

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

March 8, 2026

John 4:5-42

Thirsty Voices

There's an old stone well on my Vermont property dating back to the eighteenth century. It's no longer operational as it ran dry years ago. A deeper well has since been drilled. Still, there's something spiritually powerful about that old well. Each time I walk by the stone relic I find myself pausing for a blessed second, imagining Jesus offering me water in which I would never thirst again.

It was the same offer he extended to the Samaritan woman in the village near Shechem at Jacob's well, believed to have been built around 1906 B.C.

Jesus encounters the woman in the noontime sun. After getting past the societal faux pas of a Jew asking a Samaritan for water, and after disregarding the red flag waving that this woman is an outcast among her own people — after all, who draws water when the sun is the highest and the hottest — Jesus has the water conversation.

He doesn't talk about the refreshing liquid that quenches parched throats, but the refreshing Word of God that saturates souls that have become spiritual wastelands.

Sir, how do I get this water? It's a question we should all ask, for what will satiate our thirsting for acceptance and wholeness?

Soon after moving to my fledgling farm that I named "Old Stone Well Farm," in honor of that well that captivated me, I began a Lenten spiritual practice. I would rise early in the morning and sit on the old rock slab covering the well's opening. I would then picture Jesus right beside me sharing all the beautiful things he sees in the world, and all the beauty he still sees in me just as he saw in the Samaritan woman.

My friends, although you can't physically join me at my old Vermont well this Lent, there is a well for you sit by this day. It is a place to retreat to and to close your eyes and to whisper to your Friend and Savior, "Jesus, I would very much like this water that you offer."

Thirst-quenching God, may we find ourselves asking Your Son boldly for the water in which we will never thirst for anything ever again. May this be the day we take a big holy gulp of hope, of love, of forgiveness, and of peace. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

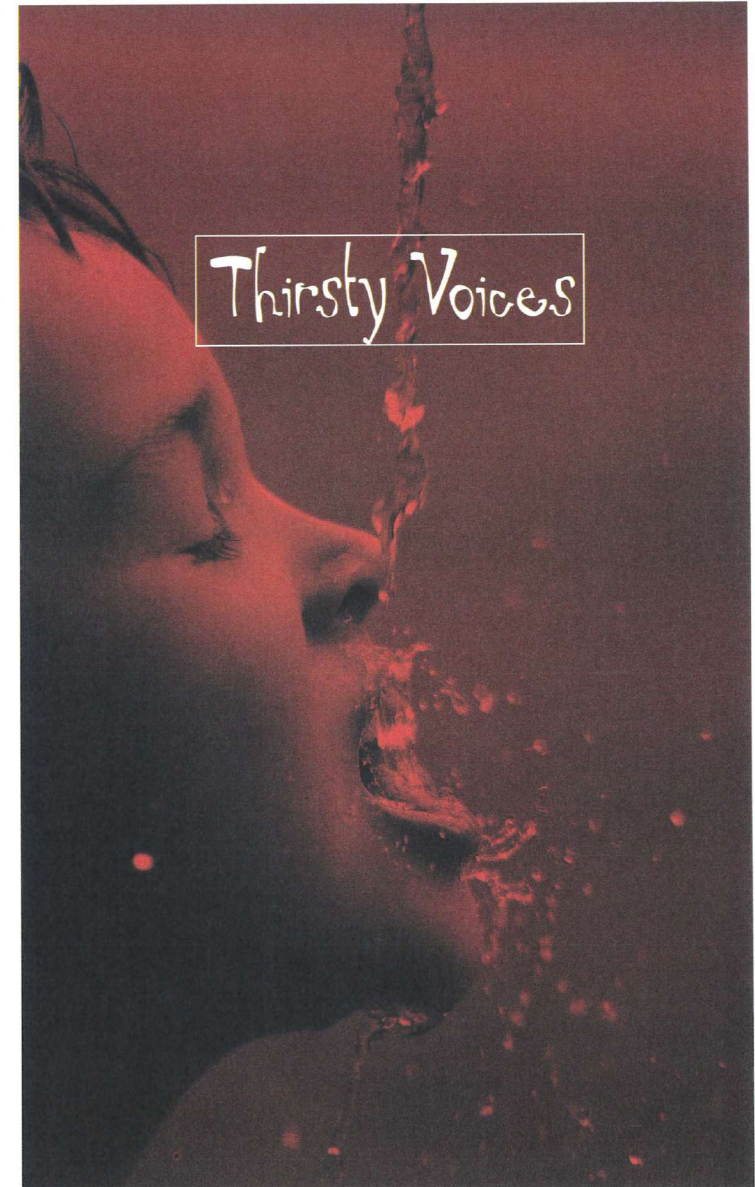
(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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St. John's United Church of Christ

Third Sunday of Lent *Amistad Sunday*

March 8, 2026



WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER (be seated)

PRELUDE

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

***GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP** (responsively)

God of rainbow and promise,

God of the swirling waters of baptism,

God of the dark night of doubt,

God of comfort and call,

LDwell with us this holy season of Lent

And lead us from temptation to trust, from fear to love, from despair to hope, from sadness to joy.

OPENING HYMN *There is a Green Hill Far Away* (vs.1 & 2)

***WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)

As we progress through Lent, Gracious God, enable us to deepen our spiritual lives. Teach us to pray rightly that we may know the blessing of being rooted and grounded in your Spirit. Focus our minds upon Christ, through whom we see the pattern we are to follow. Come, be with us in worship. Amen.

***RESPONSE** *How Great Thou Art* (chorus only) #33

ANTHEM *Walk by Faith*

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE (children come forward) *Jesus Loves Me*

OFFERING INVITATION

Let us give back to God with gratitude for all blessings received.

***RESPONSE** *Lord, Jesus, Who through Forty Days* (v. 3) #180

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

If fear of the unknown is getting in the way of our giving to you, enlighten us. Let us know what we need to know. And let new knowledge result in new gifts. Amen.

MISSION MOMENT *One Great Hour of Sharing*

WE GATHER IN PRAYER

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Congregational Response tune: *Go to Dark Gethsemane* #196

SCRIPTURE: Old Testament: Exodus 17:1-7
New Testament: John 4:5-42
The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON *The Woman at the Well*

***CLOSING HYMN** *If You Will Trust in God to Guide You* #565

***BLESSING** (responsively)

Our Lenten journey marches still onward and we travel with Jesus. There are no faithful detours, nor can we rush to the end of the story. But in the meantime of Lent, we can live, and move, and have our being, in a God who assures us of eternal life.

Let us depart in hope and confidence that, although the wilderness of Lent stretches still before us, God's promises go with us, today and always.

*** CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *God, Dismiss Us* (v.1) #439

* POSTLUDE

****You may place your offering in the plate at the back of the sanctuary or online at myucc.org and clicking on the *contribute* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.**

Never put a period where God has put a comma, God is still speaking!

Announcements

****** You may place your offerings in the designated basket or online at myucc.org and click on the *contribution* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.

LENTEN BIBLE STUDY on Tuesdays beginning February 24th at 11:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. each week. *The Room Where It Happens* is an exciting Lenten course written by Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilkin, inspired by the filmed version of the award-winning stage musical *Hamilton*. The course has been written in the hope that all ages can be involved in the room where it happens for discussions about what the Bible and the experience of Christian faith teach us about some of the big issues faced in the musical by Alexander Hamilton: his responses to injustice, adversity, and temptation, his search for identity, and his realization that he (and all of us) can make a difference in the world. The course has five weekly sessions

- Identity and Belonging - Ambition and Temptation - Love and Sacrifice
- Hope and Courage through Adversity - Forgiveness and Redemption

Each session includes suggestions for inspiring songs from the musical to watch, with relevant Bible passages and discussion questions. Invite your friends and join us.

MESSY CHURCH Thanks to everyone who helped make our March Messy Church such a wonderful experience. We couldn't do it without such dedicated volunteers.

LENTEN SELF-DENIAL OFFERING Set aside a dish, box, jar, can, basket, whatever and each day toss in the amount listed on the self-denial list as a daily reminder of all the blessings you have received at God's hands. A sheet was included in the February newsletter and copies are available in the back of the sanctuary. Bring your offerings on Easter Sunday as a special Lenten sacrifice.

DINNER & CONVERSATION: This week's dinner will be at Café Moonlight at 6:00 pm on Thursday night. Please sign the list in the back of the sanctuary so we can reserve a large enough table.

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING is one of the four denominational offerings we collect each year. This offering supports relief efforts for hunger, poverty, natural disasters, climate change, immigration/migration and refugees. It serves individuals and communities in need providing people with safety, sustenance and hope. This year's offering will be collected during worship on March 15th.

If you would like to donate a Spring Flower in honor of, or in memory of a loved one, please leave them in Memorial Hall by 12:00 noon on Friday, April 3. Don't forget to complete the donor form including the label to attach to your Spring Flower. A list of donors will be included in the May newsletter.

PRESCHOOL OPEN HOUSE and early registration will be held on Sunday, March 15th from 2:00-3:30 pm. Please share with any families with preschoolers. The Caterpillar Class (3 yrs. old) meets Tuesday & Thursday from 9:00-11:30 am with tuition of \$135 monthly for the 2026-27 school year. The Butterfly Class (4 yrs. old) meets from 9:00-3:00 on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays with tuition of \$215 monthly. Flyers will soon be available to put up around town.

MARCH MOVIE NIGHT will be *Hamilton* on March 15th at 4:00 p.m. This movie is over 3 hours long so we are starting early. A light dinner will be served during the intermission. *Hamilton* is a revolutionary Broadway musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda that tells the story of American Founding Father Alexander Hamilton, blending hip-hop, R&B, pop, and traditional show tunes with a diverse cast to reimagine U.S. history. It follows Hamilton's rise from an immigrant to the first Secretary of the Treasury, exploring his political and personal life through his relationships with figures like Aaron Burr, George Washington, and Eliza Hamilton. The show won numerous awards, including 11 Tony Awards, a Grammy, and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Some adult language and content but recommended for high school students and up. Sign up sheet in back of sanctuary will help us plan food.

March Youth Dates: 3/08 (Sunday) 4pm-5:30pm
3/18 (Friday) Lock-In 7pm-9am next day
3/29 (Sunday) Youth Group 11:30am-1pm Lunch Provided

Prayers Posts

We ask for continuing prayer requests for: Tom Nowaskie, Marilyn Houchins, Tony Riley and Ellen Riggs, Bobby Bahr and Mark Schutter. Prayers for Rhonda Webber (Brenda Fillingim Niece) and Ryan Viecke.

Shut-in Addresses:

Susie Milligan - Colonial Assisted Living, Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Leona Conway - Aperion Care, C Wing Room C-35, 3801 Old Bruceville Road, Vincennes, IN 47591
Marge Beamon - The Villages at Oak Ridge, Room 303, 1694 Troy Road, Washington, IN 47501

At Home:

Gary Meyer
Mike Lankford

Prayer requests or updates can now be relayed to the church office during regular office hours and Pastor Debbie during the evening/weekend.
Email: st.johnsuccoffice@gmail.com or call 812-882-2720 M-F, 9 am - 1

This Week in the Life of St. John's

Sunday, March 08

Daylight Savings Time

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Worship 10:30am
One Great Hour of Sharing

Tuesday, March 10

Hamilton Bible Study @ 11 & 6:30p
Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm
Good Samaritan Foundation
Meeting/Dinner in Evansville @ 6pm

Thursday, March 12

Dinner & Conversation
Kelso's @ 6 pm

Monday, March 09

BABE Store 12-5:30pm
Membership/Evang. @ 5:30p

Wednesday, March 11

Messy Church @5:30-7pm

Christian Ed @ 6pm
Choir @ 7pm

Friday, March 13

Pastor Debbie is Off

Looking Ahead In March 2026

Sunday, March 15

Adult SS Class 9:30am
Fellowship @ 9:45am
Worship 10:30am
One Great Hour of Sharing

Tuesday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day

Hamilton Bible Study @ 11 & 6:30p
Girl Scouts 4:30-6:30pm

Thursday, March 19

Dinner & Conversation
Café Moonlight @ 6pm

Monday, March 16

BABE Store 12-5:30pm
Music/Worship @ 5pm
Board Meeting @ 6pm

Wednesday, March 18

Christian Ed @ 6pm
Choir @ 7pm

Friday, March 20

Pastor Debbie is Off



Staff and Volunteers

Pastor:	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
Secretary	Kim Butler
Church Board President:	Sandra Lange
Organist:	DeEtta Welte
Music Director, Pianist:	Becky Brockman
Children & Family Ministry Coordinator:	Will Meyer
Nursery Attendant:	Darcie Bahr
Head Usher:	Allison Cummins
Liturgist:	Brenda Fillingim
Projection:	Jana Vieck
Sound:	Brian Fillingim

Did You Know?

St. John's Sunday Morning Worship Services are streamed **LIVE** on our church's Facebook page, "**St. John's United Church of Christ Vincennes.**"

Or, you can watch the Worship Service at your convenience by going on the church website, "**myucc.org**" and clicking on "Worship Service" for a particular date.

You can also download a copy of each monthly **church newsletter** from our church website to keep up with all the activities.