.190 **Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
 heaven and earth are full of your glory, full of your glory.  
 Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.  
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
 Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**Eucharistic Prayer D – The Season of Lent<sup>4</sup>**

Holy God, our living water and gracious guide,  
 together with rivers and seas, wells and springs we give you thanks.  
 You led your people Israel through the desert,  
 And provided them water from the rock.  
 We praise you for Christ, our Rock and our Water,  
 who joined us in our desert, pouring his life for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
 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.

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<sup>3</sup> Adapted by Rev Lynn Robertson from *With One Voice: Leaders Edition*, p.22A-22D

<sup>4</sup> Adapted by Rev Lynn Robertson from *With One Voice: Leaders Edition*, p.68

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

Pour out your Spirit on this holy food  
 and on all gathered for this meal of love and forgiveness.  
 Strengthen us that we may be revived for our journey by the love of Christ.

Through Christ all glory and honour is yours, gracious God,  
 with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. Amen.

p.191 **The Lord's Prayer**

**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.**

**Communion Distribution**

p.191 ***Lamb of God***

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
 Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
 Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
 grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.**

**#777 Communion Hymn "Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty"**

- 1. Come to me, all pilgrims thirsty; drink the water I will give.  
 If you knew what gift I offer, you would come to me and live.**

*Refrain:*

**Jesus, ever-flowing fountain, give us water from your well.  
 In the gracious gift you offer there is joy no tongue can tell.**

- 2. Come to me, all travelers weary; come that I may give you rest.  
Drink the cup of life I offer; at this table be my guest.**

*Refrain*

- 3. Come to me, believers burdened; find refreshment in this place.  
Come, receive the gift I offer, turn to me and seek my face.**

*Refrain*

- 4. Come to me, repentant sinners; leave behind your guilt and shame.  
Come and know divine compassion, turn to me, I call your name.**

*Refrain*

- 5. Come to me, distressed and needy; I would be your trusted friend.  
Come and seek the gift I offer, come, your open hands extend.**

*Refrain*

- 6. Come to me, abandoned, orphaned; lonely ways no longer roam.  
Come and take the gift I offer, let me make in you my home.**

*Refrain*

## **Communion Blessing**

### **Prayer after Communion**

Compassionate God, you have fed us with the bread of heaven. Sustain us in our Lenten journey: may our fasting be hunger for justice; our giving, a making of peace; and our prayer, the song of grateful hearts, in Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

## **Announcements**

### **Blessing**

Bathe in the river of God's love.

Swim in the waters of Christ's healing.

Ride the currents of the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Share God's living water with a thirsty world

and feel the blessings of God well up within you into a spring of eternal life.

Go with God in the name of the + Creator, the Redeemer, and the

Comforter. Amen.

**#658 Sending Hymn “O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts”**

1. **O Jesus, joy of loving hearts, the fount of life, the light of all:  
from ev’ry bliss that earth imparts we turn, unfilled, to hear your call.**
2. **We taste you, ever-living bread, and long to feast upon you still;  
we drink of you, the fountainhead; our thirsting souls from you we fill.**
3. **For you our restless spirits yearn, where’re our changing lot is cast;  
glad, when your smile on us you turn,  
blest, when by faith we hold you fast.**
4. **O Jesus, ever with us stay! Make all our moments fair and bright!  
Oh, chase the night of sin away! Shed o’er the world your holy light.**

**Sending**

Go in peace, to love and serve God through word and deed.

**Thanks be to God!**

**Sources:**

Bible passages (except where otherwise indicated) from Common English Bible (CEB) and adapted for inclusive language.

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