

*Liturgy*  
The Third Sunday in Lent  
Year A

GATHERING

Come, let us sing to the LORD;

Let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.

**With joy, we come before Him with thanksgiving,  
and extol Him with songs of praise.**

**For His steadfast love endures forever.**

Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,  
those He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy  
and gathered to Himself,  
from the east and from the west,  
from the north and from the south!

**Let them thank the LORD for His steadfast love,  
for His wondrous works to the children of men.**

**For He satisfies the longing soul,  
and fills the hungry soul with goodness.**

Come, let us bow down in worship,  
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker;

**O magnify the LORD with me,  
and let us exalt His name together!**

– from Psalms 95:1-2, 107:1-9, 34:3

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,  
The King of creation!  
O my soul, praise Him,  
For He is thy health and salvation!  
All ye who hear,  
Now to His temple draw near;  
Join me in glad adoration!

Praise to the Lord,  
Who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;  
Surely His goodness and mercy  
Here daily attend thee.  
Ponder anew  
What the Almighty can do,  
If with His love He befriend thee.

Praise to the Lord,  
Who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,  
Shelters thee under His wings,  
Yea, so gently sustaineth!  
Hast thou not seen  
How all thy longings have been  
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Hast thou not seen  
How all thy longings have been  
Granted in what He ordaineth?

Setting: Ellen Koehler. Copyright ©2013 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.  
Words: Joachim Neander, 1680; transl. by Catherine Winkworth, 1863.  
Hymn tune: LOBE DEN HERREN, 1665.

*LECTIONARY for the third Sunday in  
Lent, Year A:*

*Exodus 17:1-7*

*Psalm 95*

*Romans 5:1-11*

*John 4:5-42*

*We are nearly at the halfway point of our Lenten journey. On this third Sunday of Lent, the Church traditionally attends to the theme of God's call to repentance. As we walk through this season in year A, the lectionary presents us with what might be thought of as portraits of the Lenten soul.*

*Through each of the characters in the gospel narratives and the other, related Scripture texts, we see specific aspects of the ways in which God calls us and works in us to conform us increasingly to the image of Christ as we walk this journey of Lent. Last week, we saw Nicodemus coming to Jesus with a pressing question, and Jesus leading him in conversation to disclose what he really, actually, was seeking. This week, we view the scene of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. She comes to the well for water, but she finds the One who knows everything about her—and who imparts to her that for which her soul truly longed, Living Water and spiritual life. In the Old Testament passages, we read of the Israelites' urgent need and demand for water. God's gracious provision of water from the rock prefigures and points to Christ. And in Paul's letter to the Romans, we read that "God proves His love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Therefore, we have peace with God through Him, and abundant grace, reconciliation, and hope.*

*For a detailed look at the Woman at the Well and her encounter with Jesus, see Ellen's blog, "A Longing Soul."*

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/blog/2017/03/18/longing-soul>

*Ellen's setting of Praise to the Lord, the Almighty is available in the music catalog (Hymn Settings) as a lead sheet and scored for keyboard (suitable for piano or organ, also). Please see the commentary on this*

## INVOCATION

Prayers of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving for God's presence

### *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

Come, Thou fount of every blessing,  
Tune my heart to sing Thy grace.  
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,  
Call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet,  
Sung by flaming tongues above;  
Praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it,  
Mount of God's redeeming love.

Hitherto Thy love has blest me,  
Thou hast brought me to this place.  
And I know Thy hand will bring me  
Safely home by Thy good grace.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger,  
Wandering from the fold of God;  
He to rescue me from danger  
Bought me with His precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be.  
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter,  
Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.

Setting: Ellen Koehler. ©2003 Ellen Koehler.  
Text: Robert Robinson, 1757. Hymn tune: NETTLETON; traditional American melody,  
John Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music*, 1813

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

The word of the Lord:

Since we are justified by faith,  
we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.  
**Through Him we have obtained access by faith  
into this grace in which we stand;  
and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**  
*And not only that, but we also rejoice in our tribulations,  
knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance;*  
And perseverance brings about proven character;  
*And proven character brings about hope.*  
And hope does not disappoint,  
because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts  
by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.  
*For while we were still helpless, at the right time  
Christ died for the ungodly.*  
**God demonstrates His own love for us in that,  
while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**

— from Romans 5:1-8

*hymn setting for reflections on the text, performance suggestions, and creative ideas for using the hymn verses throughout a worship service.*

*In this liturgy, as we often do, we sing the first three verses as the opening hymn, and conclude the service with the final verse sung as a strong declaration of faith as we are sent out into the world to love and serve the Lord. Here's a link:*

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/praise-lord-almighty>

*Music for Ellen's setting of Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing is available in the music catalog as a lead sheet and scored for three-part vocal harmony ("vocals").*

*Here's a link:*

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/come-thou-fount-every-blessing>

## PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

The LORD, our Maker, is our God, and we are His people.

Today, as we hear His voice, let us not harden our hearts.

*LORD, continue Your steadfast love to those who know You,  
and Your righteousness to the upright of heart.*

— based on Psalm 95:7-8, 36:10

Everlasting God, fountain of all life and the true home of every heart:

**Our hearts are restless until they rest in You.**

**We confess that we have allowed our hearts  
to be drawn away from our rest in You.**

**We have sought after many things,  
and too easily neglected Your ways.**

**We have not loved You with our whole hearts;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**

**We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.**

[Silence]

**For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us,  
that we may walk in Your ways, and worship You in spirit and in truth.  
Amen.**

*Nothing But the Blood*

What can wash away my sin?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
What can make me whole again?  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

*Chorus*

Oh, precious is the flow,  
That makes me white as snow.  
No other fount I know,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

This is all my hope and peace,  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.  
This is all my righteousness:  
Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

Setting: Ellen Koehler ©2012. Words and music: Robert Lowry, 1876.

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Since we have been justified by His blood,  
how much more shall we be saved  
from God's wrath through Him!

*For if, while we were God's enemies,  
we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son,  
how much more, having been reconciled,  
shall we be saved through His life!*

Not only that, but we also rejoice in God  
through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

— Romans 5:9-11

**Thanks be to God!**

*Passing of the Peace*

*This prayer of confession and repentance is crafted from the well-known first sentence of Augustine's Confessions (Augustine of Hippo, A.D. 354-430), parts of the traditional morning prayer of confession in the Book of Common Prayer, and phrases from today's gospel reading in John 4.*

## TIME OF OFFERING

Testimonies and prayers of thanksgiving and devotion.

### *O Lord, My Rock and My Redeemer*

O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer,  
Greatest treasure of my longing soul,  
My God, like You there is no other.  
True delight is found in You alone.  
Your grace, a well too deep to fathom,  
Your love exceeds the heavens' reach;  
Your truth, a fount of perfect wisdom,  
My highest good, and my unending need.

O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer,  
Strong defender of my weary heart,  
My sword to fight the cruel deceiver,  
And my shield against his hateful darts;  
My song when enemies surround me,  
My hope when tides of sorrow rise,  
My joy when trials are abounding,  
Your faithfulness, my refuge in the night.

O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer,  
Gracious Savior of my ruined life,  
My guilt and cross laid on Your shoulders,  
In my place, You suffered, bled, and died.  
You rose, the grave and death are conquered.  
You broke my bonds of sin and shame.  
O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer,  
May all my days bring glory to Your Name.

CCLI Song #7096627 ©2017 Sovereign Grace Worship. Nathan Still.

## THE WORD

Exodus 17:1-7

Psalm 95

Romans 5:1-11

John 4:5-42

## THE TABLE

Remembering the Body of Christ

The Lord be with you!

**And also with you!**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again!**

*Our Father in Heaven* (sung)

Our Father in heaven, Your name is holy,  
Your name is holy, our Father.  
Your kingdom come,  
And Your will be done  
Here on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us, we pray, our bread for today,  
Our debts forgive and in turn we will live,  
Forgiving of what others owe.  
Keep us from trials;  
Save us from our ancient foe!

As we sing the kingdom,  
We sing the power,  
We sing the glory be Yours –  
Forever. Amen. Amen. Amen!

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*Here Is Love*

Here is love, vast as the ocean,  
Lovingkindness as the flood,  
When the Prince of Life, our Ransom,  
Shed for us His precious blood.  
Who His love will not remember?  
Who can cease to sing His praise?  
He can never be forgotten,  
Throughout Heav'n's eternal days.

On the mount of crucifixion,  
Fountains opened deep and wide;  
Through the floodgates of God's mercy  
Flowed a vast and gracious tide.  
Grace and love, like mighty rivers,  
Poured incessant from above,  
And Heav'n's peace and perfect justice  
Kissed a guilty world in love.

Of Your fullness You are pouring  
Your great pow'r and love anew,  
Without measure, full and boundless,  
Drawing out our hearts to You.  
You alone will be our glory,  
Nothing in the world we see.  
You have cleansed and sanctified us,  
You Yourself have set us free.

Let us all Your love accepting  
Love You ever, all our days;  
Let us seek Your kingdom only  
And our lives be to Your praise.

Setting: Ellen Koehler ©2011. William Rees (vs. 1-2);  
transl. from Welsh by William Edwards (1900)  
verses 3-4 attributed to William Williams (adapted by Ellen Koehler);  
Tune: Robert Lowry, 1876.

*Music for this setting of the Lord's Prayer, Our Father in Heaven, is available in the sheet music catalog as a lead sheet, and as a solo/melody line with piano accompaniment on request.*

<https://clerestorynotes.com/live/sheetmusic/our-father-heaven>

*Sheet music for this lovely and poignant hymn, so appropriate especially during the season of Lent, is available by request. Email us at: [clerestorynotes@gmail.com](mailto:clerestorynotes@gmail.com)*

SENDING FORTH  
The Life of the Body

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (verse 4)*

Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore Him!  
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him.  
Let the Amen sound from His people again;  
Gladly, for aye we adore Him.

Let the Amen – sound from His people again;  
Gladly, for aye we adore Him.

Setting: Ellen Koehler Copyright ©2013 Ellen Koehler. All Rights Reserved.  
Words: Joachim Neander, 1680; transl. by Catherine Winkworth, 1863.  
Hymn tune: LOBE DEN HERREN, 1665.

Benediction:

Now brothers and sisters, as you go forth into the world to live out your baptisms, do so with this promise echoing in your hearts and minds:  
His steadfast love endures forever.

It is He who keeps and sustains us,  
and in His love He satisfies our longing souls.

**Amen.**

Now may the Lord direct your hearts and keep your souls  
in God's love as you observe a holy Lent,  
walking in Christ's own footsteps and taking on His likeness.

**We remember, and we go with grateful hearts  
into the world to love and serve the Lord.**

**Amen. Thanks be to God!**

*A thought about worship from the Ancient Fathers –*

“We read and believe many things in light of the Incarnation. But even in our human feelings, we can observe God's greatness. For example, Jesus is wearied by His journey so that He can refresh the weary. He desires a drink when He is about to give spiritual water to the thirsty. He was hungry when He was about to supply the food of salvation to the hungry. He dies to live again. He is buried to rise again. He hangs on the dreadful cross to strengthen those in dread. He veils the heaven with thick darkness so that He can give light. He makes the earth shake so that He may make it strong. He rouses the sea so that He can calm it. He opens the tombs of the dead so that He can show that they are the homes of the living. He is born of a virgin so that people can believe He is born of God. He pretends not to know so that He can make the ignorant know. As a Jew He is said to worship so that the Son may be worshiped as the true God.”

– Ambrose

*Lectionary for next week:* 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Psalm 23

Ephesians 5:8-14

John 9:1-41

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*You will notice that our usual closing of the benediction, “Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!” is missing. That is because it’s customary during Lent to refrain from saying “Alleluia!” In a sense, we fast from this exuberant expression of praise, which makes it all the more meaningful and glorious when we declare on Resurrection Sunday, “Christ is risen, Alleluia!”*