

**St. Olaf Lutheran Church**  
**Sunday, March 8, 2026**  
**Third Sunday in Lent**

*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.*

**Welcome & Announcements**

**\*Confession and Forgiveness**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

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.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Most merciful 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.**

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of

Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**\*Hymn**

*Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty*

**ELW 777**

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

**\*Kyrie**

**pg 147**

**\*Prayer of the Day**

**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.**

*Please be seated.*

**Bells**

**First Reading: Exodus 17:1-7**

<sup>1</sup> From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" <sup>3</sup> But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" <sup>4</sup> So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me." <sup>5</sup> The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. <sup>6</sup> I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup> He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

L: Word of God. Word of Life

**C: Thanks be to God**

## Psalm: Psalm 95

<sup>1</sup> Come, let us sing | to the Lord;  
let us shout for joy to the rock of | our salvation.

<sup>2</sup> **Let us come before God's presence | with thanksgiving  
and raise a loud shout to the | Lord with psalms.**

<sup>3</sup> For you, Lord, | are a great God,  
and a great ruler a- | bove all gods.

<sup>4</sup> **In your hand are the caverns | of the earth;  
the heights of the hills are | also yours.**

<sup>5</sup> The sea is yours, | for you made it,  
and your hands have molded | the dry land.

<sup>6</sup> **Come, let us worship | and bow down,  
let us kneel before the | Lord our maker.**

<sup>7</sup> For the Lord is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep | of God's hand.

Oh, that today you would | hear God's voice!

<sup>8</sup> **“Harden | not your hearts,  
as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah | in the desert.**

<sup>9</sup> There your ancestors | tested me,  
they put me to the test, though they had | seen my works.

<sup>10</sup> **Forty years I loathed that gener- | ation, saying,  
‘The heart of this people goes astray; they do not | know my ways.’**

<sup>11</sup> Indeed I swore | in my anger,  
‘They shall never come | to my rest.’”

## Second Reading: Romans 5:1-11

<sup>1</sup> Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup> through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> And not only that, but we also boast in our afflictions, knowing that affliction produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

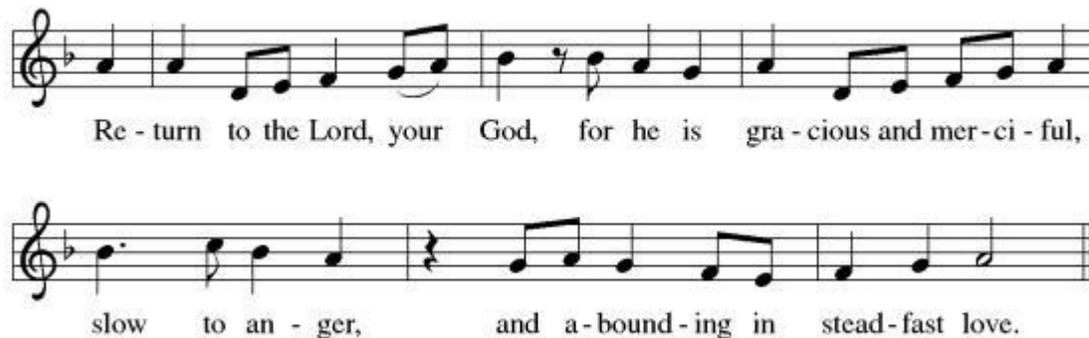
<sup>6</sup> For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. <sup>9</sup> Much more surely, therefore, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. <sup>10</sup> For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be

saved by his life. <sup>11</sup> But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

L: Word of God. Word of Life

C: **Thanks be to God**

### \*Gospel Acclamation



### \*Gospel: John 4:5-42

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

C: **Glory to you, O Lord**

*(This is the condensed story from the children's Spark Bible.)*

Tired from walking a long way, Jesus rested at a well in a place called Samaria. His disciples went to get food while he rested. The sun was high in the sky. Whew! Jesus was hot. His tongue was as dry as a wad of sheep's wool. He was very thirsty.

A Samaritan woman came to the well to get water. "Will you give me a drink?"

Jesus asked. She gave him a puzzled look. Jesus was a Jew, and she knew that most Jews didn't like people from Samaria.

"Why are you asking me for a drink?" she asked. "If you knew who I was," Jesus answered, "you would ask me for living water."

Now the woman was really puzzled! "Sir," she said as she pointed to the well, "the well is deep and you don't have a jar. Where will you get this living water?"

Jesus smiled. "Everyone who drinks from this well will be thirsty again. But the water I bring lasts forever!"

What the woman didn't understand was that Jesus wasn't talking about water you drink. He was talking about living water-love that forgives and life that lasts forever with God. As Jesus explained more, the woman became more and more interested. She wanted to hear more.

So Jesus told her more... lots more. Jesus knew all about her-about where she came from and what she believed.

As they talked, the woman's eyes began to twinkle. "I know the Messiah is coming," she said. "I've heard all about him."

Jesus smiled and put his hand on the woman's shoulder. "I am the Messiah," he said gently. The woman was so surprised; she nearly spilled her water jar! As the disciples came back with food, the woman rushed past them. She was so excited to tell everyone about what Jesus had said. The woman ran all over town telling people about what she had seen and heard. "There's a man at the well who says he's the Messiah. He has amazing things to say! Come and see him for yourself!" she said. The people came running to see Jesus. Many people believed in Jesus because of what he told them that day.

P: The gospel of our Lord

**C: Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Children's Sermon**

**Pastor Emily Sauer-Alvarez**

**Sermon**

**Pastor Emily Sauer-Alvarez**

**\*Hymn**

*Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross*

**ELW 335**

**\*Apostles Creed**

**pg 105**

**\* Prayers of Intercession**

Hear us, O God.

**Your mercy is great.**

**\*Peace** (*Feel free to share a handshake or hug*)

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Please share with one another a sign of Christ's peace.

**Offering:** *Please consider giving an offering for the mission and ministry of St. Olaf. We can continue to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ with your support and generosity. God bless you. Also, please pass the attendance sheets down your row and fill out your info.*

**\*Offering prayer**

O God, maker of heaven and earth,  
your steadfast love embraces all creation.

You send rain and sunshine to nourish the earth  
and bring forth its bounty.

Draw us into the death and life of your Son,  
who calls us to bear witness to his saving work.

We ask this in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

**\*Lord's Prayer**

**\*Blessing**

Receive the blessing of the holy Trinity:  
God, who calls all things into existence,  
Jesus Christ, who redeems us,  
and the Holy Spirit, whose breath sustains creation,  
✠ bless you now and always.

**Amen.**

**\*Hymn**

*Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me*

**ELW 623**

**\*Dismissal**

Go in peace. Believe the good news.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Assisting in Worship**

Presider: Pastor Jim McColley

Assisting: Pastor Emily Sauer-Alvarez

Organist: Jason Swedlund

Reader: Stacy Hendrickson

Ushers: Mitch Craigmile, Doug Seltz

Tech: Bob Younie