

## Order of Worship for March 12, 2023

### Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

### Opening Hymn – “Come to Calvary’s Holy Mountain” – Hymn #435

### Confessing our sin and receiving God’s forgiveness –

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

### Old Testament Lesson – Exodus 17:1-7

R: All the congregation of the people of Israel moved on from the wilderness of Sin by stages, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?" But the people thirsted there for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." And the LORD said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink." And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarreling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

P: We confess our sins to God.

**C: We complain about all that is wrong in our lives. We lack health, funds, peace in our families, security. Though we have seen Your great act of saving us in Christ Jesus, we demand like the people of Israel, “Give us, give us, give us!” What Moses said of the people of Israel could be said of us, “What shall I do with this people?”**

P: God sent His Son, Christ Jesus, to die on the cross with our lack of trust and faith. In His name, by His power, and following His command I forgive you of your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**C: Amen.**

P: Hear what we have through that forgiveness:

### Epistle Lesson – Romans 5:1-8

R: Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in

which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Entrance Psalm:**

P: Blessed are those whose strength is in You,

**C: in whose heart are the highways to Zion.**

P: How lovely is Your dwelling place,

**C: O LORD of hosts!**

P: My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the LORD;

**C: my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God.**

P: Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young,

**C: at Your altars, O LORD of hosts, my King and my God.**

P: Blessed are those who dwell in your house,

**C: ever singing your praise!**

**All: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: Blessed are those whose strength is in You,

**C: in whose heart are the highways to Zion.**

### **Hymn of Praise – “Glory Be To Jesus” – Hymn #433**

### **Holy Gospel – John 4:5-26**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter

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

P: So [Jesus] came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as He was from His journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." (For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that You, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings 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 nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will

never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." 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 now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but You say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. 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 is seeking such people 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 (He who is called Christ). When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C: Praise be to You, O Christ.**

### **Children's Message:**

**Sermon Hymn:** *"For All the Faithful Women"* - Hymn #855 vs 1, 10, 3-4

### **Sermon:** *"Living Water"* – John 4

Next to the air we breathe, water is the primary element in God's creation. Water comes in all shapes and sizes, depending on its use and temperature, as we've seen in the precipitation over the last few days. When water is frozen, it is solid. We put ice in many beverages, and snow falls on the mountains and on our driveways and sidewalks. When water is above freezing, it is a liquid. We drink it, shower with it, bathe with it, and wash our clothes and dishes with it. Finally, when water is heated, it becomes a gas. It forms clouds and fog and steam. Water is everywhere in our lives.

Or at least it should be, and needs to be. Without fresh water, your body cannot be sustained. Without water, nothing can live. Human beings—like all living things—need water not only to survive but to thrive. Our bodies are mostly made of water, and without it, quite simply, we die. Water is life.

Water is especially important in the desert. When water is rare, it becomes more valuable. One UN study claims that 2/3 of the global population will soon live in water scare areas, and that over 700 million people will be displaced because of drought. Others claim that wars will not be fought over oil, but over water. Here in Iowa, farmers carefully watch the drought maps, hoping they'll get enough rain and snow at the right times for crops to grow.

We all thirst. Even if it's not literal water, we still thirst. And we try to quench our thirst by all kinds of people and things that we think we will satisfy us: money, sex, power, popularity,

fame, recognition, entertainment. But they don't satisfy. Even after we obtain them, we are still thirsty. We're left high and dry, empty, disappointed, and dissatisfied.

But there is a "thirst" in each of us that is even deeper than our need for physical water. And that is our thirst for wholeness and connection with God and other people. We are created for communion with God and community with each other. The Bible says that God has placed eternity in our hearts, a deep spiritual thirst. And that thirst can only be satisfied by God. But our sin gets in the way of our need, separating us from God and isolating us from each other. Sin wants us to be empty and alone, with a thirst that can never be satisfied.

It's in that context that we see this Samaritan woman who Jesus meets at the well. She comes in the middle of the day, approaching the well, alone, hot and thirsty. This woman is everything that a good Jew thought was bad about Samaritans. She was an outcast among outcasts.

More than that, this woman's life had dried up. She was rejected by her fellow villagers, and came to the well alone. While all of the other villagers came to get their water when it was cooler, in the morning, she comes in the heat of the day. In the course of the conversation with Jesus, the reason is revealed. This woman had had five husbands, and was now living with a sixth man. A string of broken relationships that even if she was repeatedly widowed would have made her an outcast. Her life has isolated her from everyone around her, as she attempted to hide from the public shame and scorn. Friendships had dried up, leaving her alone and isolated. She thirsts for something more.

After revealing her sordid past, after revealing everything that he knows about this woman, Jesus reveals himself to her. "I who speak to you am he." He reveals himself as the Messiah, as the Christ. He reveals himself as God, who knows everything. Jesus reveals Himself as the one who knows everything about the woman, but talks with her and loves her anyway. And at this point, at the end of the longest conversation Jesus has with anyone, Jesus has shown the woman who she is, and who he is. From that beginning, from Jesus revealing her sinfulness, Jesus shows who he is, and what he does. Contrary to the woman's previous experience with Jews who had been made unclean by her presence, Jesus instead sanctifies, cleans, all that he sees.

How has your life dried up? Maybe, like the woman at the well, it's a string of broken relationships, a string of bad decisions. Maybe, instead, all of your job prospects have dried up. Or maybe your mouth is dry because of a disease, or the side effects of medication or radiation therapy, or the grief and nervousness that come with watching a loved one suffer from those symptoms. There's a lot in life that can dry us up.

Even if we recognize our need for water, we can try to quench our thirst with things that do not satisfy. Instead of being filled with the living water from Jesus, we fill ourselves with food and drink, with a thirst for ambition or power or peer recognition, or a deep desire for any number of things that keep us from God. We are like sailors adrift on the ocean, surrounded by water that will only make them thirst more. What can possibly quench our thirst?

Like the woman by the well, we also thirst for wholeness, healing, forgiveness, hope, and grace. And Jesus freely offers living water to everyone who thirsts.

But on the cross, Jesus said, "I thirst," one of the last words from the cross, and one of the phrases that shows us the agony he was in. On the cross, water and blood pour forth to show he

was truly dead, and to give us life. On the cross, Jesus Christ died for our sins. On the cross, he was glorified because the sinless Son of God died for unholy, empty, thirsty sinners like you and me.

In Israel, there are two bodies of water along the Jordan River. The Sea of Galilee is where the disciples fished, and where people still fish. It's full of life and gives life to those around it. The other body of water is the Dead Sea. The area around the Dead Sea is just as you'd expect from the name; dead. The water there isn't living water. It doesn't flow. It doesn't give life. The difference between these two bodies of water? Water flows out of the Sea of Galilee. Water doesn't flow out of the Dead Sea. As the water evaporates, the salt remains behind, making the Dead Sea the saltiest body of water on Earth. Everything keeps flowing through the Sea of Galilee. It has living water, flowing water, water that isn't just trapped. It flows outward and onward.

Even though we live in a time where water flows out of faucets and drinking fountains without much thought or effort on our part, we will still get thirsty. We still wait until we will thirst no more. We wait until the promise comes true, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." Until then, we see how the water around us gives us life, and points us to Jesus who gives us living water that fills us to overflowing.

**Hymn of Faith:** *"Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart"* – **Hymn #708**

**Sharing Our Ministry**

**Offering & Voluntary**

**Prayers –**

**P:** Lord in Your mercy,

**C:** give us Your water so we do not need to be thirsty.

**Lord's Prayer:**

**Closing Prayer:**

**All:** Christ Jesus, the Living Water from the Father, make us thirsty for You so that we seek not the things of this world which will not last, but the water You offer which alone can quench our spiritual thirst, You who rule with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. Amen.

**Blessing (Pastor)**

**C:** Amen.

**Closing Hymn:** *"I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus"* – **Hymn #729**

**Postlude**