



THE UNITING CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA

Ballarat Central Uniting Church

Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2026 - LENT 3

@ 10:00 a.m.

## STEWARDSHIP: PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM!

***“Sharing Water of Life!”***

**WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD**

**INTROIT:** TiS 703 – As the deer pants!

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.

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### GREETING

Leader: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**ALL:** ***And also with you!***

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

### WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

### CALL TO WORSHIP

### OPENING PRAYER

In the driest desert, O God, you provided a rock that held a fountain for those who thirst.

***Come, gracious God, and fill us with your love.***

In a place of quarrelling, you provide an answer that holds life for those who hope.

***Come, gracious God, and fill us with your love.***

In a place of wonder, you provided living water, for those who met there. Come, gracious God, and fill us with your love. ***Amen.***

**HYMN/SONG:** TiS 100 – All creatures of our God and King!

All creatures of our God and King, lift up your voice and with us sing  
alleluia, alleluia;

O burning sun with golden beam, and silver moon with softer gleam,  
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Swift-rushing winds that are so strong, and clouds that sail in heaven  
along, O praise him, alleluia;  
fresh-rising morn, in praise rejoice, and lights of evening, find a voice:  
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

O flowing water, pure and clear, make music for your Lord to hear,  
alleluia, alleluia!

O fire, so masterful and bright, providing us with warmth and light,  
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Dear mother earth, who day by day unfolds rich blessings on our way,  
O praise him, alleluia!

All flowers and fruits that in you grow, let them his glory also show;  
O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless, and worship him in humbleness;  
O praise him, alleluia!

Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, Three in  
One: O praise him, O praise him, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

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### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

### DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

God’s voice carries over the waters of creation, reaching out to you and assuring you that you are loved into life’s fullness over and over again. You will drink of the living waters and never be thirsty again.

***Thanks be to God! Amen!***

## SHARING OF JOYS, CONCERNS, NOTICES

### SPECIAL TIME WITH THE CHILDREN – Early Word

#### WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

**Reader:** "Your Word O Lord is a lamp to our feet".  
**ALL:** "A light to our path."

**Scripture Readings:**  
**Exodus 17:1-7 (NRSVUE)**  
**Water from the Rock**

17 From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. <sup>2</sup> The people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" <sup>3</sup> But the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" <sup>4</sup> So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do for this people? They are almost ready to stone me." <sup>5</sup> The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. <sup>6</sup> I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. <sup>7</sup> He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

#### PSALM 95

*Music: Matthew Still*

**Response** *If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts, (x2)  
harden not your hearts.*

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord;

let us acclaim the rock of our salvation.  
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

**Response**

Come, let us bow down in worship;  
let us kneel before the Lord who made us.  
For he is our God, and we are the people he shepherds,  
we are the flock he guides.

**Response**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:  
"Harden not your hearts as in the desert.  
Where your fathers tempted me; though they had seen my works."

**Response**

#### **John 4:5-42 (NRSVUE)**

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

<sup>7</sup> A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." <sup>8</sup> (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) <sup>9</sup> 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.) <sup>10</sup> 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." <sup>11</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? <sup>12</sup> Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" <sup>13</sup> Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, <sup>14</sup> 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." <sup>15</sup> 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."

<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." <sup>17</sup> The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in

saying, 'I have no husband,'<sup>18</sup> for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!"<sup>19</sup> The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet."<sup>20</sup> Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."<sup>21</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem."<sup>22</sup> You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews."<sup>23</sup> 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."<sup>24</sup> God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."<sup>25</sup> 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."<sup>26</sup> Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

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

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

<sup>39</sup> Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done."<sup>40</sup> So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed

there two days."<sup>41</sup> And many more believed because of his word."<sup>42</sup> 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."

**Reader:** "Lord, may your word live in us."

**ALL:** "And bear much fruit to your glory!"

### **PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD: "Sharing Water of Life!"**

**Ballarat Uniting** - Faith Thompson, Emergency Relief Centre Co-Ordinator, shares the Emergency Relief Centre current services.

## **RESPOND TO THE WORD**

### **OFFERING**

*(Your offerings for the mission and ministry of God through Ballarat Central will be gratefully received during the hymn. Please remain seated until the last verse.)*

**HYMN/SONG:** TiS 585 - I heard the voice of Jesus say!

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, weary and worn and sad;

I found in him a resting-place, and he has made me glad.

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.

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.

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### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**PRAYER OF INTERCESSION** *(Followed by the Lord's Prayer)*  
***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!***

## **SENDING FORTH OF GOD'S PEOPLE**

**HYMN/SONG:** TiS 690 – Beauty for brokenness!  
Beauty for brokenness, hope for despair,  
Lord, in the suffering, this is our prayer.  
Bread for the children, justice, joy, peace,  
sunrise to sunset your kingdom increase.

Shelter for fragile lives, cures for their ills,  
work for the craftsmen, trade for their skills;  
land for the dispossessed, rights for the weak;  
voices to plead the cause of those who can't speak.

*God of the poor, friend of the weak, give us compassion we pray;  
melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain.  
Come change our love from a spark to a flame.*

Refuge from cruel wars, havens from fear,  
cities for sanctuary, freedoms to share,  
peace to the killing-fields, scorched earth to green;  
Christ for the bitterness his cross for the pain.

Rest for the ravaged earth, oceans and streams,  
plundered and poisoned, our future, our dreams.  
Lord, end our madness, carelessness, greed;  
make us content with the things that we need.

*God of the poor, friend of the weak, give us compassion we pray;  
melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain.  
Come change our love from a spark to a flame.*

Lighten our darkness, breathe on this flame  
until your justice burns brightly again;  
until the nations learn of your ways,  
seek your salvation and bring you their praise.

*God of the poor, friend of the weak, give us compassion we pray;  
melt our cold hearts, let tears fall like rain.  
Come change our love from a spark to a flame.*

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## **WORD OF MISSION & BLESSING**

**DISMISSAL SONG:** TiS 779 – May the feet of God walk with you!  
May the feet of God walk with you, and his hand hold you tight.  
May the eye of God rest on you, and his ear hear your cry.  
May the smile of God be for you, and his breath give you life.  
May the Child of God grow in you, and his love bring you home.

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**Worship Leaders** – Rev Lauleti Tu'inauvai, Andy Gault, Faith Thompson;  
**Elder** - Margo Cunningham; **Readers** – Nina Netherway, 'Atelaite Tupou,  
Lauren Martin; **Prayer** – Helen Duggan; **Choir Director** - Helen Duggan and  
BCUC Choir; **Organist, keyboardist** – Roger Peck; **IT, Video & Audio** – Ben  
Daniel, Andrew Boatman; **Welcome** – Betty Stewart, Jen Mitchell; **Door  
Stewards** – Judy Stone, Ken Jenkin; **Morning Tea** – Faye Withers, Jan Tozer,  
Jan Dimond, Bev Hutchinson.

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