

Christ Church, Ipswich
Sunday 8th March 2026
Family Worship for The Third Sunday in Lent

Hello, I hope you are well.

For this the Third Sunday in Lent, our readings will be Psalm 95:1-7 and John 4:5-42.

Let us worship God together:

Call to worship – Psalm 95

Come! Let us raise a joyful song to the Lord,
 a shout of triumph to the rock of our salvation.

**Let us come into his presence with Thanksgiving
 and let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!**

For the Lord is a great God,
 a great King over all gods;
**the farthest places of the earth are in his hands
 and the heights of the mountains are his also;**
 the sea is his for he made it;
 the dry land fashioned by his hands is his.

**O come, let us worship and bow down,
 let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!**

for he is our God,
 and we are his people,
 we are the flock he shepherds.

A gathering prayer

Lord, we are drawn to your well
 to seek the water of eternal life.
 Refresh us with your Word.
 Surround us with your Love.
 And fill us to overflowing with your Spirit,
 the water of life,
 that we may never be thirsty. **Amen.**

R&S 187 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness

1 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,
 bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
 gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,
 bring and adore him; the Lord is his name.

2 Low at his feet lay thy burden of carefulness,
 high on his heart he will bear it for thee,
 comfort thy sorrows, and answer thy
 prayerfulness,
 guiding thy steps as may best for thee be.

3 Fear not to enter his courts in the slenderness
 of the poor wealth thou would'st reckon as thine;
 truth in its beauty and love in its tenderness,
 these are the offerings to lay on his shrine.

4 These, though we bring them in trembling and
 fearfulness,
 he will accept for the name that is dear;
 mornings of joy give for evenings of tearfulness,
 trust for our trembling, and hope for our fear.

5 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness,
 bow down before him, his glory proclaim;
 gold of obedience and incense of lowliness,
 bring and adore him: the Lord is his name.

John S. B. Monsell. 1811-1875 altd.

A prayer of adoration

The woman recognises Jesus for who he really is.
 The Samaritans hear that Jesus is the saviour of the world.
 They can't help but believe.
 May we see today that you know us, Lord,
 through and through.
 May we hear that you are our Saviour,
 be astonished by your amazing love and acceptance,
 realising that you have always known us.
 Praise you, mighty redeemer. **Amen.**

A prayer of confession

Forgive us when we have tried to draw water from elsewhere,
 and failed to draw water from you.
 Forgive us when we have ostracised those who,
 like the woman at the well, are not like us.
 Forgive our prejudices towards those on the edge
 of our society today.
 Forgive us when we struggle to be holy.
 Help us, Lord, to love as you love,
 and to open our hearts and minds and eyes to all. **Amen.**

Assurance of forgiveness

Though tempted and though we make bad choices,
 through the cross we are assured of grace and forgiveness.
 In our weakness we are made strong.
 We are forgiven and restored through the unending love of God.
 All thanks and praise be to God. **Amen.**

A prayer of thanksgiving

We give you thanks and praise today, Lord, for the woman at the well.
 Thank you for her willingness and eagerness to seek you.
 Thank you for the life-giving water that you gave to her – and now give to us.
 Thank you that she – and we – may thirst no more.
 Thank you that you welcome the outcast and the stranger.
 Thank you that you welcome us.
 We give you thanks and praise for your life-giving Spirit that transforms individuals and communities.
Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
 thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those who trespass against us.
 Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Family Talk

GG 35 As the deer pants for the water

1 As the deer pants for the water,
so my soul longs after You.
You alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship You.

*You alone are my strength, my shield,
to You alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire
and I long to worship You.*

2 I want You more than gold or silver,
only You can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver
and the apple of my eye.

3 You're my friend and You're my brother,
even though You are a king.
I love You more than any other,
so much more than anything.
You alone are ...

Martin Nyström
© 1985 Restoration Music

The children go to Junior Church with our love and blessing**Gospel Reading****John 4:5-42***Jesus and the woman of Samaria*

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.) 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, 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, 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, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you 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 will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²² You worship what you 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 worshippers 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, 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, 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 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 labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.’

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 for 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 Saviour of the world.’

R&S 295 Breathe on me, breath of God

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| <p>1. Breathe on me, breath of God,
fill me with love anew,
that I may love what thou dost love,
and do what thou wouldst do.</p> | <p>3. Breathe on me, breath of God,
till I am wholly thine,
until this earthly part of me
glows with thy fire divine.</p> |
| <p>2. Breathe on me, breath of God,
until my heart is pure,
until with thee I will one will
to do and to endure.</p> | <p>4. Breathe on me, breath of God;
so shall I never die,
but live with thee the perfect life
of thine eternity.</p> |

Edwin Hatch (1835-89) altd.

Reflection

A moment for reflection as Stephan plays the organ

R&S 349 I heard the voice of Jesus say

1 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘Come unto me and rest;
lay down, O weary one, lay down
your head upon my breast.’

I came to Jesus as I was,
forlorn and faint and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
and he has made me glad.

2 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘Behold, I freely give
the living water; thirsty one,
stoop down, and drink, and live.’
I came to Jesus, and I drank

of that life-giving stream;
my thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
and now I live in him.

3 I heard the voice of Jesus say,
‘I am this dark world’s light;
look unto me, your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright.’
I looked to Jesus, and I found
in him my star, my sun;
and in that light of life I’ll walk,
till travelling days are done.

H. Bonar (1808-89) altd.*

Our prayers of intercession

Lord, as you sat by the well and asked for a drink you broke some of the taboos of society. You led your disciples in a new way of living. So we pray for the leaders of the nations, particularly the leader of our country...

And Lord, we pray particularly for the Middle East, where war is raging...

We pray for those who have lost loved ones...

We pray for all those who have had their homes destroyed...

Lord, give our leaders wisdom. May they be people of integrity and people who lead with humility and justice. Reveal yourself to them, Lord, so that they may follow where YOU lead. Speak peace into their hearts and minds, Lord, and thus bring a swift end to the conflict, we pray.

Lord, in your mercy: **Hear our prayer.**

The following prayers use this response:

Lord as we get to know you better,

Reveal more of who you are.

Lord Jesus, we thank you for coming to live and breathe and work among us. You didn't stay aloof, you came to be the incarnate God, to get your hands dirty for us and with us. Thank you that you experienced all aspects of human life so that we can be assured that you understand us and everything that we have to face. Thank you that you meet us in different ways, revealing different aspects of your character. As we get to know you better, grant us the opportunity to see more of how you move among us now by your Spirit. Help us to see where heaven touches earth as you breathe your new life into so many situations. Help us to hear your whisper as you prompt us to serve you in the people and places around us. Open our eyes to see where you are working and nudge us to follow your lead.

Lord as we get to know you better,

Reveal more of who you are.

Lord, we pray for all those who are enquiring about you; those who have heard or seen something and want to know more. Help our church to be a place of welcome, where enquirers are free to ask all the questions they need. We pray for anyone who is preparing for baptism or confirmation or attending a Lent group for the first time. We pray for children in our local schools, that they may find staff who can help them with any questions they have about you. Give us the courage to invite our friends and families to join us in worship. We pray for friends and family members who once knew you but now have wandered away. Help us to gently bring them back to you. And we pray for all those who may enter our church unsure of why they have come. May they find peace and a true encounter with you.

Lord as we get to know you better,

Reveal more of who you are.

Lord, as we think of the woman at the well, we think of those in our communities who may be shunned by those around them, perhaps because of their race, their gender, their accent, their past. We think of times when we have felt out of place or unwelcome, unsure of ourselves and uncomfortable. Thank you for those who helped us settle: perhaps with a kind word, a listening ear, a non-judgemental attitude.

We name out loud or in our hearts anyone we know who feels unwelcome in our community... We rejoice, Lord, that you welcome everybody, whoever they are and whatever they have done. Show us how to be an inclusive community here in our church. And send us out to serve those who are on the margins for whatever reason.

Lord as we get to know you better,

Reveal more of who you are.

Lord, as you came to draw water at the well, our thoughts turn towards those who do not have safe water to drink. We pray for those whose daily journey to fetch water is fraught with danger. We think of those with no sanitation, particularly in schools where lack of toilets can mean girls miss out on some of their education. We thank you for the aid agencies that work to provide communal taps and wells and for those who build latrines so that more people can have the basic necessities required for healthy living.

We pray for those who have too *much* water, where flooding has ruined homes, crops and livelihoods.

Help us to be good stewards of the resources you have given us. Guide the leaders of the nations to work towards a healthier planet for the benefit of everyone.

Lord as we get to know you better,

Reveal more of who you are.

Lord, we thank you for Lent where we are encouraged to get to know you better. Give us the determination to find one or two ways to connect with you more deeply: perhaps by reading, or by downloading an app, by giving something up or giving some of our time or money. May Lent be a time of blessing as we discover more about you. Lead us forward towards Easter with a new desire to serve you and learn from you so that we can rejoice all the more in your resurrection.

Lord as we get to know you better,

Reveal more of who you are and bring us your peace and joy.

Amen

R&S 345 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

1 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah,
 pilgrim through this barren land;
 I am weak, but thou art mighty,
 hold me with thy powerful hand:
 bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
 feed me now and evermore;
 feed me now and evermore.

2 Open thou the crystal fountain
 whence the healing stream doth flow;
 let the fiery, cloudy pillar
 lead me all my journey through:
 strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
 be thou still my strength and shield;
 be thou still my strength and shield.

3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,
 bid my anxious fears subside;
 death of death, and hell's destruction,
 land me safe on Canaan's side:
 songs of praises, songs of praises,
 I will ever give to thee;
 I will ever give to thee.

William Williams, Pantycelyn (1717-91)
 v. 1 tr. Peter Williams (1722-96) altd.
 vv. 2-3 tr. William Williams (or John Williams, 1754-
 1828) altd.

A sending out prayer

We have heard for ourselves:

the great love of Jesus.

We have drunk for ourselves:

the living water of God.

We have seen for ourselves:

the new life of the Spirit.

May the great love,
 living water and new life
 go with us this week;

into our lives and the lives of others. Amen.

The Blessing

And may the blessing of God,
 Creator, Christ, and Comforter,
 go with us and all whom we love.
 Now and forever, Amen.

The Grace

**May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 the love of God,
 and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit,
 be with us all evermore. Amen.**