



Lent 3
Surprising conversations:
Woman at the Well

Sunday, March 8, 2026
Third Sunday in Lent



48 Perrin Street, Fairport, NY ~ (585) 223-0634 ~ www.blcfairport.org

PRELUDE

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

(NETTLETON)

Paul Manz
tune, American folk /J. Wyeth

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

Amen.

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Gracious God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Amen.

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 HYMN	O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts	ELW 658
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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.


KYRIE




In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.




For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



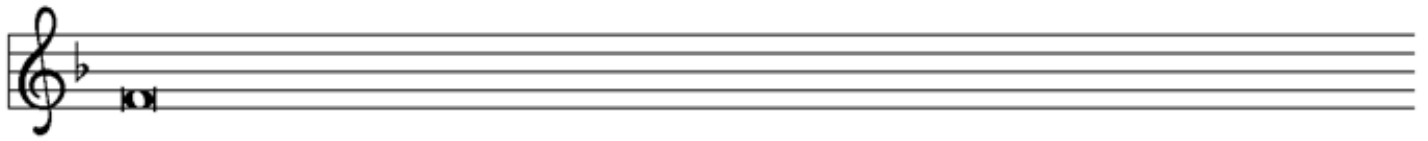
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.

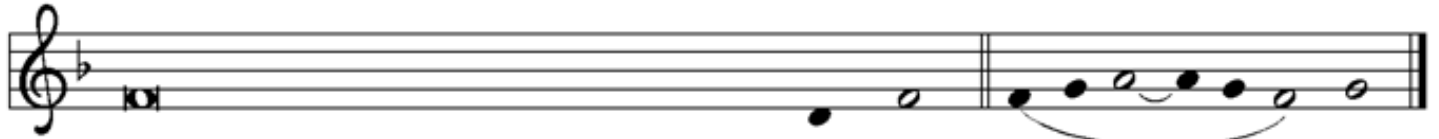


For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. **A - men.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. 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.

HEARING GOD'S WORD

DISMISSAL TO WORSHIP FOR KIDS AND JOY!

*All kids ages 3 through elementary are welcome to a special time of hearing the Word, conversation and activity! Parents can remain in the sanctuary while the kids gather in designated spaces. **Worship for Kids** (Ages 3 – Grade 2) meets across the hall from the sanctuary and **JOY!** (Grades 3 – 5) meets downstairs. Kids will return during the offering so they can participate in Communion.*

Psalm 95

This Lent, we join with our ancestors in faith in praying and singing the Psalms in worship. While written for a specific time and particular situations, the Psalms remain a powerful source of language that expresses the depth of human emotion and experience. The congregation sings the refrain at the direction of the cantor.

Refrain

Refrain

If to - day you hear his voice, hard - en not your
hearts, hard - en not your hearts.

Verses:

1. Come, let us sing with joy, sing praise to the Rock who saves us.
Come now with open hearts, singing songs of thanks, singing songs of praise.

Refrain

2. Come, let us kneel to God, bow down to the Lord who made us.
We are the flock of God; God who shepherds us, God who guides us home.

Refrain

3. If you should hear God's voice, do not let your hearts be hardened as in that desert land; there they saw my works, still they tested me.

Refrain

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Re - turn to the Lord, your God, for he is gra - cious and
mer - ci - ful, slow to an - ger, and a - bound - ing in
stead - fast love, and a - bound - ing in stead - fast love.

The holy gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL: John 4:3-42

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

Narrator: Jesus left Judea and started back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the land Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his journey, so he sat down by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw water.

Jesus: Give me some water to drink.

Narrator: His disciples had gone into the city to buy food.

Samaritan Woman: Why do you, a Jewish man, ask for something to drink from me, a Samaritan woman?

Narrator: Jews and Samaritans didn't associate with each other.

Jesus: 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.

Samaritan Woman: Sir, you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get this living water? You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave us this well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.

Jesus: Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water I give becomes in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life.

Samaritan Woman: Sir, give me this water, so that I will never be thirsty and will never need to come here to draw water!

Jesus: Go, call your husband, and come back here.

Samaritan Woman: I don't have a husband.

Jesus: You are right to say, *'I don't have a husband.'* You have had five husbands, and the man you are with now isn't your husband. You have spoken the truth.

Samaritan Woman: Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you and your people say that it is necessary to worship in Jerusalem.

Jesus: Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you and your people will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You and your people worship what you don't know; we worship what we know because salvation is from the Jews. But the time is coming — and is here — when true worshippers will worship in spirit and truth. The Father looks for those who worship him this way. God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth.

Samaritan Woman: I know the Messiah is coming, the one who is called the Christ. When he comes, he will teach everything to us.

Jesus: I am the one who speaks with you.

Narrator: Just then, Jesus' disciples arrived and were shocked that he was talking with a woman. No one asked, *What do you want?* or *Why are you talking with her?* The woman left her water jar and went into the city.

Samaritan Woman: Come and see a man who has told me everything I've done! Could this man be the Christ?

Narrator: They left the city and were on their way to see Jesus.

Disciples: Rabbi, eat something.

Jesus: I have food to eat that you do not know about.

Disciples: Has someone brought him food?

Jesus: I am fed by doing the will of the one who sent me and to complete his work. Don't you say, *'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 harvest. The one who harvests receives pay and gathers fruit for eternal life so that the one who sows and the one who gathers can celebrate together. This is a true saying: one sows and another harvests. I sent you to harvest what you didn't work hard for—others worked hard, and you will share in their hard work.

Narrator: Many Samaritans in that city believed in Jesus because of the woman's word when she testified:

Samaritan Woman: He told me everything I've ever done!

Narrator: When the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. Many more believed because of his word, and they said to the woman:

Villagers: **It's no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this one is truly the Savior of the world.**

Narrator: And at a well in Samaria, thirst was quenched — not only for water, but with faith that flowed like a living spring.

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

We take a moment to reflect on God's word before singing the hymn of the day.

HYMN OF THE DAY

There Is in Every Person

Stanzas —1: Cantor

2, 3, 4: All



1. There is in ev - 'ry per - son ca - pac-i - ty for
 2. There is in ev - 'ry per - son ca - pac-i - ty for
 3. There is in ev - 'ry per - son ca - pac-i - ty for
 4. There is in ev - 'ry per - son ca - pac-i - ty for



love. If not to give, then to re-ceive. If
 grace. If not to give, then to re-ceive. If
 trust. If not to give, then to re-ceive. If
 hope. If not to give, then to re-ceive. If



not to grasp, then to be-lieve. God's im - age marks
 not to grasp, then to be-lieve. God's mer - cy seeks
 not to grasp, then to be-lieve. God's sto - ry shapes
 not to grasp, then to be-lieve. God's vi - sion calls



each one of us, and God is love.
 each one of us and of - fers grace.
 each one of us and teach - es trust.
 each one of us and leads to hope.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Our prayers are always offered on behalf of the whole community.

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

A brief silence.

#1 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.

#2 When the waters run dry, sustain this earth. Send water to places languishing with drought, and bring relief to places damaged by floods. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

#3 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.

We pray for people of other faiths, especially Muslim neighbors who celebrate Ramadan at this time, that we share with them a deepening of our respective faiths; and for our siblings in faith in our twinned parish in Shurugwi, Zimbabwe. May our partnerships remind us of your abundance. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We know that all people matter in your eyes and you know their cares and concerns, their hopes and joys. We pray for those whose needs are known to us.

We pray for those who are grieving, especially the family and friends of:

- Ritva H, godmother to Marja R, who died on 2/26
- Josiah L, friend of the Koncilja family, who died 2/23
- David, friend of the Moragne family, who died in February
- Paul N, who died 2/22, we especially remember wife, Gwen, their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren
- Marie, Bob & Becki P's daughter's mother-in-law

We pray for those in need of healing, especially:

- Bob P, who is recovering from anticipated surgery
- Erika P, partner of Brian K, who is recovering from multiple fractures following a fall
- Denise H, daughter-in-law of Kathy F, who has been sick with pneumonia
- Jan S, recovering from knee replacement surgery

Hear the names of those we raise to you in our hearts or on our voice.

Silence for individual prayer.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Receive our prayers, O God, through Jesus Christ, our strength and salvation.

Amen.

SHARING GOD'S MEAL

THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Share the peace in a way that cares for friend and neighbor. If you worship virtually, share the peace through the comments section or text.

OFFERING

Thank you for your offerings that support the ongoing ministry that we share.

Information about supporting Bethlehem's ministry with your offerings is available in the Welcome insert in your pew rack or by visiting blcfairport.org/support-our-ministry or scan the QR (quick response) code on the right and you'll be brought to BLC's mobile giving page.



OFFERING OF MUSIC

Come to the Water

text, John B. Foley, S.J.
music, Cary Ratcliff

The Chancel Choir

OFFERTORY

Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right

spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your

pres-ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -

store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,

and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Let us pray. God our provider,
you have not fed us with bread alone, but with words of grace and life. Bless
us and these your gifts, which we receive from your bounty, through Jesus
Christ our Lord. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

United in baptism, we pray as Jesus taught:

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

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

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

Thanks be to God!

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

*Our communion bread is gluten-free, unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice
is available; indicate your need to the communion assistant.*

THE COMMUNION



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have

mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
 world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
 sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion is served at the rail. The ushers will direct you forward by the center aisle. You may kneel or stand, remaining at the rail as long as you desire and return to your seat by the outer aisle. Our communion bread is gluten-free, unless noted by the pastor. Grape juice is available; indicate your need to the communion assistant.

HYMN FOR COMMUNION
 I Received the Living God

ELW 477

Refrain: sung by All

Refrain

I re - ceived the liv - ing God, and my heart is full of joy.
 I re - ceived the liv - ing God, and my heart is full of joy.

Cantor:

1. Jesus said: I am the bread, kneaded long to give you life; you who will partake of me need not ever fear to die. **Refrain**
2. Jesus said: I am the way, and my Father longs for you; so I come to bring you home to be one with us anew. **Refrain**
3. Jesus said: I am the truth; come and follow close to me. You will know me in your heart, and my word shall make you free. **Refrain**
4. Jesus said: I am the life, far from whom no thing can grow, but receive this living bread, and my Spirit you shall know. **Refrain**

HYMN FOR COMMUNION

Blessed Assurance

ELW 638

Refrain:

“This is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long;
this is my story, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.”

TABLE BLESSING

LEAVING TO SERVE

CHORAL BENEDICTION

O God, You Search Me

text, Psalm 139, adapt.
text / music, Bernadette Farrell

*O God, you search me and you know me.
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze.
When I walk or lie down you are before me:
Ever the maker and keeper of my days.*

*Before a word is on my tongue, Lord,
You have known its meaning through and through.
You are with me beyond my understanding:
God my present, my past and future, too.*

SENDING HYMN

Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me

ELW 767

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

During the season of Lent we omit the Postlude and provide space for reflection following worship.

BLC Pastors

The Rev. Abigail Zang Hoffman and The Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson, co-Pastors

BLC Musicians

Raelynn Clare, Music Director and Organist

Chrisanne Gates, Chancel Choir Director

Rich Towsley, Director of The Folk Group and BLC Dulcimers

Additional musical leadership provided by:

Flute: Sue Cardinal

Cantors: Madeleine Hoffman, Kathy Moragne, Rev. Amy Walter-Peterson,
Hans Walter-Peterson

Thank you to all those who participated in worship this Sunday! Want to learn more about what roles are needed in worship or sign-up for a pre-scheduled role? Talk with one of the pastors following worship or send an email to volunteersupport@blcfairport.org and we'll follow up!

Communicate with us: Share more about who you are, request further information, or leave a prayer request or comment through our website - <https://blcfairport.org/share-in-worship/> - scroll down the page to request or share information.

What's happening at BLC this week? Visit the Calendar of Events at www.blcfairport.org. Zoom links for virtual meetings are also found there. If you would like to schedule a meeting or event, please email the church office at office@blcfairport.org or visit <https://blcfairport.org/blc-facility-request/>

Church office hours: Sandy Squires holds office hours on Wednesdays from 9-1 and is responsive to phone and email Monday through Friday during usual business hours. Please communicate your needs through the church office by phone (585) 223-0634 or by email office@blcfairport.org. Our co-Pastors are available Sunday – Thursday and on-call for emergencies. Contact them directly to schedule an appointment either by calling the church office or emailing pastor.hoffman@blcfairport.org or pastor.amy@blcfairport.org

Lent and Holy Week at Bethlehem

Wednesdays in Lent

6 – 6:45 pm – Simple Supper

Each Wednesday in the Fellowship Hall we host a simple supper of one-pot dishes. If you would like to contribute to a meal, a week of clean-up, sign up online, or on the kiosk in the Narthex . . .or just show up to enjoy the meal and fellowship.

7 pm – A modified version of Holden Evening Prayer, in person and livestream

Share in worship, prayer, and listen in on conversation.

Holy Week and Easter

During Holy Week we follow Jesus' journey from his triumphal entry into the city to a desolate cross to an empty tomb.

Check out the weekly Star and Ready for Worship emails for more information about Holy Week worship.

Palm/Passion Sunday, March 29 at 8:55 am (in person and livestream)

Maundy Thursday, April 2 (in person and livestream)

Noon (in person and livestream) – Individual Absolution and Holy Communion in the Sanctuary

6 pm (in person only) – Remembering Jesus' last supper with his disciples, we will begin worship with a shared meal at tables in the Narthex and end in silence in the sanctuary after the altar is stripped

Good Friday, April 3 at 7 pm (in person and livestream) – **Tenebrae Service**

Easter Sunday, April 5 at 8:55 am (in person and livestream) **and**

11 am (in person only)

Easter Breakfast served 9:45 – 10:45 am

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS)

SAVE THE DATE!

JULY 20-23, 2026

AT ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN IN PITTSFORD

BLC is partnering with St. Paul's, Pittsford again
for this **FREE** summer's VBS program!

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Holy Communion, Setting Three; Music: Richard W. Hillert © 1978, 2006 Richard W. Hillert (adm. Augsburg Fortress)

“Create in Me a Clean Heart”, Music: J. A. Freylinghausen

“O God, You Search Me” Text and Music: Bernadette Farrell © 1992, Bernadette Farrell (adm. Oregon Catholic Press)

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” Tune: J. Wynth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

Music: Paul Manz © 2011 Birnamwood Publications (ascap)

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Music and Psalm Verses (adapt.) © 2002, Scott Soper (adm. OCP Publications)

“Come to the Water” Text © 1978 John B. Foley, SJ (adm. New Dawn Music); Music © 1991 Cary Ratcliff (adm. Kairos Music Publishers)

Our “Other” at the Well

The woman at the well is a familiar text for many people. This image of Jesus standing at a well talking with a Samaritan woman is emblazoned in our visual and theological imaginations, but as with all Bible stories that we *think* we know, we might do well to take another look! Perhaps relegating this text to the simple moralism “be nice to people who are different” causes us to miss how deeply radical and difficult the message really is. We may assume this gospel simply urges us to stand with the marginalized, especially women. Yet while standing with marginalized women is a commendable action it can lead us, after doing so, to congratulate ourselves for being just like Jesus. A more critical and searching look at this text calls us to the reality that Jesus doesn’t just stand with *the other*, Jesus stands with *your* other; *your church’s* other. Your church’s “Samaritans” may be LGBTQ+ people, evangelicals, urban people, rural people, conservatives, liberals, the poor, the rich, the dying, or single parents. Your church’s Samaritans could very well be the key to this text. Because, like it or not, when we draw lines between ourselves and other people, Jesus is always on the *other* side of that line. So communities and individuals who thirst for the living water would do well to look to who our own Samaritans might be. And when we find them we should perhaps not be surprised to also find Jesus; a Jesus we thought was all our own but who, in reality, is the living water who comes to us in the strange and the stranger.