

WADE IN THE WATER

MIDWEEK LENTEN WORSHIP: *The River of Life*

March 25, 2026 –7:00 p.m.
St. Matthew Lutheran Church
4101 Washington Street NE
Columbia Heights, MN 55421

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OPENING HYMN: “Christ, the Life of All the Living” – Blue Hymnal #94
Christ, the life of all the living, Christ, the death of death, our foe,
Christ, yourself for me once giving To the darkest depths of woe;
Through your suff’ring, death, and merit Life eternal I inherit,
Thousand, thousand thanks are due, Dearest Jesus, unto you.

You have suffered great affliction And have borne it patiently,
Even death by crucifixion, Fully to atone for me;
For you chose to be tormented That my doom should be prevented.
Thousand, thousand thanks are due, Dearest Jesus, unto you.

Then, for all that bought my pardon, For the sorrows deep and sore,
For the anguish in the garden, I will thank you ever-more,
Thank you for the groaning, sighing, For the bleeding and the dying,
For that last triumphant cry, Praise you ever-more on high.

INVOCATION AND CONFESSION OF OUR SINS:

L: There are things on earth that mirror things in heaven. The water of baptism – earthly, ordinary water, drawn from a tap in the sacristy – mirrors the River of Life that flows through heaven. Baptism connects us in a very real way to that River of Life. Our worship begins the way our life in Christ begins in baptism: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

L: Let us approach with confidence this One who takes on death that we may have life.

C: **Lord, we have sinned against you and against each other. We have chosen death over life and lived like dead people. We have failed to share that life with others. That is destructive and deadly. We need you to repair what we have broken, to restore what we have destroyed, to bring back what we have banished, to heal what we have poisoned.**
(Time of silence for personal confession)

P: God says, “Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life.” This is our Good News. The cross of Jesus gives us forgiveness and life. As a called and ordained servant of the Word, it is my joy and privilege to follow Christ’s command and forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

RESPONSE: "Let the River Flow"

E

Let the poor man say, "I am rich in Him," _____ let the

3 A2

lost man say, "I am found in Him," _____ and

6 E

let the riv - er flow; _____ Let the

9

blind man say, "I can see a-gain," _____ let the dead man say, "I am

12 A2 E

born a-gain," _____ and let the riv - er flow; _____

16 A2 Bsus B

_____ let the riv - er flow. _____

CHORUS

21 E Bsus B A

Let the riv-er flow, _____ let the riv - er flow;

24 B E Bsus B A

_____ Ho - ly Spir-it, come, _____ move in

28 B E Bsus B

pow-er. _____ Let the riv-er flow, _____

31 let the riv - er flow;___ Ho - ly Spir-it, come,

34 ___ move in pow - er. ___ Let the

37 riv - er ___ flow, ___ let the riv - er ___ flow, ___

40 ___ let the riv - er ___ flow. ___

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PRAYER OF THE DAY:

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

L: Let us pray.

C: **Almighty God, You give life abundant and eternal. You have refreshed our lives with the Water of Life. You invite us to stand at your side and join you in inviting others to drink of the Water of Life. Thank you, Lord. Give us faith and love to stand where you are and join you in what you are doing. In the name of Jesus, Amen.**

GREETING TIME

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Ezekiel 47:1-2, 6-12

The man brought me back to the entrance to the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was trickling from the south side...He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river. When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Dead Sea. When it empties into the sea, the salty water there becomes fresh. Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live. Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Mediterranean Sea. But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear fruit, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing."

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

SECOND LESSON: Revelation 22:1-3, 10-17

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him...Then he told me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this scroll, because the time is near. Let the one who does wrong continue to do wrong; let the vile person continue to be vile; let the one who does right continue to do right; and let the holy person continue to be holy." "Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star." The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let the one who hears say, "Come!" Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

L: This is the Word of the Lord.

C: Lord, have mercy.

MESSAGE: "The River of Life – The River of Invitation "

Part 1: Fishing Francis

"Wade in the Water" – traditional

(The congregation will sing the refrain before and after the verse)

The musical score is written on three staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the refrain: "Wade in the wa - ter, Wade in the wa - ter, child - dren;". The second staff continues the melody for the second line: "Wade in the wa - ter, God's gon-na trou-ble the wa - ters. Why don't you". Below the second staff, the chords A7 and Dm are indicated. The third staff shows the beginning of the verse melody: "wa - - - ters." with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket.

Verse: *Water and Spirit, Born from above*

The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come soak in God's love."

The River of Life, waiting for you.

Come take a big swallow; it will make you brand new.

Part 2: Pastor Bill Hugo

CONFESSION OF FAITH: Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

GATHERING OF THE OFFERINGS

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH:

(Prayer response – P: Lord, in your mercy, C: Hear our prayer.)

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

C: **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

READING FROM THE PASSION OF OUR LORD (Time of silence)

BENEDICTION

CLOSING SONG: “Drink Deeply”

I have all I need, my shep-herd cares for me, He leads me be-side the
You have filled my cup un- til it o-ver - flows; A ta - ble is set for
stream, Rest - ing in pas-tures so green; And he guides me down the path that's safe and
me, You've seen to my ev-'ry need. Ev-'ry- where I go, your good-ness fol-lows
sure. The dark-ness can bring no fear, I know my shep-herd is near.
me, And this is where I be - long, here, in the house of my God.
So drink, drink deep-ly the wa-ter of life, Your thirst to
quench for the ver-y last time. This gift is free-ly giv'n; You'll
nev-er thirst a-gain. So drink, drink deep-ly the wa-ter of life.

(“Drink Deeply the Water of Life” by Jay Beech, copyright 2001 by Jay Beech,
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WORSHIP ASSISTANTS:

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Passion Reading: Doug Krant