

*As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.
May we together experience the presence of God*

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We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord



Prelude – Welcome - Announcements

Water is one of the most critical needs of human existence. It ranks right up there with air.

Some of us have trouble understanding such desperation, given the availability of so many things that can quench our thirst. Those who live in the Great Lake States are looked upon in envy by those in the dry southwestern states.

We are thirsty. And we just might be getting thirstier. Both physically and spiritually.

Which leads me to ask...

Did you ever do a kindness for someone and feel that the individual was not properly grateful? Did it make you less likely to help the next time around? When Jesus says, “Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48), do you think he meant putting up with complaints and overreactions when people’s basic needs aren’t being met? Do you think he meant, “Give drink to the thirsty, regardless of how they respond”?

The truth is we all have our thirsty days. Even Jesus had them. At least if John is right about the story that he tells in our Gospel text for today. But the difference is, for Jesus, a thirsty day was an opportunity rather than a terror. It was a chance to give out of abundance, rather than a panic to fill an emptiness.

The question I heard asked some time ago that still echoes in my soul is this: “Jesus says if we drink of the water he offers us, we will never be thirsty. So, why are we still thirsty?”

Why do we still live in emptiness? Is it because we don’t ask? We think our own buckets are sufficient. Why do we not embrace the life that he offers? It can’t be that simple, can it? Just ask? Just want it, and he will give it? What’s the catch? Maybe we should just give it a try.

CALL TO WORSHIP

Welcome pilgrims on the way to the cross.

We are learning to follow Jesus.

The way is long, and we are thirsty.

We seek the living waters of Jesus.

We feel the weight of scarcity warring with hopeful whispers of abundance.

We need the living waters of Jesus.

We wonder if God will provide us with what we need, here and now.

As God gives us the living waters of Jesus, so God calls us to quench the thirst and meet the needs of our neighbors.

Pilgrims on the way, come let us worship God!

We come to worship God as we learn to live inside out!

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We are dry, Lord, like the pavement on a sweltering summer day. Our lives are heated, and the streams of our souls sometimes run dry. We catch our tears, but they cannot ease our thirst. We drip in sweat, but this cannot ease the heat. So, we beg for only a few drops of refreshing rain to moisten the dryness in our world.

(Time for Silent Confession)

God's promise is greater than rain or streams. God promises a Savior sent to redeem and fill us with water eternally. [Living] in the will of God, we [live] without thirst anymore. Amen.

***HYMN OF PRAISE**

We Hear God's Word

Gospel Reading..... John 4:5-42
New Revised Standard Version

5 So he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. 6 Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

7 A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." 8 (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 9 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.)[a] 10 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." 11 The woman said to him, "Sir,[b] you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? 12 Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" 13 Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, 14 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." 15 The woman said to him, "Sir,[c] give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." 17 The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband,' 18 for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" 19 The woman said to him, "Sir,[d] I see that you are a prophet. 20 Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you[e] say that the place where people

must worship is in Jerusalem.” 21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you[f] will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22 You[g] worship what you[h] do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 23 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. 24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” 25 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.” 26 Jesus said to her, “I am he,[i] the one who is speaking to you.”

27 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?” 28 Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, 29 “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah,[j] can he?” 30 They left the city and were on their way to him.

31 Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” 32 But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” 33 So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” 34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. 35 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. 36 The reaper is already receiving[k] wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. 37 For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ 38 I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

39 Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” 40 So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of his word. 42 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 Savior of the world.”

The Word of God for the People of God, **Thanks be to God!**

FAITH HYMN UMH

“Message”

Joys/Concerns

Prayer of Intercession

We thank you, O God, that you have given us an enduring hope—one which cannot disappoint us or mislead us. We thank you, that through our faith in you and in your Son Jesus Christ, you enter into every believing heart and make us new...

We pray today, O God, that those believers who are asleep may awake and know that salvation is nearer now than when they first believed. Help them, and us, to lay aside the works of sin and to put on the armor of salvation that you bestow upon those who actively seek your grace. Grant that their faith and ours may be fully alive....

We ask today, O God, for those who have lost hope and for those who have never had it. Grant to us and to those we lift before you in our hearts a new and abiding vision of what you have done, and what you are doing, and what you will do, to save and redeem your people and indeed creation itself. Grant, O God, that all might see and believe and discover their purpose and the purpose of all that is and all that is yet to be....

We lift before you, O God, those persons and those places named in our sharing time (bidding prayer)....

Lord, hear our prayer.....

We ask all this of you, O God, knowing that you are our hope and our salvation, a very present help in times of trouble, and the One whose purpose is to grant new and abundant life to us and our world. In the name of the one who is the living water let us unite in prayer this day, Our Father...

Offertory (UM Hymnal 95) Doxology

Offertory Prayer

God, our provider, in Christ you give us a spring of pure water that overflows to eternal life. Your love and hope fill our hearts, so we want to worship you in Spirit and truth. Open our eyes to see the places in this neighborhood where our church's ministries could reach new people. Direct our gifts and offerings for your purposes, so that our community will become like a field ripe for harvest. We ask this through Christ, our risen Lord. Amen. (John 4:5-42)

Departing Hymn

Benediction

As you leave today, may you be blessed with thirst that produces compassion, with living waters that restore your soul, and with a heart flowing with the healing waters that our parched world desperately needs. Amen.

***POSTLUDE**