



A Celebration for Third Sunday of Lent

Sentence

'As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts,' says the Lord. *(Isaiah 55:9)*

or

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. *(Isaiah 55:6)*

Opening Prayer or Collect

O God, the fountain of life,
to a humanity parched with thirst
you offer the living water that springs from the Rock,
our Saviour Jesus Christ:

stir up within your people the gift of your Spirit,
that we may profess our faith with freshness
and announce with joy the wonder of your love.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Collect for the Season

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made,
and you forgive the sins of all who are penitent:

create and make in us new and contrite hearts,
that we, worthily lamenting our sins,
and acknowledging our wretchedness,
may obtain of you, the God of all mercy,
perfect remission and forgiveness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Readings for the Third Sunday in Lent (Year A)

Old Testament: Exodus 17:1-7

A Reading from Exodus, Chapter 17 beginning at verse 1

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. The people quarrelled 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?" 3 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?" So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready

to stone me.” 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. 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. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarrelled and tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

Hear the Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Psalm 95 APBA p322

- 1 O come, let us sing out to the Lord:
let us shout in triumph to the rock of our salvation.
- 2 Let us come before his face with thanksgiving:
and cry out to him joyfully in psalms.
- 3 For the Lord is a great God:
and a great king above all gods.
- 4 In his hand are the depths of the earth:
and the peaks of the mountains are his also.
- 5 The sea is his and he made it:
his hands moulded dry land.
- 6 Come, let us worship and bow down:
and kneel before the Lord our maker.
- 7 For he is the Lord our God:
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.
- 8 Today if only you would hear his voice—
'Do not harden your hearts as at Meribah:
as on that day at Massah in the wilderness;
- 9 'When your forebears tested me:
put me to proof, though they had seen my works.
- 10 'Forty years long I loathed that generation and said:
"It is a people who err in their hearts,
for they do not know my ways',
- 11 'Of whom I swore in my wrath:
They shall not enter my rest."

New Testament: Romans 5:1-11

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans, Chapter 5, Verse 1

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 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. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person —though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. 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. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Hear the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

Gospel: John 4:5-41

A Reading from the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John, Chapter 3, beginning at verse 1
Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ

So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common 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 no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." 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 have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 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 seeks such as these 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" (who is called Christ). "When he comes,

he will proclaim all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

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.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.”

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world.”

For the Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ