

# Outline of Worship      Lent 3      March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026

*Worship leaders: Simba at NUC    Carolien at SUC      Pianist: Julie at NUC*

## PRELUDE

### LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT *(projected)*

**WELCOME** *(with explanation of theme for the day, and "Affirmation of Faith" in unison)*

**Simba**

#### **Welcome**

Welcome to this 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent, where we continue to gather around the table. The table offered by Jesus is one, where everyone has access. At this table, no one should be excluded regardless of their identity, their origin, their views, association or any other. God's hospitality is welcoming everyone from anywhere in the world. We also recognize that as we gather, our world is bleeding, burning and afraid. Peace is what we need. Let us ground ourselves in the presence of God. Like the Woman at the well, may we seek understanding, growth, holy wisdom and encouragement. Let us open our hearts to the spirit of moment and engage in the unfolding expression of our faith in this worship session.

Let us affirm what we aspire for regarding the table

#### **Affirmation of Faith** (unison)

We believe in a table-setting God who always has a seat saved for you.

We believe in an inviting God who leaves the porch light on and a hand extended.

We believe in a radically welcoming God who eats with the overlooked and the outcast, the hungry and the downtrodden.

We believe in the good news of the gospel, which reminds us that all are welcomed, all are celebrated, all are loved, and all are claimed.

Pull up a seat at God's table.

There is good news to be shared here.

Amen

#### **CREATE SACRED SPACE** *(with candle lighting and invitation to table as worship)*

**SUC-Carolien**

As we gather as a community of faith, a family and as a diverse people, we recognize the centrality of water at every table. It might be there to cool you down, wash the hands before the meal or a drink after the meal. The table is never complete without water.

Like the Samaritan Woman, may we all bring our empty vessels, our hearts, to this place, ready to fill them. Not as vessels to carry from without, but that we become the vessels that carry the living water within us.

Let us now, with a sense of wonder, open ourselves to the mystery that unfolds whenever the presence of the divine is revealed.

We light these candles as symbols of Christ's presence and a light that shines in us as we seek to experience the "aha" moments of our faith encounters. We also light the candle of inclusion as God welcomes us all to the table.

## SONG: MV 193 God Bless to Us Our Bread x2

Words: Bishop Federico Pagura, Argentina copyright © World Council of Churches Publications, Geneva English translation and arrangement: John L. Bell copyright © 1997, 2007 by WGRG, Iona Community, Scotland Music: traditional melody, Argentina

God bless to us our bread,  
And give bread to all those who are hungry,  
And hunger for justice to those who are fed;  
God bless to us our bread.

## LIFE & WORK

Simba/Carolien

## SONG: TLUS 22 Build a Longer Table vs 1-3 (same melody as VU 117)

Words: David Bjorlin © 2018 GIA Publications, Inc/Music: Mediaeval French carol/Harm: Martin Fallas Shaw © 1928 Oxford University Press

Build a longer table, not a higher wall,  
feeding those who hunger, making room for all.  
Feasting together, stranger turns to friend,  
Christ breaks walls to pieces; false divisions  
end.

Build a safer refuge, not a larger jail;  
where the weak find shelter, mercy will not fail.

For any place where justice is denied,  
Christ will breach the jail wall, freeing all inside.

Build a broader doorway, not a longer fence,  
Love protects all people, sparing no expense.  
When we embrace compassion more than fear,  
Christ tears down our fences: all are welcome  
here.

## PRAYER

God of all peoples, we gather in your presence & in the presence of one another. To wonder as a people seeking to quench our thirst and seeking fulfilment and wholeness. May we experience your power that transforms us, your love that makes us feel free, liberated and empowered to testify. Bless this sacred moment and use us as your vessels in the kingdom. This we ask, in Jesus' name. Amen.

## SPIRITUAL READINGS:

### Scripture: John 4: 4-31

NUC-Judith

<sup>4</sup> on his way there he had to go through Samaria. <sup>5</sup> In Samaria he came to a town named Sychar, which was not far from the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. <sup>6</sup> Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by the trip, sat down by the well. It was about noon. <sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink of water." (<sup>8</sup> His disciples had gone into town to buy food.) <sup>9</sup> The woman answered, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan—so how can you ask me for a drink?" (Jews will not use the same cups and bowls that Samaritans use.)<sup>a</sup> <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, "If you only knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him, and he would give you life-giving water." <sup>11</sup> "Sir," the woman said, "you don't have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get that life-giving water?" <sup>12</sup> It was our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well; he and his children and his flocks all drank from it. You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?" <sup>13</sup> Jesus answered, "Those who drink this water will get thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> but those who drink the water that I will give them will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give them will become in them a spring which will provide them with life-giving water and give them eternal life." <sup>15</sup> "Sir," the woman said, "give me that water! Then I will never be thirsty again, nor will I have to come here to draw water." <sup>16</sup> "Go and call your husband," Jesus told her, "And come back." <sup>17</sup> "I don't have a husband," she answered. Jesus replied, "You are right when you say you don't have a husband. <sup>18</sup> You have been married to five men, and the man you live with now is not really your husband. You have told me the truth." <sup>19</sup> "I see you are a prophet, sir," the woman said. <sup>20</sup> "My Samaritan ancestors worshiped God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should worship God." <sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time will come when

people will not worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. <sup>22</sup> You Samaritans do not really know whom you worship; but we Jews know whom we worship, because it is from the Jews that salvation comes. <sup>23</sup> But the time is coming and is already here, when by the power of God's Spirit people will worship the Father as he really is, offering him the true worship that he wants. <sup>24</sup> God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Spirit can people worship him as he really is." <sup>25</sup> The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah will come, and when he comes, he will tell us everything." <sup>26</sup> Jesus answered, "I am he, I who am talking with you." <sup>27</sup> At that moment Jesus' disciples returned, and they were greatly surprised to find him talking with a woman. But none of them said to her, "What do you want?" or asked him, "Why are you talking with her?" <sup>28</sup> Then the woman left her water jar, went back to the town, and said to the people there, <sup>29</sup> "Come and see the man who told me everything I have ever done. Could he be the Messiah?" <sup>30</sup> So they left the town and went to Jesus. <sup>31</sup> In the meantime the disciples were begging Jesus, "Teacher, have something to eat!"

**Contemporary: "Listening"** by Steve Garnaas-Holmes *Unfolding Light*  
*Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done."* —John 4.39

**SUC Eleanor**

I don't think Jesus was omniscient, that he knew everything about the woman before meeting her.

I think he was just a really good listener.

He listened to people's hearts, to the unspoken.

He asked questions and let them answer. May my Lenten discipline be listening.

God help me to listen, to listen like Jesus, to listen as the sea listens to rivers, to set aside all I think, all I want to say, and offer the sacred empty space of listening,

the silence of deep listening.

When I am distracted help me be attentive.

When I am afraid help me be curious.

When I am angry help me be compassionate.

When I am right help me be humble.

When I am in silence help me listen for you.

When I am with others help me listen for you.

May my repentance be listening, my praise be listening,

my prayer be listening.

Even now, Love, I am listening.

**REFLECTION: "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman Speak"**

**SUC- Dennis and Pearl**

J: Hello

SW: *Who are you? Why are you talking to me, a woman and worse still, a Samaritan? What kind of a Jew are you?*

J: Well, I guess you don't know who you are talking to, do you? I know that you are a segregated group, seen as impure, but I don't mind. We are all children of Abraham. Aren't we?

SW: *Can you say more about you Jews and us Samaritans?*

J: At the fall of Samaria 700 years ago, the imperial forces brought in some people from outside our traditions. Due to inter marriages, your people were considered not pure. Ironically, not long after,

almost 200 years later, that happened to us as well; Jerusalem fell. I guess we are not pure either, but we claim to be. That is the stereotype anyway.

SW: *So ... if this has been going on for hundreds of years ... these divisions and these stereotypes ... what can you and I do about it? Do you think that talking to me at this well is going to change anything? Do you think we can “unlearn” what we and our parents and grandparents have been taught about one another all our lives? Not likely!*

J: Well, if we could see each other as brothers and sisters, not defining one another by our place of origin, that would be a start. We all have the same heart, blood and brains. What makes anyone special? God’s love is for ALL.

Anyway, could I have a drink of water?

SW: *You’re asking me for a drink of water? Are you trying to get me into trouble? Most Jews wouldn’t even talk to a Samaritan much less ask for a favor.*

*You know that you’re not even supposed to be talking in public with a woman. And you know that if you drink from my “Samaritan” water vessel you will be considered defiled. I just hope there’s nobody watching us!* SW pours Jesus a glass of water

J: Do you know me? If you did, you would be asking for living water.

SW: *Living water? What are you suggesting? Remember, our ancestor Jacob gave us this well – a descendant of Abraham! Are you saying you are greater than them? And you don’t even have anything to draw water with. How are you going to give me water?*

J: This is wonderful water, thank-you! Yes, our ancestors gave us this well, and you drink from it, but if you ask for living water from me, there will be a spring of living water bubbling from within you ...and your spirit won’t be thirsty again.

SW: *Then please give me some of that water!*

J: First, go get your husband and come back.

SW: *I don’t have one.*

J: You have told the truth. Because the man you are with right now is not your husband, either.

SW: *Word sure does get around! Why do you think I come here in the heat of the day? If I come early in the morning when it’s cool, when the other women come, all they do is sneer and gossip about me. But here you are, talking to me.*

*Who are you, really? How did you know all that? Are you a prophet or something . . . . ?*

*So help me understand, we Samaritans worship on this mountain, but you Jews say we need to worship in Jerusalem. Tell me, where should we worship? These traditions cause a lot of confusion.*

J: You have a curious mind, a spiritual hunger. I like that! It's not about worshipping here or there. Worship is not determined by geographical location. God is seeking people who worship in spirit and in truth. The time will come, in fact it already has, when people will not worry about where they worship - whether here, or in Jerusalem. God is Spirit; whoever worships God should do so in spirit and in truth.

SW: *You mean we can all worship equally? How is that possible? You keep saying things that I used to hear from my grandparents. And they said that someday the Messiah is coming, and when he comes, he will change everything.*

J: The one you are talking to is he.

SW: *What? Did I hear you right?*

J: Yes! I am he.

SW: *Oh my goodness!*

*I was thinking that maybe you were just stringing me along. . . But as I've been talking with you, I can feel something happening. I feel my guilt slipping away, my sadness melting, my failures - like they don't even matter that much.*

*You talk to me without judging me. I am used to men who don't treat women with respect. My story is well known in this community, but you are very different. How can you look past my failures, my challenges, my limitations and my shame? Your message shows us a new way. Truly your God, our God is a God of love and justice!*

*My heart feels full. It's like all the coldness that has built up inside of me is melting. I feel ... dare I even say it? ... I feel so much joy! I must go and tell everyone. They must come and meet you, experience your profound wisdom and understanding, and your loving ways.*

*Wait here. I will be back! Living water! Amazing!*  
(SW runs out, excitedly inviting everyone to come see. Leaves the water jug)

**SONG: VU120 O Jesus, I Have Promised vs 1-3**

Words: John Ernest Bode ca. 1866, alt. Music: James William Elliott 1874 Public Domain.

O Jesus I have promised to serve you to the end;  
remain forever near me, my Saviour and my friend:  
I shall not fear the journey if you are by my side,  
nor wander from the pathway if you will be my guide.

O let me feel you near me: the world is ever near;  
I see the sights that dazzle, the tempting sounds I hear;

my foes are ever near me, around me and within;  
but, Jesus, then draw nearer and shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear you speaking in accents clear and still,  
above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will;

O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;  
now speak, and make me listen, O guardian of my soul.

## OFFERING INVITATION

As we keep wondering about this Man, Jesus, let us also offer ourselves and our resources to this season of wonder. Shall we present our offerings?

## SONG: VU540 Grant Us, God, the Grace

*Words: anonymous. Music: attributed to Christian F. Witt, Psalmodia Sacra, adapted by Henry John Gauntlett. Public Domain.*

Grant us, God, the grace of giving,  
with a spirit large and free,  
that ourselves and all our living  
we may offer faithfully.

## OFFERING PRAYER

God who reveals the God-self through Jesus, teach us to be grateful and offer ourselves, our time, treasures and skill, that may all be used to bear testimony of your kingdom. Now and forever. Amen.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God our Creator, the divine mystery and the force beyond our comprehension; we gather as a people, a community and a fellowship. You called us out to be witnesses of your kingdom, where you teach us that everyone is worth your time, your ears and your especially your love. You have demonstrated again and again that you care for all people.

Today we come to express our faith in what you can create in our world through us. You invite us to share our experiences in and with you, to share how your love transforms us, welcomes us, embraces us, and sustain us without judging. Teach us not to judge.

We pray for and with our colleagues experiencing pain, who need healing. others are grieving. They need you comfort. we pray for those facing different forms of crises, the anxiety from the war, the fear created by the uncertainty of conflict and the despair that engulf those within the battle grounds. Dear God; grant that which we request.

May you give us the courage to stand for peace, the wisdom to express your love and the grace to remain truthful. Bless now our ministry, our community and our country. Through Jesus who taught us to pray, in the form of a song;

## SONG: VU959/974 Prayer Jesus taught

*Music VUV 959: David Haus © 1986 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. Music VU 974: Jim Strathdee© 1985 Desert Flower Music. Words: Public Domain*

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread,  
forgive us our sins

as we forgive those  
who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial  
and deliver us from evil  
for the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
Now and forever.  
Amen! Amen!  
Hallelujah, amen!

## **SONG: TLUS 23 For Everyone Born vs 2,3,4 and refrains**

*Words: Shirley Erena Murray © 1998 Hope Publishing Company Music: Brian Mann © 2006 admin. General Board of Global Ministries, GBB Musik*

For all who share life, a place at the table,  
revising the roles, deciding the share,  
with wisdom and grace, dividing the power,  
for all who share life, a system that's fair,  
*and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!*

For those we neglect, a place at the table,  
a voice to be heard, a part in the song,  
the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled,  
for those we neglect, the right to belong,

*and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!*

For all who have breath, a place at the table,  
a covenant shared, a welcoming space,  
a rainbow of race and gender and colour,  
for all who have breath, the chalice of grace,  
*and God will delight when we are creators  
of justice and joy, compassion and peace:  
yes, God will delight when we are creators  
of justice, justice and joy!*

## **BLESSING**

May the grace of the Jewish Rabi, our Teacher and Liberator, Jesus Christ be with you all, the love of God that looks past all our weaknesses and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with and go you all.  
Amen.