



PHINNEY RIDGE
LUTHERAN CHURCH



LENT
DEVOTIONS
WHERE DO
YOU FIND
LIVING
WATER?

2023

Remember **Baptism**



***How many different water sources can you use this Lent to place a cross on your forehead and say:
"I am a beloved child of God!"***

Where do you find that living water?



I love the scripture readings at the Easter Vigil. One reading stands out from Isaiah 55: “Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat!” These ancient words become new each year as a clarion call for the people of God to come to God or return to God, in and around the waters of baptism.

Many persons at the Vigil will have prepared for this moment through a rich journey through forty days of Lent. Those in the WAY process, people new to PRLC or new to the Christian faith, come to the waters with their companions after a time of exploring what living water looks like in their individual lives and within the Christian community. The journey is made by all of us as we take time to step back and consider the ways we need Christ to reshape our lives and ask questions like: How are we living out the Gospel? What areas of spiritual growth are needed? Where have we fallen short and failed to love? We explore these questions by returning to the source of living water through prayer, worship, and acts of generosity and mercy.

The Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well asks Jesus, “Where do you get that living water?”

I recommend asking your questions and engaging in spiritual practices with this primary question in mind. This year’s Gospel readings from John are a rich resource in helping us probe what it means to live in Christ and to return to Living Water.

-Pastor Bryon Hansen

This resource contains daily liturgies that you are encouraged to use either in the morning or at evening or both. Each day a reflection is offered around a different kind of water or use of water. Thanks to all in our community who offered reflections based on their favorite images of water. We pray that this prayer companion will be a useful tool as we return again to the fountain of living water.

Prayer Morning

You may prepare a bowl of water and light a candle. You are invited to make the sign of the cross and may dip your fingers in the water before doing so.

Blessed be the holy Trinity +,
one God, who forgives all our sins
and whose mercy lasts forever.

Amen.

O God, you are kind and forgiving,
full of love to all who call on you.

Listen to my prayer

hear the cries of my pleading.

Thanksgiving for Baptism

O God, we give you thanks
for the mercy you so freely offer us
through the grace of our baptism –
safe passage through the sea,
justice rolling down like water,
deliverance from sin and death forever.
By the power of your Holy Spirit,
poured out upon us in baptism,
teach us to love and serve you faithfully
and reconcile us to you and to one another
as members of one, living body,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Psalm 51

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Daily Scripture and Reflection

We live not by bread alone,
but by every word that comes from God.

Thanks be to God.

Thanksgivings and Intercessions

Offer prayers of thanksgiving for the church, every service that proclaims love, the people and relationships that sustain us, signs of new life, and our daily calling to follow Jesus.

Offer prayers of intercession for the church, the stewardship and healing of creation, friends and family members, neighbors in special need, the wisdom of the Spirit of this day.

God of love, we pray that we may this day and all our lives long, walk without stumbling in the way you have prepared for us, which is Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

May the steadfast love of God,
the abundant grace of Jesus Christ, +
and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit
be with us this day and always. **Amen.**

Prayer Evening

*You may light a candle and/or prepare a bowl of water.
Make the sign of the cross, saying:*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son +, and of
the Holy Spirit,
Amen.

Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening
and the day is almost over.

Thanksgiving for Light

Blessed are you, O God,
the pillar of cloud by day,
the pillar of fire by night.

In these forty days
you led us into the desert of repentance and
the pilgrimage of prayer
that we may learn to be your people once more.
Open our eyes to your presence in the world
and free our hands to lead others
to the wonders of your grace.
Be with us in these journey days,
for without you we are lost and will perish.
To you alone be dominion and glory
forever and ever.

Amen.

Psalm 141

I call upon you, O Lord; come quickly to me;
give ear to my voice when I call to you.
Let my prayer be counted as incense before you
and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice.
Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord;
keep watch over the door of my lips.
Do not turn my heart to any evil,
to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with those who work iniquity;
do not let me eat of their delicacies.
Let the righteous strike me;
let the faithful correct me.
Never let the oil of the wicked anoint my head,[a]
for my prayer is continually against their wicked deeds.
When they are given over to those who shall condemn them,
then they shall learn that my words were pleasant.
Like a rock that one breaks apart and shatters on the land,
so shall their bones be strewn at the mouth of Sheol.[c]
But my eyes are turned toward you, O God, my Lord;
in you I seek refuge; do not leave me defenseless.
Keep me from the trap that they have laid for me
and from the snares of evildoers.
Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
while I alone escape.

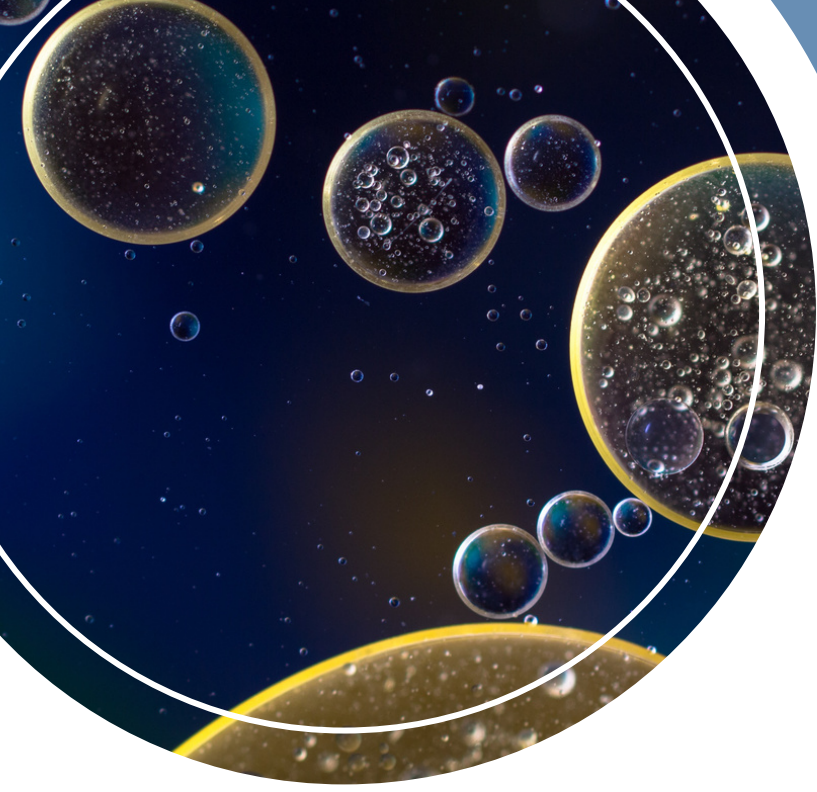
Daily Scripture and Reflection

Prayer

*Review the day. For what are you most thankful and for what
are you least thankful? Add intercessions as you like.*

The Lord's Prayer

Keep watch, O God, with those who work, or
watch, or weep this night, and give your angels
charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord
Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying,
soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the
joyous; and all for your loves' sake. **Amen.**



February 22

Patrick Meagher

Cell

And God said, “Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.” And it was so. — Genesis 1:9

Cellular biology has always fascinated me. For starters, every cell in our body contains water. Some are 70-80% water such as brain and kidney cells, but even our bone cells are about 30% water. It’s everywhere. Creation has implanted a little bit of water in every part of our physical being.

This had me thinking about the creation story in Genesis, and particularly the moment on the second day, before any mention of plant or animal life, when God organized the water from the land. A simplistic understanding of evolution (the only kind of which I’m capable!) tells us our predecessors eventually emerged from these bodies of water and forged a new existence on land. It’s like we took a bit of the primordial sea with us in our cells, and from those waters we still draw sustenance.

I encourage you to take a moment, sit still, feel the creation juice in your cells, and consider the hand of the Great Creator who put you together cell by cell.

Great Creator, we acknowledge we are practically nothing in the grand scheme of creation, yet we are everything to you. Amen

February 23

Chris Shultz



Snow

God saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of God's mercy. God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior. — Titus 3:5

I love when it snows. When everything is covered in snow it always feels like we get a chance at a fresh start, a rebirth. Everything that we have done to mess things up is covered in beauty. When we lived at Holden I was in charge of undergrounding the electrical system, replacing all the water lines and installing a fire suppression system. We dug trenches everywhere and left scars all over the village. It looked terrible. But then the heaven poured out a generous helping of snow, feet of snow and the Village was restored. The mercy of snow covered everything and all we saw was beauty. When it snows I am reminded of God's mercy that covers and washes our sins and renews us, even when we make a mess of things. What a promise, what a blessing.

**Dear God, thank you that our salvation is not dependent on our deeds
but on your mercy. Amen.**

February 24

Pastor Anne Lohrmann

River

**God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;
Psalm 46**

I have been a churchgoer since I was a week old. But I really learned what “Church” is on the Clark Fork River in Idaho. See, when I was in high school, I somehow landed the best church camp opportunities through Camp Lutherhaven (still operating today in Coeur d’Alene, ID! Go!). I spent a week each summer doing outdoor adventure camps, including three years of canoe camp and one mountain biking through the San Juan Islands. My parents faithfully brought me to church throughout my childhood, and I always loved it. I loved the singing and the relationships with old people and with young people. I loved potlucks and using the cool kneeler things during confession. But when I had the chance to go to camp, without my parents, without a hymnal to guide me, without a spoken response for each prayer – I began to wonder about God all on my own. Staring at the stars after a long day of canoeing, praying fervently and singing church camp songs to get us through the rough patches of the river, sharing doubts and questions with my peers and young adult counselors...this was the living water that really nourished the roots of my faith.

Listen, I love “church” as we know it as much as anyone (obviously). But it’s important for my spiritual journey to remember that Church is not a building. Church is a community of believers and doubters, stumbling along this journey of following Jesus together. It’s not a box to check. It’s not a book to memorize. Real Church is us, wondering together at the expansiveness of God’s creation and God’s love and forgiveness. It’s showing up for one another and listening. It’s cheering each other on and knowing we’re being prayed for when we can muster a prayer. Our buildings may crumble and our leaders may disappoint us, but none of that matters, because God’s Church is so much bigger than a building. Dear Church, you are so much bigger than you know, and I pray that today you will go out into your daily life and see Church at work somewhere unexpected.




God of love, thank you for the Church in its many forms. Help us to be Church in the world. Bless all outdoor ministries, and nudge parents to send their children out to experience your love, and your Church, in new ways. Amen.

Wade in the Water

Refrain
All

Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,



wade in the wa - ter, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Leader

All

1 See that host all dressed in white,
2 See that band all dressed in red, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the
3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?
4 If you don't be - lieve I've been re - deemed,

Leader

wa - ter. the lead - er looks like the Is - rael - ite.
looks like the band that . . . Mo - ses led.
the Ho - ly Ghost a - com - ing on me.
just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream.

All

Refrain

God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

February 27

Mary Lydic

“Return our exiles, O Lord, like watercourses in the Negev. Those who sow in tears shall reap with songs of joy. They who go along weeping, carrying the seedbag, shall come back with songs of joy, carrying their sheaves” — Psalm 126:4-6

Puddles

Raindrops keep falling on my head . . .

With eyes to see and booted feet
The children splash like baby ducks in a pond.

In the arid desert the dry brown washes and
wadis fill with rushing streams.

The children splash in holy joy
Refreshed by God’s bounty.

Refresh us O God with your holy water. Show us the joy of splashing in puddles. Rain down your love on thirsty people and grant us your peace. Amen.





February 28

Tina Georgeson

Fountain

***The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of Glory thunders, the Lord,
over mighty waters.***

***The voice of the Lord is powerful;
the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. — Psalm 29: 3-4***

As I sit by the fountain, the water rises from the center filling the surrounding pool with refreshing water. As I watch the fountain's center, it reminds of my Lenten practice. God is the center of my life sometimes. I can leave the center for so many reasons, hardship, too much joy, sadness, too much self-righteousness. Sometimes it takes a clap of thunder to remind me to pray. When this happens I stop and pray in order to find my back to the center; to the voice of God. I pray for peace of mind and serenity which only God can give, and then I am restored — back in the center of God's refreshing pool of water. This is living water for me because it is refreshing and always accessible when I find myself away from the center.

Good and gracious God, send claps of thunder to remind us to pray so that we can hear your voice. Amen.

March 1

Amy Radil



Fish Ladder

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.
—Matthew 11:28

Many of you have probably visited the Ballard Locks, it's a great place for kids to watch the boats going through and the water levels rising and falling at the transit point of our lakes with Puget Sound. In school our kids learn all about another part of the locks: the journey of the salmon, back from the ocean to seek their home streams and spawn.

But it's less academic when you actually see the fish ladders teeming with these salmon working so hard to make their way home. Behind the glass, they are huge, silvery beautiful fish, battling every second against the current to jump up the many levels to enter Salmon Bay and the Lake Washington Ship Canal. Some of them have scars and scrapes on their bodies from close calls along their journey. I'm always moved by their determination and the strength it all takes.

With the living water of Jesus I hope we can marvel at the beauty and diversity of our Creation, show care for the well-being and habitat of every creature, and find strength for our own incredible journeys.

**Dear God, Thank you for your living water
that fills and sustains us. Help us to
smooth one another's ways in this world
by offering love, hospitality and rest.
Amen**

March 2

Deacon Patrick Meagher

Steam

***Is there no balm in Gilead?
Is there no physician there?
Why then has the health of the daughter of my people
not been restored?
~Jeremiah 8:22***

Recently, I discovered I'm actually allergic to quite a lot of things! That reality, plus a deviated septum, means a lifetime of sinus flare ups featuring occasional severe pain. Medicines sort of help, and environmental changes have really helped. But my favorite treatment is a very natural one: steam. Whether I linger in an extra-hot shower, or hover over a boiling pot of water, steam often brings relief to the inner workings of my face. The vapor floats up and coats my raw nasal passages, assisting the natural process of expelling the plugged mucus and bringing sweet, gentle relief — a balm, if you will.

In these moments, steam sure feels like living water to my physical self. It's also something I can count on. The treatment is cheap, accessible, and easily applied. These qualities remind me of the living water of God's love through Jesus that is always available to nourish our soul, coat the raw nasal passages of our inflamed lives, and gently relieve our pain.

Great Balm, we look to you for relief from our physical and spiritual pain. Please sustain us as we wait. Amen.



March 3

Christina Sunstone

***The LORD will guide you continually
And satisfy your needs in parched places
And make your bones strong,
And you shall be like a watered garden,
Like a spring of water
Whose waters never fail.
— Isaiah 58:11***

Garden

I'm a little more than halfway now through a year of mission work in Bratislava, Slovakia, where I am teaching high school English.

When I got this job, people would ask why I was doing this, and I had a handful of reasons I'd offer. I've traveled widely, but never actually lived in a foreign country. I've studied several languages, but never achieved fluency in any. I used to teach, but I changed careers more than a decade ago, and I missed it.

With closer friends, I'd go deeper: my divorce a few years ago had freed me up to possibilities like this, and I didn't want to go to my grave never having taken this kind of deep dive, stepped up to this kind of adventure.

But I couldn't see God's hand in it until I'd been here for a while. I know now that I am on a pilgrimage. I am here to serve, to stretch, to give everything of myself. And I could not have done it in my comfortable home.

**Continually guiding God: Give us ears
to hear your voice as you help us find
your path. Give us the will to follow it.
Make of us a watered garden, alive
and green and growing. Amen.**



Baptized in Water



1 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, cleansed by the
 2 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, dead in the
 3 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, marked with the



blood of Christ our king: heirs of sal - va - tion, trust-ing his
 tomb with Christ our king: one with his ris - ing, freed and for -
 sign of Christ our king: born of the Spir - it, we are God's



prom - ise, faith - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.
 giv - en, thank - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.
 chil - dren; joy - ful - ly now God's praise we sing.

Text: Michael Saward, b. 1932

Music: BUNESSAN, Gaelic tune

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March 6

Cindy Shultz

Churn

“For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” — Matthew 11:30

Walking has usually been my “go to” exercise, but when I worked at Starbucks, the last thing I wanted to do after being on my feet for 5 or 6 hours was go for a walk. After failing at several other exercise options, I joined the YMCA downtown and rediscovered my love for swimming. No matter how tired I was, once I slipped into the water, I felt like my feet could churn forever. The water took the weight off my tired legs and feet and I made the churn, rather than fighting against it as I had been with other exercises. This can happen in our service to others as well. When we find the right fit, our work and service make churn instead of fighting against it.

Jesus, when we are weary and carrying heavy loads, may we take up your yoke and find our rest in you.

March 7

Ted Hunter



Jug

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him. — John 2:11

The first miracle of Jesus was to turn water into wine. What qualifies as a miracle? The planting of a seed that gives us grapes which we can process into wine seems like a miracle. The joy of holding a newborn baby seems like a miracle. The flight of a flock of birds for thousands of migration miles seems like a miracle. In fact, it may be that there are miracles all around us; we just need to be like the disciples and recognize them.

While we may not be able to turn water into wine, but we can be mindful of those wonders that occur because of the love of God and the love we show our neighbor. Miracles big and small happen when we let our light shine. Let the miracles be known!

March 8

Linda Ramsdell

Spigot

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. — Romans 8:38-39

Growing up in another country I experienced water shortages. Our bathtub and home cistern were kept filled to prepare for times of shortage. Homes only had cold water spigots so our baths were warmed a bit by adding water heated on the stove. I was so thankful when our spigot provided water! Spigots can and do run dry and I lament our world's water shortages.

God promises us living water that will not run dry. Romans 8:39—"neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." God's love provides us with nourishment, like water, and prepares us for shortages that come our way.

Dear God, Thank you for your promise to always love us! Amen!



March 9

Pepper Thomas

Everywhere

And God said, “Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. — Genesis 1:6-7

Living water is everywhere even if you don't know it and see it. In Genesis 1, it states that the earth used to be inky blackness where you could not see anything. It also states that God's spirit created the earth with the water. It also clearly states that God said, "Separate! Water beneath Heaven, gather into one place; Land appear!" Water can also be in plants and trees and other lively things. Even if you can't see the water, you can feel it without knowing it. Living water also can be inside of you like blood running through your body like water runs through life.

Dear God, thank you for all the water that we use to live and breathe with. Amen.





March 10

Nancy Winder

Ocean

There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea; there's a kindness in God's justice which is more than liberty.

Frederick W. Faber 1814-1863. (ELW 587)

For twenty-eight years my husband and I have been going to Tofino, BC every year. Tofino is on the west coast of Vancouver Island. For us it is a glorious haven of rest and renewal. We read books, work on projects, and spend time walking on magnificent Chesterman Beach. We look at shells and seaweed, explore the depths of tide pools, and marvel at the glorious expanse of the Pacific Ocean before us. It is so immense and wide. We see the breadth of creation, and I am reminded that the creator's love is even broader, wider, and more awesome than even this amazing expanse of ocean. God's mercy and love are far greater than we can imagine and we are called to view all the world and all people with such a gracious and expansive view.

Make our love, O God, more faithful; let us take you at your word, and our lives will be thanksgiving for the goodness of the Lord. Amen.

You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore *Tú has venido a la orilla*



1 Tú has ve - ni - do a la o - ri - lla, no has bus -
 1 You have come down to the lake - shore seek - ing
 2 You know full well what I have, Lord: nei - ther
 3 You need my hands, my ex - haus - tion, work - ing
 4 You who have fished oth - er wa - ters; you, the



ca - do ni a sa - bios ni a ri - cos; tan só - lo
 nei - ther the wise nor the wealth - y, but on - ly
 trea - sure nor wea - pons for con - quest, just these my
 love for the rest of the wea - ry— a love that's
 long - ing of souls that are yearn - ing: O lov - ing



quie - res que yo te si - ga.
 ask - ing for me to fol - low.
 fish nets and will for work - ing.
 will - ing to go on lov - ing.
 Friend, you have come to call me.

Refrain / Estribillo



Se - ñor, me has mi - ra - do a los o - jos; son - ri - en - do,
 Sweet Lord, you have looked in - to my eyes; kind - ly smil - ing,



has di - cho mi nom - bre. En la a - re - na he de - ja - do mi
 you've called out my name. . . . On the sand I have a - ban - doned my



bar - ca; jun - to a ti bus - ca - ré o - tro mar.
 small boat; now with you, I will seek oth - er seas.

2 Tú sabes bien lo que tengo:
 en mi barca no hay oro no espadas;
 tan sólo redes y mi trabajo.
 Estribillo

3 Tú necesitas mis manos,
 mi cansancio que a otros descanse,
 amor que quiera seguir amando.
 Estribillo

4 Tú, Pescador de otros mares;
 ansia eterna de almas que esperan.
 Amigo bueno, que así me llamas.
 Estribillo

March 13

Pastor Anne Lohrmann

Birth

***For you yourself created my inmost parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I will thank you because I am marvelously made;
your works are wonderful, and I know it well.
My body was not hidden from you,
while I was being made in secret
and woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my limbs, yet unfinished in the womb;
all of them were written in your book; — Psalm 139: 13-16***



Amniotic fluid is the original “living water,” wouldn’t you say? And whether you’re a mother or not, we all have had an experience with the waters of birth, at least once!

I don’t think enough about the true miracle of life. The way that our bodies are formed, cell by cell, little tiny limbs and stubs of toes, and then internal organs formed and growing and working together until we become, well, us! Maybe I don’t ponder it often because it’s just too huge a mystery for me to even begin to comprehend!

I have birthed four babies, but my water never broke on its own with any of them. Those waters were stubborn, like the little ones growing within. But I love the image of stubborn, protective waters. And I kind of love the idea of thinking of baptismal waters in that way. When we are baptized, whether in a river, a trough, or with one little sprinkle, God promises us a stubborn, protective relationship, where new life is always available because of Christ’s love, forgiveness, and healing.

It’s a miracle that each of us was born, and that we were formed exactly how we are. In stubborn, protective waters, God brought life to being in the form of YOU. And that makes you extremely valuable. Extremely precious. Extremely beloved. Nobody else was formed like you. I’m pondering the enormity of this mystery today.

Dear God, Thank you for the miracle of new life. Though we seem small in the vastness of your creation, help us to remember how precious we are. Help us to see how precious all of your beloved children are! Protect those who are pregnant and giving birth this day; those whose children have died at birth or before; and all those who grieve. Fiercely protect us from sin and evil, and help us birth new life into the world each day with our love, healing, forgiveness, and creativity. Amen.

March 14

Signe Roscoe

Oasis

***until a spirit from on high is poured out on us,
and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field,
and the fruitful field is deemed a forest.
— Isaiah 32:15***

a wet or green area in an arid region (such as a desert) or something that provides refuge or relief

To people in desert lands an oasis meant literal survival. Our barren landscape of complex news, information and culture wars can be stressful. We try to live in The Way of Jesus, loving others as ourselves, caring for those in need and making ethical choices. Sometimes it's all a bit much for our spirits to handle. Lord, to Whom shall we go? Isaiah 32:15 says "Yes, weep and grieve until the Spirit is poured down on us from above and the badlands desert grows crops and the fertile fields become forests." Spiritually, an oasis is wherever God is. A place where we can find grace, forgiveness, love and mystery, redefining our perspective and focusing us on renewal and rest. If you invite it, the oasis of God is as close as your next breath.

O God, you have promised to be with
us always. Help us to pause, invite
and meet you in our breath.
Amen



March 15

Paula Eisenrich

Waves

***The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.
— Genesis 1:2***

Kauai

Drawn to the laughing waves of the Pacific under a cloudless blue tent of sky, I walk past jackfruit trees, lobster claw heliconia, bottle palms, wade out into the water, alone, my toes sinking into the silky, yellow sand, water at my knees when she immediately felled me, and for a moment I drowned in joy.

I swear it was love, waves upon waves, buoying me towards the shore, a force I could not stand, saltwater stinging my eyes, me wanting more.





March 16

Linda Ramsdell

Pond

On the last day of the festival, the great day, while Jesus was standing there, he cried out, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” — John 7:37-38

During the “lockdown” these past few years we explored our local neighborhood and discovered a pond brimming with life: turtles and herons and beavers! Each walk to the pond brought delight! This past fall I was crestfallen to see the pond covered in algae, the waters stagnant and still and no wildlife seen. It felt like a gift taken away and added to my worries about climate change. So last week I was amazed to see flowing water and spot a heron. It turns out this pond is fed by a tributary from Lake Washington that may have been blocked. This makes me ponder Jesus’s words “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink. As the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.’” (John 7:37-38)

Thank you God for the gift of life
“unblocked” and renewed by your
living water!

March 17

Lucy Baker Johnson

Dew

May my teaching drop like the rain,
my speech condense like the dew,
like gentle rain on grass,
like showers on new growth.
—Deuteronomy 32:2



Did you know that God is always whispering — ALWAYS.

We've all seen them. The TV commercials, YouTube videos, TikTok, or even Instagram stories where a person is gifted with a pair of EnChrona color blind glasses. The recipient tears open the packaging, slips the glasses out, and gingerly places them on the bridge of their nose. The smile that spreads across their face, the excitement of the observers anticipating the reaction. Often the only word uttered is WOW!

Imagine now, that this is what it feels like to experience God. We've been told that God speaks in a "still, small voice" (1 Kings 19:12). In Deuteronomy 32:2, God says 'May my teaching drop like the rain, my speech condense like the dew; like gentle rain on grass, like showers on new growth.' In the PNW we experience dew, often. At night the air cools and leaves a layer of moisture on the ground. As the sun comes up, the ground warms, and the water droplets formed at night – by the condensation of water vapor from the air onto the surfaces of God's creations – are exposed to the sky. Each droplet is like a tiny whisper from God.

The Word of God is the whispering of the Holy Spirit.

Down to the River to Pray

2

13

come on down. Oh, sis - ters,

15

let's go down, down in the ri-ver to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray, Studyin' about that good old way
 And who shall wear the stary crown, Good Lord, show me the way!
 O sisters let's go down, Let's go down, come on down,
 O sisters let's go down, Down in the river to pray.

As I went down in the river to pray, Studyin' about that good old way
 And who shall wear the robe & crown, Good Lord, show me the way!
 O brothers let's go down, ...etc.

As I went down in the river to pray, Studyin' about that good old way
 And who shall wear the stary crown, Good Lord, show me the way!
 O fathers let's go down, ...

As I went down in the river to pray, Studyin' about that good old way
 And who shall wear the robe & crown, Good Lord, show me the way!
 O mothers let's go down, ...

As I went down in the river to pray, Studyin' about that good old way
 And who shall wear the stary crown, Good Lord, show me the way!
 O sinners let's go down,...

As I went down in the river to pray, Studyin' about that good old way
 And who shall wear the stary crown, Good Lord, show me the way!

March 20

Pastor Bryon Hansen

Pool

***“Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” Then he went and washed and came back able to see.”
— John 9:7***

When I was a kid, we had a swimming pool in our backyard. It was one of those above the ground pools that we put up every summer. It seemed like it took forever to put it up and then fill it with water from the garden hose. Though that was nothing compared to the long summer which, as a child, really did seem like it lasted forever. During raspberry season around July, we would spend long days picking berries and at the end of the day, would plunge our dusty and sweaty bodies into the water. It was so refreshing. My younger brother and I spent many hours in the pool doing crazy things like pretending to be dolphins, whales, or contestants in a swim meet. It felt like the swimming pool contained healing waters. It was a container for refreshing water and play after toiling all day. It was restorative.

Healing may not necessarily be the word many of us would use to describe pools, though I suspect people who have spent time in pools of hot springs or a Jacuzzi would readily agree. For me, a pool in the backyard was a great gift of healing waters on those hot days that are so rare in the Northwest.

Jesus instructed the blind man to go to the pool of Siloam, and thanks to the transforming power of Jesus, he emerged healed and changed. God washes us in the healing waters at baptism. We are changed, but not all at once. It takes a lifetime to complete our baptism. With the man healed at Siloam, we are on a journey of seeing things in new ways. We don't know how. All we know is that once we were blind and now we see.

- Would you describe your baptism as a kind of healing?
- Were you baptized in a pool or a horse trough?



March 21

Mary Lydic

Salty

But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream! — Amos 5:24

Salt flavors our food, yet humans cannot be refreshed with salt water from our great oceans.

And where does all that salt come from?

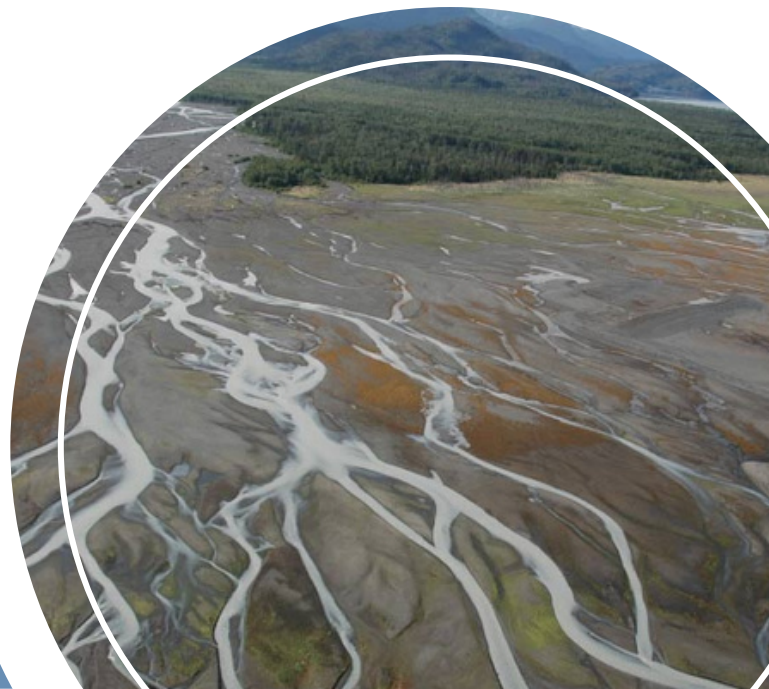
From our rocks and rivers which flow into the seven seas.

Therefore, the freshest water for humans comes from the mountaintops.

From the mountain tops to the toes dipped in salt water oceans we walk in God's Grace and bounty.

Plus to be "salty" adds spice and flavor to our spirits. Rejoice in the sandy, salty pleasures of many beaches.

Creator God, shower us with blessings from mountaintop to seaside. And keep us salty with toes covered in sand. Amen





March 22

Nancy Monelli

Sweat

...the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. — 1 John 4:4)

When I consider living water in a literal way, I am drawn to thinking less about what flows from the tap and more about the water that flows through and out of me as sweat. All of us can and do sweat and, whether we like it or not, it is necessary for our survival.

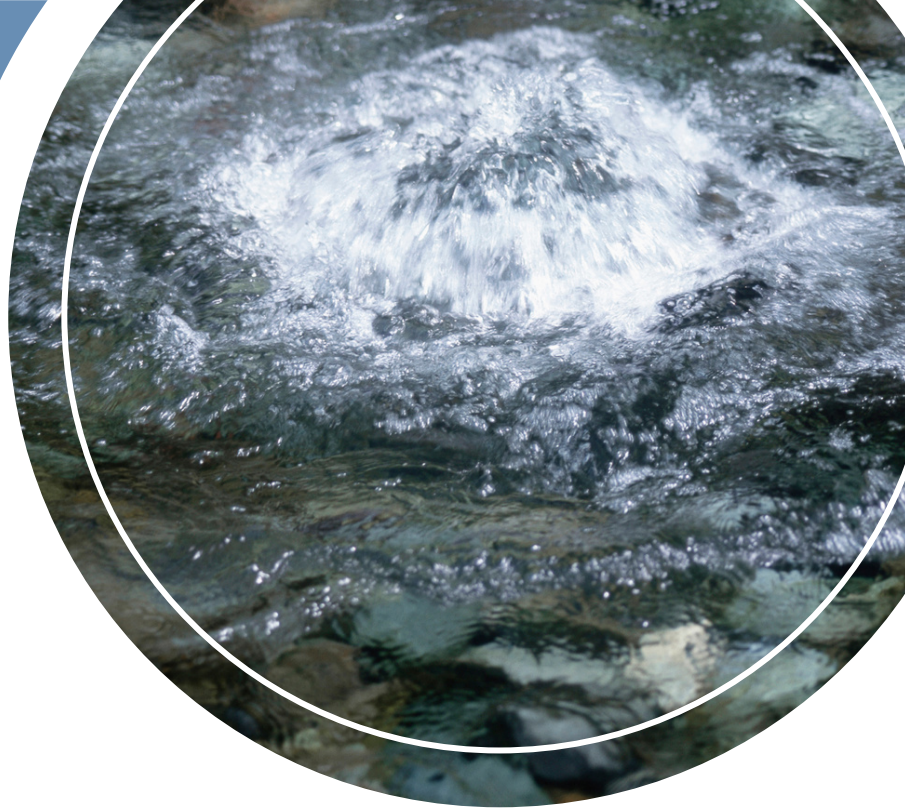
Sweat comes from reserves within our bodies but must be continually replenished. While it refreshes us, sweat also makes us thirsty so that we will replace what our bodies have just given up, and I think that the living water offered by Jesus works in much the same way.

Receiving Christ's living water is not something that only happens once, not something that we then keep contained within ourselves, hoarded in a special reliquary so that we can brag about owning it. No. Like the need to rehydrate, we need to continually welcome this living water into us by returning again and again to its source, Jesus. Each time we spend time with him in scripture study, in prayer and worship, and in time with the members of our faith community we receive more of his living water. Then, as his water flows into us, we are refreshed, revitalized and empowered to the point where we cannot keep it to ourselves for it is mightier than any worldly problem or power and it demands that we share it. When the world presents us with violence, destruction, and pain, the living water flowing in and through us offers peace, restoration, and healing. And, just as our body responds to exertion with sweat, our efforts to serve in Christ's name results in his living water being poured out of us to bless others as well. Forgiving when we want to nurse a grudge is one way to share this water of life but so is extending a hand to someone in need or giving up time to spend with the ailing or lonely. The more we seek and accept this gift of living water the more we are compelled to let it flow through and out of us into the lives of others. And, the more we share from what we have been given, the thirstier we become to receive more of this living water ourselves.

Perhaps the reason I've been thinking about the gift of living water like the gift of sweat is that I have a boxing partner who sweats profusely, more than anyone I have ever known. His sweat flies off of him and onto me and leaves a pattern on the floor that immediately announces where he has been. Because of this he needs to take a swig from his water bottle every time there is a break in the action. And, upon reflection, I realize that I want to be more like him. Rather than sweat, however, I want to have the living water of Jesus so flow from me that it will leave the marks of his love behind me wherever I go, be a splash in the face to everyone around me, and always make me thirsty for more.

March 23

Sally Thompson



Spring

***They will not hunger or thirst,
Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down;
For He who has compassion on them will lead them
And will guide them to springs of water.
— Isaiah 49:10***

I am a person who does not like heat. Hot days with humidity and unrelenting sunshine drain me of energy, enthusiasm and the ability to think clearly. This is why I have chosen this beautiful part of the country in which to live. But my life continues to have patches of unbearable spiritual heat – times of trials and tribulations and troubles –and it soothes me to know that “He who has compassion” is always there to lead me to cool spring waters bubbling from the earth, enabling me to return to calmness and sanity.

**Lord, help me to recognize when you
come to lead me away from the heat and
to your reviving cool waters.**

Amen

Downpour

Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing. — Malachi 3:19

Have you ever been fortunate to experience a tropical downpour? They can be glorious and a bit frightening. The last one that I experienced was in 2019 when we went to visit my daughter Kasey who was doing a year of volunteering in Madagascar with Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM). When the rain started it was just a sprinkle but soon it had turned into a deluge, water was coming down so fast that the gutters were useless, and within seconds there was water everywhere. Then adding to the roar of the rain, lightning, followed immediately by thunder, caused everything to shake. Experiences like this remind me of Malachi 3:10 “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.” Test me in this” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. Too often we worry if there will be enough when we worship a God who is waiting to throw open the floodgates of heaven, like a tropical downpour, with blessings for everyone.

Dear God, give us the courage to try to outgive you, that we may be a blessing in Greenwood. Amen.

March 24

Chris Shultz



Take Me to the Water



1 Take me to the wa - ter, take me to the wa - ter,
 2 I . . . love . . Je - sus, I . . . love . . Je - sus,
 3 He's . . my . . Sav - ior, he's . . my . . Sav - ior,
 4 Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah. Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah.



take me to the wa - ter to be bap - tized.
 I . . . love . . Je - sus, oh, yes, I do.
 he's . . my . . Sav - ior, oh, yes, he is.
 Glo - ry, hal - le - lu - jah to be bap - tized.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: TAKE ME TO THE WATER, African American spiritual

March 27

Pastor Bryon Hansen

Tears

Jesus began to weep. — John 11:35

Tears can be disarming. The kind of laughter that makes a person cry diffuses tension. Tears born of stress and sadness will change a person's countenance in minutes. Bitter tears of suffering and grief will upend your life. Jesus wept. Witnessing the tears of Mary and the grieving crowds, Jesus shed tears at the grave of his friend Lazarus. I imagine this was disarming, even disruptive. How is it that the one who claimed to be the way, truth, and life, would shed tears?

Jesus disarmed conventional beliefs around the things of God. Tears flowing down Jesus' face shows us that God is not removed from suffering but is with us in our suffering. I find it hard to trust a messiah removed from the complexities of life. The weeping Jesus is a savior I can trust. With Lazarus, we are called out of our graves, but not without the journey watered by tears. This is the mystery of dying and rising, so very human and so very divine.





March 28

Tina Georgeson

Splash

I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel. — John 1:31

A splash on the face to cool down, a bird splashing in a puddle to wash itself, Splash Mountain at Disneyland, a splash as children go puddle jumping are just a few of the ways a splash can remind us of Living Water. By far, though, the splash of Baptism is the ultimate sign of Living Water. We are Baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, splashing water on the individual three times. Each splash has a promise — the promise of redemption, the promise of everlasting life and the last splash brings the individual closer to God's care. I remember when my sons were Baptized, my husband was smiling as was all of the family, I felt a warmth that only God can give; it was magical. The Baptisms during the Easter Vigil bring the same smiles and warmth as the child or teen or adult are welcomed into the Phinney community. Perhaps when you see some one or something splashing in water you will remember your Baptism and the Baptisms of others, thanks be to God.

March 29

Nancy Winder

Creek



Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized – Acts 8:36

In the Fall of 1977 a young man walked out of the wilderness into Holden Village. A villager sitting on the wall that afternoon welcomed him and began to learn his story. He'd been hiking in the backcountry for three months, his only companion a New Testament. It had deepened his new faith and give him insights into his life as a follower of Jesus. But one thing was missing. He wanted to be baptized. I was the Village Pastor and when I heard his story I just pointed to Railroad Creek and said, "Let's do it!" So in a day or two the community gathered and processed with song and banners down to the creek. I walked into the water with him and washed him into his new life as a child of God. Railroad Creek is cold water, so being baptized there is memorable! I heard from him once in a while over the years and he never forgot the gift of that day, living his life in Christ and letting his light shine as God's child.

God of the rushing mountain creek, bless all of our journeys with surprise, gift, and joy. Amen.

March 30

Amy Radil

Stream

Then David took his staff in his hand, chose five smooth stones from the stream, put them in the pouch of his shepherd's bag and, with his sling in his hand, approached the Philistine. — 1 Samuel 17:40

In the summer we frequently gather in western Nebraska, where my mom grew up. It's a dry place so water is always a topic of concern -- and appreciation when it appears. I've always been fascinated with the small stream that runs through her family's ranch. You never know what you'll find there. In the spring when the stream was running, we would throw twigs or leaf-boats and see how quickly they passed under the footbridge. At drier times of year the stream disappears completely. On our last visit we saw a huge snapping turtle who seems to find cool refuge in the tall grass along its banks. The living water of Jesus often surprises me, filling me when I thought I had run dry from too much anxiety or sadness about the fate of this beautiful planet.

In this passage, I like that David finds what he needs for the perils ahead in a stream. This is a story about combat, killing and victory, in one sense we love David's surprise triumph over a bully. Personally, I think the living water of Jesus calls us to be peacemakers, not literal warriors like David. But I like the metaphor that we can draw on these streams for beauty, refreshment, understanding and strength, to face all the challenges of our own lives.

Dear God, Thank you for the surprising abundance of your beautiful world. Help us to take time to look at and treasure it, and to draw strength to do your work.

Amen



March 31

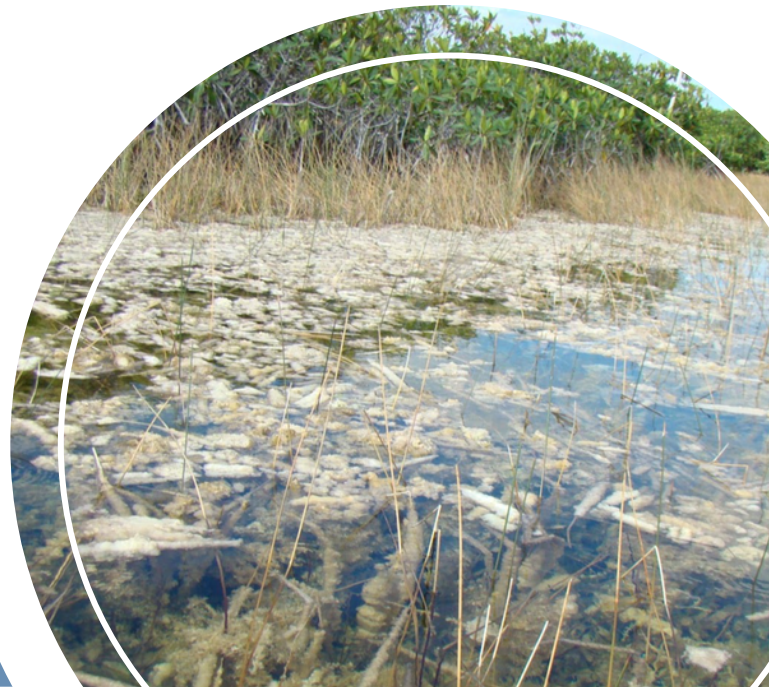
Cindy Shultz

Swamp

I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. — John 10:10

When we hear the word swamp, I think most of us have a negative connotation. We think of swamps as sinister and forbidding, full of alligators and other scary things like mosquitos. We say things like “drain the swamp” to indicate a need to get the bad stuff out. In actuality swamps are an amazing part of God’s creation. They act like nature’s water treatment plant. Contaminated water flows into the swamp and the plants and soil absorb the bad stuff and the water that flows out is purified. That’s amazing! Swamps are full of life – adaptive plants and animals flourish in conditions that would kill other species. That’s amazing! Swamps provide flood protection for dry lands, acting as a buffer for storm surges. That’s amazing! Swamps remind us that sometimes we need to look beyond negative connotations to find the truth of God’s abundance. Is there something you view as sinister and forbidding that may actually be teeming with abundant life?

God of all creation, help us to find
the truth of the abundant life you
offer in unexpected places.



As the Deer

Martin Nystrom
Based on Psalm 42:1

Martin Nystrom

D C#m Bm C A D7 G Asus A7 Dsus A7

1. As the deer pant-eth for the wa-ter, so my soul long-eth af-ter You.
2. You're my Friend and You are my Broth-er ev-en though You are a King.

D C#m Bm C A D7 G Asus A7 D

You a-lone are my heart's de-sire, and I long to wor-ship You.
I love You more than an-y oth-er, so much more than an-y-thing.

Bm Bm A GM7 A7 Dsus F#m G D F#m Em Em7 F#sus

You a-lone are my strength, my shield; To You a-lone may my spir-it yield.

D C#m Bm C7 D7 GM7 A D

You a-lone are my heart's de-sire, and I long to wor-ship You.



April 3

Don Boelter

Rain

When no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no vegetation of the field had yet sprung up — for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground, — Genesis 2:5

In Jane Harper's 1996 mystery novel *The Dry*, the residents of a sleepy Australian town are plagued by a year's long drought. The land is brown, the riverbeds empty, and the vegetation a tinder box ready to explode.

Unsurprisingly (and maybe unoriginally?) the arid state of the natural world of the fictional town mirrors the drought within its residents. Unsolved murders, family secrets, and distrust of authorities has withered any sense of community within the town.

Harper's protagonist is asked for an update on the state of the town featured in her first novel in her 2023 follow-up *Exiles*. He reports, thankfully, that the mysteries solved and secrets revealed in the story of the first book have led to a major catharsis and healing in the following years. And, as he also mentions, they have seen literal rain as well. Their drought is over, the rain has come.

**Lord, let your wonder and mercy rain down in my life
and the life of my community. Amen.**



April 4

Nicole Meyer

Lake

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea. Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach. And he told them many things in parables...

— Matthew 13:1-3

The Sea of Galilee in northern Israel has long been a source of religious inspiration and intrigue. It was along the shores of the shallow freshwater lake where the gospels say Jesus performed some of his ministry and miracles. Boating across, sitting at the edge, and barbecuing on the beach; It sounds like he loved the lake. Me too, Jesus!

No matter where I have gone there's always been a lake to make me feel alive again. From growing up in the Great Lakes and attending college in the Land of 10,000 to floating in Lake Washington and paddling on Greenlake. Camp is my happy place and where I have had my most intimate and influential encounters with God and they have each been beside the lake: Stony, Spring, Sammish, and Couer d'Alene. The best family vacation moments were made at Carp Lake, Lake James, Lake Chelan, Lake Pearrygin, Mountain Lake... I don't have enough space to tell you about all the lakes! So many different lakes, but always the same literal water quenching my metaphorical thirst.

Dear God, Thank you for meeting us at the shores and on the seas. May your love drench our hearts again and again. Amen

April 5

Signe Roscoe

Reservoir



And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. — Philippians 4:19

an artificial lake where water is collected and kept in quantity for use

We have a lot of reservoirs in the Northwest where our plentiful winter rain is stored up for the dry summer months. It's kind of like having a supply of canned soup on hand in case of an earthquake. What happens if the reservoirs run dry like is happening in some Southwest states? Global warming has some big consequences looming for humankind. In Philippians 4:19 And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Jesus says to give our worries to Him. Can we both try to live a sustainable lifestyle and regularly go to the eternal reservoir and life spring of God so that we do not become parched and brittle?

O God, you offer us a never-ending well of love.
Help us to dip into Your reservoir of peace and
hope when we become dry.

Amen

April 6

Doug Johnson

Tide

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. — John 13:1&5

Stand still on the wet sand in a dense morning fog, and wait. The rising tide will wash your feet, as Jesus washed his disciples' feet. Feel the sea salt cleanse your skin, as Jesus will cleanse your soul if you let him. Wait, watch, listen. Hear the sea birds' cry in the grey gloom. He has given them their own compass, and he will also give you yours. Breathe in the seashore incense of ancient beached kelp. Stand so still in the knee deep foaming surf that fish nibble your bare toes. Be still, and know that He is the Lord.



April 7

Pastor Bryon Hansen

Thirst

After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said “I am thirsty!” — John 19:28

Good Friday is a kind of liminal experience. I feel suspended between the cries of Jesus on the cross and something new that is about to take place. I feel that something is unfinished.

In the evening liturgy, we hear the Passion from John’s Gospel. Here Jesus isn’t so much the suffering servant as we heard the previous Sunday. In John, Jesus is the Risen One who reigns from the cross. The last word he utters before declaring, “It is finished,” is this: “I am thirsty.”

I wonder if Jesus is giving us a final lesson. Jesus, echoing the words he spoke to the Samaritan woman, says again, “give me a drink.” The women who loved him to the end, put a sponge of wine to his mouth. Would we have done the same?

More importantly, we are sent to do the same. When we give drink to thirsty neighbors, the water we offer is given to Jesus. Now that the work of salvation is complete, we freely share the love of God with a thirsty world.

God, help us to give drink to all who
thirst for living water. Amen.



Shall We Gather at the River



- 1 Shall we gath - er at the riv - er, where bright an - gel feet have trod,
- 2 On the mar - gin of the riv - er, wash - ing up its sil - ver spray,
- 3 Ere we reach the shin - ing riv - er, lay we ev - 'ry bur - den down;
- 4 Soon we'll reach the shin - ing riv - er, soon our pil - grim - age will cease;



with its crys - tal tide for - ev - er flow - ing by the throne of God?
 we will walk and wor - ship ev - er, all the hap - py gold - en day.
 grace our spir - its will de - liv - er, and pro - vide a robe and crown.
 soon our hap - py hearts will quiv - er with the mel - o - dy of peace.

Refrain



Yes, we'll gath - er at the riv - er, the beau - ti - ful, the beau - ti - ful riv - er;



gath - er with the saints at the riv - er that flows by the throne of God.

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826–1899
 Music: HANSON PLACE, Robert Lowry



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