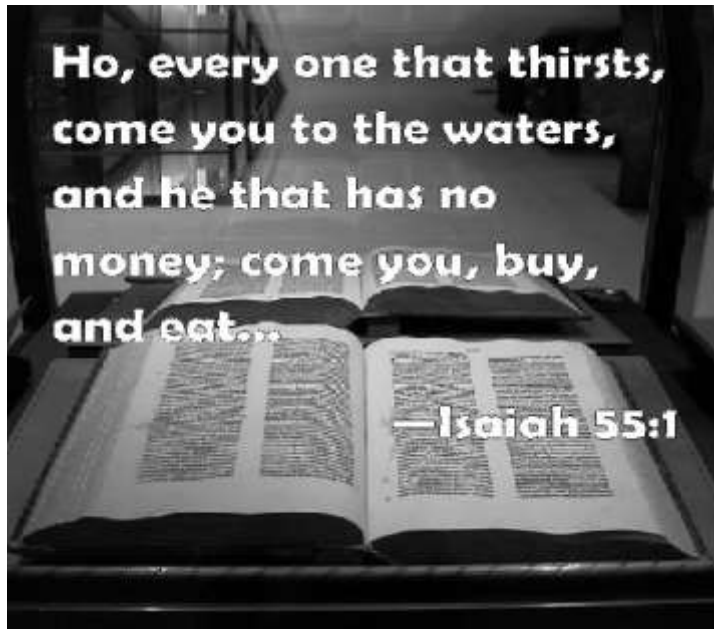


WELCOME TO...  
The Presbyterian Church of  
Saint David  
February 28, 2016



# COME TO THE WATERS

*Come to the water, all you who thirst – we come to drink deeply from the river of life. Come to the water, all you who are weary – we come to rest in the quiet pools of God's love. Come to the water, all you who long for a justice – we come be renewed in God's ever-flowing stream. For God is here among us, washing away the dust and grime of our lives, and pouring out the Spirit on all who thirst. Let's worship God together.*

**Gathering:** *O God, you are our God. We seek you. Our souls thirst for you, our bodies long for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. We have met you in the sanctuary, and beheld your power and glory. Because your steadfast love is better than life, our lips will praise you. We will bless you as long as we live; we will lift up our hands, and call upon your name.*

Hymn: You thirsty ones (vs. 1-2) 190

Prayer of Confession: together: *God of grace, we are hungry. God of mercy, quench our thirst. Forgive us, we pray, for our fearfulness, as we rely more upon our own human illusions of control and satisfaction, even though we know that these illusions separate us from you. Forgive us for not trusting in your grace, in your abundance, in the covenant promises that you have renewed with every generation. In Christ, may we learn to love you more than we love ourselves. Amen.* silence

Assurance of Pardon *Come, all you who are thirsty. If you take the first step, if you are willing to plunge once again into the waters and to emerge into new life, you will receive a love beyond all you can envision. We turn our hearts to God, and by grace our hungers are satisfied, our thirsts are sated; through Christ we are made whole; by the Spirit we are led forth as God's people. Amen.*

Hymn: You thirsty ones (vs. 3-4) 190

Prayer of the Day: *Holy God, whose Spirit moved over the waters at the dawn of creation, bear our prayers for all who thirst today. We pray for those who are spiritually thirsty, who long to know Your presence, but don't know where to find You. We pray for those who are alone and without hope, those who long to feel needed and loved, those who are searching for meaning and purpose. O healing river, pour down Your waters, and heal Your people. We pray for all who are physically thirsty, who don't have enough water to drink, or feed their animals, whose fields are parched, whose crops have withered; those who have to walk long distances to find enough water to survive, or who have to be content with water that is unclean. We pray for those whose homes and villages are torn apart because of drought or famine. O healing river, pour down Your waters, and heal Your people.*

Hymn: You thirsty ones (vs. 5) 190

❖ **Scripture: Isaiah 55:1-9** 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. Why 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. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the LORD, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Come to the water; come to the banquet; come buy without money. In other words, don't take what has value and waste it on nothing. Don't settle for what doesn't feed; take only what is good. This theme of choice permeates the whole passage. Soon the food imagery recedes, and returning to the land is merged with returning to God (verses 6-7). Clear distinction between seeking God's ways and failing to seek them is made in verses 8-9. Because God's ways are so radically different from human ways, because God's thoughts are not human thoughts, they won't be found by any other means than through this Godward journey. The chapter's final four verses, 10-13, return to the theme of nutrition, as God's own words are compared to the rain and snow that bring food from the ground. Mountains, hills, and trees -- powerful figures of the natural world -- are imagined singing and clapping in celebration when the exiles return. ... Isaiah 55 beckons its audience to choose to position themselves as recipients of God's bounty, both physical and spiritual. Lent is an invitation to thirst. Those who truly thirst and who truly hunger for God and the ways of God (Matthew 5) understand this invitation. In light of this passage, it's worthwhile to consider the economics of food and water -- discuss.

Hymn: All the way

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Lord for too long we have been spending our money on imitation bread,  
and we have worked hard to provide for ourselves a mirage that has never quenched our thirst.  
All the while You continually invite us into paradise, but we always seem to want more.  
You have prepared a pleasant place for us, only to have it rejected by us as not good enough.  
We have turned your green pastures into wastelands and have polluted Your still waters.  
You have tried to give us so much that we should be thankful for, yet You too often have received only our complaints and blame.  
Amazingly, You never have left us,  
You have never forsaken us,  
and You have always had hope for the likes of us.  
Thank You.  
Thank You for prophets  
who call us back from the brink of ecological disaster and mass extinction.  
Thank You for pastors  
who call us to reconcile, to forgive, to show mercy and create Your peace.  
Thank you for teachers  
who help us dream new dreams, and see new visions,  
so we can feel Your embrace within Your beloved community.  
Thank you for not returning our evil with evil, but only with Your gracious good.  
You are so great, and greatly to be praised, that we join our voices with all your children,  
all the children of the world, to sing your praise.  
You are so wonderful and so awe inspiring,  
that all of heaven is filled with your glory as we proclaim:  
**All: Gracious, gracious, gracious Love, Maker of everything that's good.**  
**Heaven and earth are filled with Your glory. Hosanna in the Highest.**  
**Blessed are all who live lives of grace. Hosanna in the Highest.**  
One: You made with us an everlasting covenant of steadfast love.  
You allowed Jesus, Your witness to live among us.

Through Jesus, Your love has touched every person on earth,  
Women and men, young and old, slave and free, unchosen and  
chosen,

all who have fallen short of Your glory.

Thank You.

You allowed Jesus, Your witness to live among us.

Through Jesus: You took away our lame excuses,

You opened our eyes to deeper expressions of compassion,  
and You gave a fresh purpose to our miserable lives.

During the Passover celebration,

Jesus, Your witness, surprised everyone present

by choosing to be the slave of all in order to express Your  
hospitality.

Jesus became Your means of grace to all who would betray.

Jesus became Your means of grace to all who would deny  
friendship.

Jesus become Your means of grace to all who turn their backs and  
walk away.

Jesus invites us to become grace too.

Jesus became Your means of grace,  
when he took the bread of human suffering, with thanksgiving,  
“Everyone, take and eat, for this is my body given for you.”

Jesus invites us to become grace too.

Jesus became Your means of grace,  
when he took the cup of Divine Deliverance, with thanksgiving,  
“Everyone, drink with me, for this is the cup of my blood, poured  
out as a testimony to God’s eternal promise to forgive you and the  
world of their sins.”

Jesus invites us to become grace too.

We hear so clearly Your invitation in Jesus Christ  
to join in becoming expressions of Your grace in the world.

We can feel Your fresh wind blowing, filled the world with mercy,  
hope and joy.

We give You our lives, as we proclaim publicly the glorious  
mystery of our faith:

**All: With Christ we have died.**

**Now it is Christ who lives in us.**

**Through our lives, Christ comes again.**

One: Wings of Faith, Breeze of God,  
touch these gifts of bread and wine  
transforming them for us into the body and blood of Christ  
The Gift of Grace.

Wings of Faith, Breeze of God,

touch these gifts of our bodies, our souls, our minds and our spirits,  
transforming them for the world into the Church, the sacred body  
and spotless bride of Christ, The Gift of Grace.

Wings of Faith, Breeze of God,

touch this gathering of the United Methodist Women,  
allow them to be your means of grace to women and children  
around the world.

Through their sacrifice bring Your grace to refugee women who  
struggle to protect their children;

use their voices to amplify cries for mercy;

use their influence to move hearts with compassion for women and  
girls who are being bought and sold on the open market;

and use their prayers to work miracles great and small to bring  
forth a rich harvest of hope in the world.

Jesus, hear our prayer.

Holy Spirit, hear our prayer.

Magnificent Creator, hear our prayer.

Use our lives now and always to bring You glory, honor and praise.

**Amen.**

Now as those who feel a fresh wind blowing, let us join with Jesus  
in prayer as we sing:

**Invitation:** *Come, you weary and restless, come, all who hunger and thirst. Jesus  
calls us to dine as friends, come, God’s feast of welcome awaits us. Invite us  
again to your feast, fill us with your word and your Spirit, that  
we might go out in joy and come back in peace.*

Hymn: Come, let us sing (1-2)

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Prayer of Thanksgiving: *The Lord be with you. And also with you.  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. Let us give thanks to the  
Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.* (we  
continue in prayer)

## Communion

Hymn: For the bread which you have broken 549

**Prayer following communion** *May we who have reached out our hands to receive this sacrament be strengthened in your service; we who have sung your praises tell of your glory and truth in our lives; we who have seen the greatness of your love see you face to face in your kingdom and come to worship you with all your saints for ever.*

Hymn: Lord Jesus you shall be my song (vs. 1 and 4) 665

*Go now from this service of worship to the service of God's people near and far, refreshed by the living water that Jesus offers to you. Listen for the parched voices of the least of these; we will search out the dry places and the arid souls, and become for them a spring of living water*

*This is Lent, and into its wilderness God calls us. Come, brothers and sisters, Christ is heading for Jerusalem. And we must follow.*