**Samaritan Woman at the Well
Scriptures:

John: 8:31
“Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.”

John 4:5-15
“So Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey was sitting by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” His disciples had gone to the city to buy food. 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. 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.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestors Jacob and Rachel, who gave us the well, and with his sons and daughter, his flocks, drank from it?” Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give to them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water, gushing up to eternal life.” 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.”**

 **John 4:16-26
Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband and come back.” The woman answered him, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You are right in saying, ‘I have no husband’; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!” The woman said to him, Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people worship is in Jerusalem,” Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. 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. God is spirit, and those who worship God must worship in spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming, when he comes he will proclaim all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”**

 **John: 27-30; 39-42
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?” Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he? …[And] many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony: ‘He told me everything I have ever done.’ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”**

**Today’s Gospel story begins at a famous well. Jacob, his sons and their sons, had dug this well; and Rachel and the village girls and women no doubt gathered water in the mornings from this well. It is an ancient place. Within 10 minutes you can walk from this well to where Rachel, Leah and Jacob’s bones are buried. This well is a place where groups of women have unhurried conversations every day. And, no doubt, there is an occasional run for water if a family runs out during the day by a woman or the girls in the household.**

**Today, Jesus arrives after the morning conversations and gathering of water for the homes. He has been walking since early morning; about seven hours. It is about noon and he’s really tired and thirsty. A woman, alone, probably because she needs more water than was gathered in the morning, comes back to the well for more water. This is a chance meeting – no one planned it. And Jesus begins talking with this Samaritan, Gentile, woman. It is an inter-faith conversation-they don’t read the same scriptures. They don’t have the same temples. It is unusual for a lone woman to speak with a stranger, especially a foreigner who is Jewish. It is unheard of for a Jewish man, a teacher, to begin conversation with a Samaritan, especially a Samaritan woman alone, about things that matter for life.**

**I’m not sure the conversation took a real long time – I’m guessing 20-30 minutes. Although, to be sure, they had to both slow down, breathe, and take a moment with each other. Their hearts had to be open and vulnerable. Jesus knew her entire history. She had not had good luck – likely she had five husbands who died – all leaving her to the next male relative by law until there were no male relatives left. After the brothers are all dead, she lives with a man now – outside of family and law because legally he is not part of the family she married into. Jesus presses her for water. He is no doubt genuinely thirsty after such a long walk. And then, Jesus presses her to think about Living water, the water that gushes up into eternity. Living Water which we learn three chapters later in John 7, is our faith in God. In faith we become Living Water gushing up to God – imagine that power at the next baptism, right?! In conversation which starting with asking for a drink of water, Jesus reveals not only her history, but more importantly, reveals himself as the Messiah, the Divine, as “the I am.” In this parlay of words that matter, she forgets her water jar and immediately runs to her people to let them know that the Messiah has come and to their village. And she is convincing, people really listen to her, and come to know God personally, as Jesus, the Messiah, God, at the well.**

**This is one of God’s Holy moments in this world. Love is not just for some. Love, God’s living water, food and word, is for Gentiles, Jews, Females, Males: God’s Love and Presence is for everyone, for all time. This Samaritan woman, who knows how changeable and impermanent life can be – I mean she has been a widow five times!, this woman is the one to testify, to encourage people to come to see for themselves. And Jesus is clear that worship and Living involve more than a Church building: worship happens when real conversations steeped in Spirit and Truth take place – where-ever 2 or 3 are gathered. Conversations that stay with us long after the initial moment; stay with us “latest and deepest.” These Holy conversations are worship. These Holy conversations are Church.**

**Each of you, as part of a mission congregation in prison, are called to slow down, and to find engaging ways to talk about God with people, and with people that you are sure have nothing in common with yourselves. You get to listen first, and then, talk about: Where you last glimpsed Living Water, God with us? What does God mean in your life? How does God find you in parched, thirsty, suffering or uncertain places? You get to watch for the one or two that are seeking you out today for Living water? Are you able to talk with humor, grace, using real examples or life stories about God’s way of doing things?**

**On the internet recently a woman asked openly for people to talk to her about when God shows up with justice and love. Another woman, Keri Gee, who got five stars for her answer, replied:
“Jesus makes it clear that people who claim God will feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit those in prison, give water to the thirsty. In the Beatitudes, Jesus shows his that his disciples will have a new ethic to live by, turning the other cheek, giving to those who ask, etc... Look at the various stories of Jesus' encounters with people, people considered unclean, like the woman with the bleeding, the lepers, the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus' interaction with the woman caught in adultery. All of these things show that Jesus was compassionate and willing to go outside the rules and norms of his day. Jesus was often criticized for associating with "sinners, tax collectors, prostitutes, yet, this is where God chooses to be, where we can most see God if we have eyes to see!**

**We all have history. Some of it lucky, some unlucky. Some about being a Sinner. Some about being a Saint. We can bring all of the truth of our story to God’s word, which is forgiveness and love, reformation of our very lives! In seeing God’s love, we canna help but share it with other people, gushing faith, living waters, in holy conversations. Faith keeps growing within us; and without: and we are the lucky ones rooted in God’s word, sharing words, about what matters most.**

**Inner Child Sermon “Living Waters”
What does Living Water mean?**

# **John 7:37-38**

**37On 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, 38and let the one who believes in me drink. As[**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7%3A37-38&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26356a)**] the scripture has said, ‘Out of the believer’s heart[**[**b**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+7%3A37-38&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26356b)**] shall flow rivers of living water.’”**
 **Isaiah 12:3
“With Joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”

Isaiah 44:3
For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
    and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my spirit upon your descendants,
    and my blessing on your offspring.

Isaiah 55:1-2
Ho, everyone who thirsts,
    come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
    come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
    without money and without price.
2Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
    and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
    and delight yourselves in rich food.**
**Isaiah 58:11
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.**

**Revelation 7:15-7:17
5For this reason they are before the throne of God,
    and worship God day and night within God’s holy temple,
    and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.
16They will hunger no more, and thirst no more;
    the sun will not strike them,
    nor any scorching heat;
17for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,
    and will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”**

**Revelation 21:6
God is speaking:
“It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.”**

**Revelation 22:1
Then the angel[**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Revelation+22%3A1&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-31066a)**] showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.**

 **Lyrics – A Might Fortress is Our God
A mighty fortress is our God
A bulwark never failing
Our helper God amid the flood
Of mortal ills prevailing

For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe
His craft and power are great
And armed with cruel hate
On earth is not His equal

Did we in our own strength confide?
Our striving would be losing
Were not the right one on our side
The one of God's own choosing

Dost ask who that may be
Christ Jesus, it is He
Lord Sabbaoth, God’s name
From age to age the same
And God must win the battle

And though this world, with devils filled
Should threaten to undo us
We will not fear, for God hath willed
God’s truth to triumph through us

The Prince of Darkness grim
We tremble not for him
His rage we can endure
We know, his doom is sure
One little word will fell him

That word above all earthly powers
No thanks to them, abideth
The Spirit and the gifts are ours
Through God who with us sideth

Let goods and kindred go
This mortal life also
The body they may kill
God's truth is living still
God’s kingdom is
Forever and ever, Amen.**