

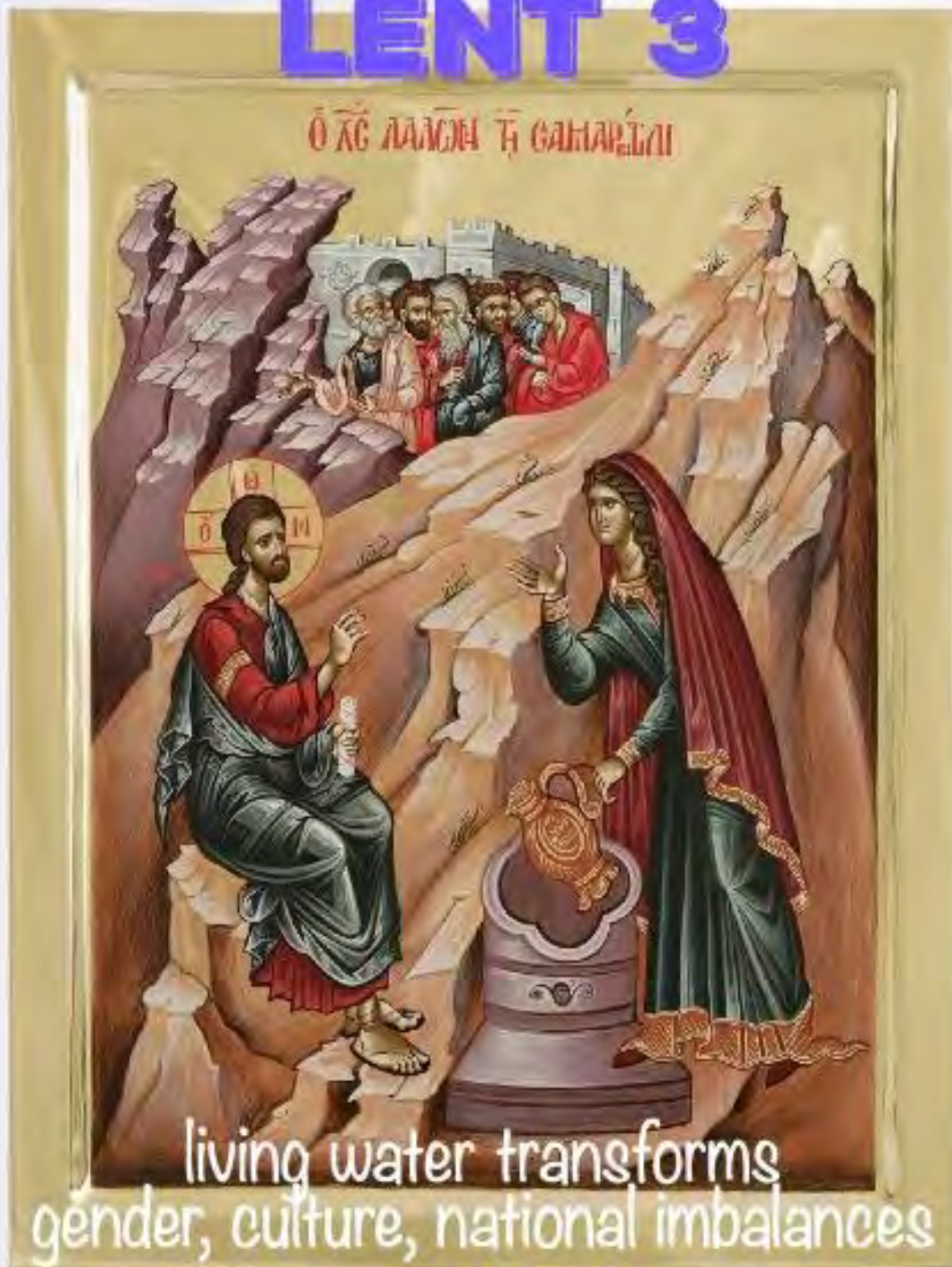


uniting
church

in Australia,
Synod of NSW & ACT

Leigh Memorial
Uniting Church

LENT 3



12 March 2023

WELCOME

Welcome to our Third Sunday of Lent.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge the Burrumattagal people of the Darug Nation, the first inhabitants of this place, as the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to their ancient culture, their elders past and present and their emerging leaders. We acknowledge the presence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who now reside within this area. We honour them for their custodianship of the land, on which we gather today.

LENTEN SPIRITUALITY

Welcome to a season of self-examination.

This is a time to ponder the depth
of God's transforming love into the world.

Lenten spirituality invites a transformative journey,
to participate in the emergent light of new life ...

LIGHTING OF THE LENTEN CANDLE

As light is borne from the white Christ candle
to the three violet Lenten candles in Lent,
so the Spirit of God lights up our lives through the desert times
of testing and times of abundant life.

The Lenten Candle is lit

OPENING SENTENCES

THIS WELL IS DEEP

THE SAMARITAN WOMAN says to Jesus

“Sir, you have no bucket or rope
and this well is deep.” John 4:11

Rising water,

springing from great depths,
stored up long ago when the stars
first sang together for joy.

Living water,

like a cup of celebration,

full and running over

all the days of our life.

Refreshing water,

mysteriously satisfying
so that our youth is renewed
like soaring eagles.

***Cleansing water,
washing deep down
where fingers cannot reach,
making all things new.***

Surprising water,
breaking through the earth
in rocky places
wherever that man Jesus goes.

***Redeeming water,
paid in full by One
who by cross and tomb
has brought us his baptism***

HYMN *Miracle of Life* (Tune, 152)

1. Miracle of life unfolding,
dazzling to our watching eyes,
far beyond full comprehension,
secrets of the earth and sky.
Each advance of understanding
each new piece of knowledge gained
leaves the soul amazed and humbled,
child-like wonder yet remains.

2. Nature teems with life abundant,
stunning in variety,
shape and size and colour differing,
wondrous in complexity.
From a high, majestic mountain
to the contours of a shell,
Life has much to teach of difference,
Rich we be to learn it well.

3. Filled with joy we stand in wonder
at the life in which we share,
Gratefully we find our spirits
sensing glory everywhere.

Sun and moon and tiny creature
in their beauty stir the heart,
leading us to sacred duty,
call us well to do our part.

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PRAYER

Vulnerable God,
you challenge the powers that rule this world
through the needy, the compassionate,
and those who are filled with longing.
Make us hunger and thirst to see right prevail
and single-minded in seeking peace;
that we may see your face
and be satisfied in you,
through Jesus Christ!

Amen!

Janet Morley, All desires known

SCRIPTURE READING **John 4: 4-52** (Selected verses)

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about noon.

When a woman from Samaria came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.'

His disciples had gone away to the city to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to Jesus, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a woman from Samaria, for a drink?' For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.

Jesus replied: 'If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you: Give me a drink, you would have been the one to ask, and he would have given you living water.'

The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have no bucket', she answered 'and the well is deep: how could you get this living water? Are you greater than our ancestors Leah, Rachel and Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it with their descendants and flocks?'

Jesus replied: 'Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again; but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give will become in them a spring of water welling to eternal life.

The woman said, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never get thirsty and or to come here again to draw water...'

Jesus said to her, 'Go, call your husband, and come back'.

The woman answered him, 'I have no husband'.

Jesus said, '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'.

'I see you are a prophet.' said the woman. 'Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, while you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.'

Jesus said: 'Believe me, woman; the hour is coming when you will worship God neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

'You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from the Jews. But the hour will come - in fact it is here already - when true worshippers will worship in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper our God wants.

'God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.'

The woman said to Jesus, 'I know the Messiah is coming - the Anointed One - who will tell us everything.'

'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am that one.'

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.

...

Many Samaritans of the town had believed in Jesus on the strength of the woman's testimony when she said, 'He told me all I have ever done,' so when the Samaritans came up to Jesus, they begged him to stay with them.

Jesus stayed for two days, and when he spoke to them many more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard this one ourselves who we know really is the saviour of the world.'

RESPONSE

*O God our nurturer,
may your word live in us.
And colour our living. Amen!*

SONG

Walls and Doors, Jackson Browne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slZwbpiCWOY>

Ever since the world's existed
There's one thing that is certain
There are those who build walls
And those who open doors
Ah but this my love
I'm thinking you already knew



For some it's always winter
While others have the spring
Some people find good fortune
While others never find a thing
Ah but this my love is something you already knew

That's how it's always been
And I know you know it
There can be freedom only when nobody owns it
I'm going to say that again
Because I know you know it
There can be freedom only when nobody owns it

Of what use is the moon if you don't have the night?
Of what use is a windmill with no Quixote left who'll fight?
Ah but this my love is something you already knew
At some point on the horizon
Sky can be confused with earth
Some people dream of God
While others dream of wealth
But of course my love this is what you see out on the street
It's how it's always been
And I know you know it

There can be freedom only when nobody owns it
Let me say that again
Because I know that we both know it
There can be freedom only when nobody owns it
When nobody owns it
When nobody owns it

Ever since the world's existed
There's one thing that is certain
Some people build walls
Others open doors

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REFLECTION

SONG *Jesus met the woman at the well.*

based it on the Peter, Paul & Mary version

(YouTube: <https://youtu.be/bBYCPM1Uu1Y>)

Jesus met the woman at the well
Jesus met the woman at the well
Jesus met the woman at the well,
And He told her everything she'd ever done.

He said,

"Please give, please give, give me some water"

"Please give, please give, give me some water"

"Please give, please give, give me some water"

"I know everything you've ever done."

She said,

"Please give, Please give, living water"

"Please give, Please give, living water"

"Please give, Please give, living water"

You know me far better than anyone."

He said,

"I give, I give, living water"

"I give, I give, living water"

“I give, I give, living water”
God’s gift of life for you, evermore

Jesus meets us all there at the well,
Jesus meets us all there at the well,
Jesus meets us all there at the well,
And He tells us everything we’ve ever done.

David MacGregor © 2015 Willow Publishing

** lyrics adapted from American trad.*

** music: public domain*

COFFEE TIME & SHARING

OFFERING

Receive these our gifts, O God.
We place them in your hands and ask you guidance
as we use them to bring compassion into the world.
Bless them now, we pray.

Amen!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

O God, we are listening for the Good News
which nurtures and feeds us.

***We pray that, when we believe that we hear it,
we will become those who live from that truth.***

Give to us a faith which lives in strength
beyond the testing times and hard questions,
which dares to bear witness to you as One
who does not wreak judgement on the innocent.

***For we believe that, even as we falter,
you cherish us and give us grace to try again.***

May your church be so faithful as the Body of Christ
that people will run to us as a place of safety,
where they can weep in the hard times

and be held in care in the face of life events
which make it hard to believe in a loving God.

We pray now for such people:

The people pray

May what lies ahead be healing and reassuring
for these people, loving God.

***Strengthen our faith so that it survives
in ways which turn fragile growings of life
into fruitfulness which can be shared, we pray.***

For we are those who thirst for the waters of your life, O God,
the water of renewal and hope which we can share with the
world.

***Grant this to us as we step into the year ahead, we pray.
Amen.***

Dorothy McRae McMahon, used with permission

HYMN *May the feet of God walk with you (TiS, 779)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rw1sjc3jVrw>

May the feet of God
walk with you,
and God's hand hold you tight.

May the eye of God rest on you,
and God's ear hear your cry.

May the smile of God be for you,
and God's breath give you life.

May the Child of God grow in you,
and God's love bring you home.

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BLESSING

Go into this fourth week of Lent
to live and learn
as we enact our faith in the world.

And may the life of Jesus Christ be made real before us,
the Holy Spirit lift our faith to follow in the Way
and the Creator God make all things new.

Amen.