



## Third Sunday in Lent

Holy Eucharist IIA

12 March 2023

**The Episcopal Church of the  
Good Shepherd in Athens, Ohio**

Seeking to know and serve Christ  
in loving service to the campus, the  
community, and the world.

Today's printed [Order of Worship](#)

## Lessons

### Lessons for the Third Sunday in Lent

Old Testament – Exodus 17: 1-7

Psalm – 95 (Sung)

New Testament – Romans 5: 1-11

Gospel – John 4: 5-42



<https://www.lectionarypage.net>

## The Collect

ALMIGHTY GOD, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,

## The Gospel



### John 4:5-42

JESUS CAME to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to 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 ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and 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 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."

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 must 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 him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

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?” They left the city and were on their way to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

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 that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world.”

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### **Gospel Commitment Questions:**

What part of this story stands out to you?  
What part would you like to learn more about?

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## **The Sermon**

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### **Beyond Bad Things**

Bryan Stevenson has one of the most Christ-like attitudes about people. If you have been listening to or reading my sermons for a while then you know I often reference Mr. Stevenson who is a Black man, a lawyer, and the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice

Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama. His book about his work with people on death row called *Just Mercy* is not only a bestseller it was the inspiration for a movie with the same title. I have followed his career since the 1980's because I admire his passion, dedication, and care for people most of society seem content to ignore and dismiss. But what I admire most about him isn't his advocacy work, it is his theology and fundamental belief about human beings.

This belief is what has kept him going for so many years through difficult and stressful work. The belief that none of us should be defined by the worst thing we have done. He writes in his book, "the bad things that happen to us don't define us."

This remarkable mindset does not neglect the significance of accountability, he believes criminal and harmful activity needs to be addressed and punishment befitting a crime is necessary and appropriate. What I find fascinating is how his belief allows him to recognize the wholeness of each person he meets and helps him connect with them. It's how he practices compassion in place of being judgmental. This is how Mr. Stevenson can see beyond stereotypes, fear, and all the stuff that can separate us, and enables him to participate in the Kingdom of God here on earth, helping to heal injustice, and the harm injustice creates.

While he has never said where his belief comes from, Bryan Stevenson has been a church member for most of his life, and it is possible he could have been inspired by Gospel encounters like the one we have today when Jesus met a Samaritan woman at a well.

This encounter is not only the longest recorded conversation with one person in the New Testament, but also rich with so much good news. Unfortunately, too many of us can get hung up with the detail we assume is something bad about the woman revealed by the number of husbands she had that we try and force the entire narrative to revolve around that one detail. When we look closely at the conversation between Jesus and the woman at the well, however, we discover Jesus was not focused on that part of the woman's life. He mentioned it not in judgment but to reveal who he is. This is remarkable because the woman at the well is the first person in John's Gospel Jesus tells simply and plainly who he is. Jesus obviously did not define the woman by the number of husbands she had. Instead, he recognized something remarkable about her, not something sinful in need of redemption.

So, if this story isn't another "redeemed sinner" story, what is it? To figure that out, we need to practice what Bryan Stevenson believes: bad things that happen do not define us. When we can look beyond the number of husbands, we can recognize there is so much that is deeply

good in today's Gospel reading: the Kingdom of God stuff that heals deep divisions and brings new life to the world.

Many scholars and commentators don't seem to know what to do with the Samaritan woman in today's Gospel. They suspect because she isn't given a name, she probably never existed and is most likely a representative for all Samaritans. Perhaps they are right. But we need to remember this is John's Gospel and the author's style of writing is complex and layered. That means the woman in today's Gospel may be a stand in for an entire people, she may have been inspired by an actual person or event or be a means of addressing issues in the community John's Gospel was written in, or something else, or bit of all of the above. The point is, whenever we look at John's Gospel, we need to remember all these factors might be in play, because that can help us get closer not only to the author's intention, but to the Holy Spirit present through the Gospel.

The woman in today's Gospel doesn't get a name and we are constantly reminded she was a foreigner. Perhaps you have read about or heard about the enmity between Samaritans and Jews. Perhaps you have also heard or read that in the culture of Jesus' time, it was considered inappropriate for men and women who were not related to talk to each other in public. So, if a Jewish man initiated a conversation with a Samaritan woman, it would be comparable to a republican and democratic socialist having a conversation in our modern times. The two didn't mix, and usually were more invested in maintaining the divide between them than in learning from each other. That is why the disciples were so taken aback when they saw Jesus talking with a Samaritan woman.

Their conversation isn't only long, it shows they are engaged as equals. Jesus started the conversation simply by requesting a drink of water, which was probably a way of meeting the woman where they both were instead of addressing a physical need. Notice no one got any water from the well. The woman's water container was even left behind. She didn't need it because their conversation was a giving and receiving of living water, always going one step deeper into the stuff of God's Kingdom. Because they kept listening to each other and learning from each other, it became a life-giving conversation for both of them.

The woman who would have been his enemy became the sower Jesus mentioned when talking with his disciples, the one who planted the seed of faith in the people of her city. Notice how she invited them to come and engage with Jesus, she didn't insist on it, she invited them to experience for themselves what she had encountered. The people in the city received this invitation and then went on to grow into a deeper faith. That is how an entire city of what would have been enemies of Jesus

came to embrace Jesus.

That makes this an encounter of healing a divide that isn't really between two religions, but people and God. The people in the village grew closer to God without being forced to change their nationality or religion. They were invited to meet Jesus and decided to make room for him in their lives.

That is not the only breach that was bridged in today's Gospel. The disciples who were on the sidelines got to witness and hopefully learn that following Jesus is not only for them. Jesus intentionally invites all people, people of all races, genders, colors, political affiliations, physical and mental abilities, socioeconomic status, education levels, and ages to follow him and participate in God's Kingdom here and now in this world and doing so can heal whatever divides us from each other and from God.

Such miracles of healing are possible, as evidenced in the work of people like Bryan Stevenson and the Equal Justice Initiative. It begins when we practice the loving compassionate way of Jesus by refusing to let bad things define ourselves, each other, or any person and learn to welcome each other as equally beloved children of God.

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A sermon by The Rev. Deborah Woolsey, 12 March 2023, at The Church of the Good Shepherd, Athens, Ohio.

**Sermon Commitment Question:**

How do you treat people going through a difficult time, so they do not feel like they are defined or valued by what is bad?

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**Please include in your prayers**

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IN OUR WORLD, we pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; we pray for peace with justice throughout the Middle East. We pray for all families and law enforcement affected by gun violence. We pray for the victims of the coronavirus. We pray for all people affected by natural and environmental disasters. We pray for the people who are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, and we pray for all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees. We pray for Joe our President,

Kamala our Vice-President, Mike, our Governor, the Supreme Court and the members of Congress.

IN OUR DIOCESE, we pray for our Provisional Bishop Wayne, the search process for a new bishop, and for Kenneth, Nedi, and Wendell our assisting bishops.

IN OUR PARISH, we pray for Good Shepherd's continued growth, for our Rector Rev. Deborah Woolsey, for our Associate Priests, Rev. Leslie Flemming, and Rev. David McCoy, for our ministry to students, the university, and the community.

THOSE WHOM OUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED: Al S., Bud and Carol, Chris L., Connie D., Jean R., Lia, Miriam, Sharon, R.C., Ann Carswell, Zelma Coleman, Lee Kembell-Cook, Richard DeNune, Roy DePue, Norm Fox, Lindsey and Regina Golden, Debbie Hunsberger, Bob and Nancy Jackson, John Jefferson, Peter Kachenko and family, Christine McGinn, Jeff Maiden, Julie Nehls, Rev. Ed Payne, Dan and Nancy Reedy, Virginia Richards, Flo and Jack Roach, Katyana Sayrs, Annette Secoy, Dale Showman, Michael Vaughn, Mary-Anna Welch, and we pray for all who care for them. \*\*

DECEASED: Ann Lloyd, Jeanne Nottingham, The Most Rev. Frank Griswold

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\*\* Full names are normally not published online. However for the Sunday 10:30 service we will publish full names unless requested otherwise. If you have a name to be added to the prayer list, Lynn Graham maintains this information. Lynn may be reached at 740-593-5098 or [grahammowery@aol.com](mailto:grahammowery@aol.com).

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## At-Home Worship

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Christ Church Cathedral Cincinnati live streams its services Sundays at 10 a.m. These are saved and can be watched anytime later.

<https://cincinnati.cathedral.com/ccj/ccc/join-online/>

Washington D C -- there's much to explore at the the National Cathedral's online portal. <https://cathedral.org/worship/>

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## Coming up on the Calendar

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Tuesday, March 14, 9:30 a.m. - - Prayer Shawl Meeting (Nehls Hall)  
Wednesday, March 15, 12:30 p.m. -- Compassion and Prayer (Nehls)  
Thursday, March 16, 7:00 p.m. - - Vestry Meeting  
Sunday, March 19, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal  
Sunday, March 19, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist (Discretionary Sunday)  
Wednesday, March 22, 12:30 p.m. -- Compassion and Mercy (Nehls)  
Sunday, March 26, 9:15 a.m. - - Choir Rehearsal  
Sunday, March 26, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist  
Sunday, March 26, 3:00 p.m. - - AGO concert 1st Presbyterian Church  
Tuesday, March 28, 9:30 a.m. - - Prayer Shawl Meeting (Nehls Hall)  
Wednesday, March 29, 12:30 p.m. -- Compassion/Well-Being (Nehls)

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### **Coffee Hour Schedule**

March 19    Alex Buckley  
March 26    Dana Carlson

### **Taken Dates for Altar Flowers**

During Lent there are no flowers and for Easter we will have an announcement for lilies.

[To Altar Flower Procedure](#)

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## **Notes & Announcements (additional items in the Friday Bulletin)**

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### **Easter Flowers**

**If you would like to contribute to the fund for altar flowers on Easter as a memorial or thanksgiving, those contributions as well as**





names should be given or sent to **Barbara Martin** no later than **Wednesday, March 29.**

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## **Learn About an Opportunity for Good Shepherd on March 19**

To help with our deficit budget, we have been invited to consider sharing our priest with a neighboring Episcopal parish. Next Sunday, March 19, we will have an informational meeting so everyone can learn more about this opportunity immediately after the church service. If you are unable to attend in person, we will have the option to attend via zoom video conference. Please let Mother Deborah know if you will be attending via zoom so she can make sure you receive a link.



## **Bryan Stevenson will speak at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati on Friday.**

Mother Deborah mentioned Bryan Stevenson in her sermon. He will be speaking at Christ Church Cathedral in Cincinnati on Friday, March 17 at 1:00 pm. Visit [cincinnati.catholic.com](http://cincinnati.catholic.com) to learn more about the event.

Stevenson is the founder and executive director of the Equal Justice Initiative. He is widely known for his best-selling book *Just Mercy*, which has been adapted into a feature film, and is the subject of the Emmy award-winning documentary, *True Justice*.

This event, which is part of the Taft Lecture Series, is free to the public, but space is limited. Registration is required. [Click here to register.](#)

Christ Church Cathedral is located at 318 E. 4th Street in downtown Cincinnati.

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## Lenten Lunch Discussion Series on Compassion

You can still join us Wednesdays at 12:30 pm in Nehls Hall. We begin with the brief service of Noonday Prayer followed by discussion from the Lenten Devotional *Practicing Compassion with Your Whole Heart, Mind, Soul and Strength*. Bring your own lunch.

Next week we will discuss Compassion and Listening.

[To more about the Lenten Series.](#)

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## Lenten Devotionals

There are only a few book versions of the FREE Lenten Devotional left. If you missed out, visit [www.livingcompass.org](http://www.livingcompass.org) to download a free copy. You can also follow Living Compass on Facebook. They post the daily devotionals there.

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## Memorial for Rev. Jan Griesinger - April 2

**Community Memorial:** Join in the celebration of the incredible life and legacy of Reverend Jan Griesinger on Sunday, April 2, 2023, from 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. Come ready to sing and share memories of this incomparable advocate for social justice. Location: Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens (184 Longview Heights, Athens, OH). Reception to follow at Purple Chopstix.

R.S.V.P. requested to assist with reception planning, but not required. Email: [Jan.G.Memorial@gmail.com](mailto:Jan.G.Memorial@gmail.com)

ABOUT JAN: The Rev. Jan Griesinger, 80, longtime community activist and Director of United Campus Ministry in Athens, Ohio, died December 9, 2022. She attended DePauw University, graduating in 1964, and in 1970

# Community Memorial

*Celebrating the incredible life and legacy of*

## Reverend Jan Griesinger



**Sunday, April 2, 2023  
3:00 - 4:30 p.m.**

**Unitarian Universalist  
Fellowship of Athens**

184 Longview Heights, Athens, OH

*Reception to follow at Purple Chopstix.*

**R.S.V.P.** requested to assist with  
reception planning, but not required.

Email:  
Jan.G.Memorial@gmail.com

received a Master of Divinity from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. She was ordained that year by the United Church of Christ. In 1976 she joined Athens United Campus Ministry, where she worked until her retirement in 2004. Jan was involved with many local, national, and international LGBTQ+ and other social change organizations. In 1979, she and her life partner, Mary Morgan, co-founded a women's intentional community, the Susan B. Anthony Memorial UnRest Home and Women's Land Trust (SuBAMUH).

A community memorial will be held on April 2, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Athens. Donations can be made in her honor to United Campus Ministry Center, Mt. Zion Baptist Church Preservation Society, Old Lesbians Organizing for Change, SuBAMUH, and Calliope Feminist Choir. (Mickey J. Hart, Director, UCM)

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## For Bishop Transition News and Updates

[-- Follow this link --](#)

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If you want to help the folks who have been negatively impacted by climate disaster and war anywhere in the world (including Ukraine) please consider contributing to [Episcopal Relief and Development \(ERD\)](#) which is the official ministry of the Episcopal Church.



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Mother Deborah sent in this photo of the snow greeting church goers in Athens this morning, but snow did not stick where we live in Marietta. (Ted Foster)





## Contacts, Information

### Quick Links

[Parish website](#)

### Pandemic Notes:

[Link to the DSO guidelines for in-person worship](#)

[Sermons](#)

[Parish calendar](#)

[Staff](#)

[Campus Interest](#)

[E-News Guidelines  
and Back Issues](#)

[Diocese Southern Ohio](#)

[Bishop Transition](#)

[\[E\]Connections](#)

[Episcopal News Service](#)

[Episcopal Journal & Café](#)

In light of local conditions we request all persons wear masks inside the church building **regardless** of vaccination status.

**Office Hours:** 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Masks are required.

The **Church Building** is not open for public meetings and gatherings but during office hours the thrift shop and chapel are available for individuals. Masks are required.

CrossRoads Café is temporarily closed.

## Contact Information

**For pastoral needs**, please contact The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895 (cell) or 740-593-6877 (church), or by e-mail at revdebwoolsey@gmail.com.

**To find out more about Good Shepherd** and other matters, please contact Alex Buckley, Senior Warden, at 740-593-5513 or by e-mail at macbuck@yahoo.com.

**For maintenance matters**, please leave a note at the office or contact Dana Carlson, Junior Warden, at 740-664-2022 or by e-mail at carlsondana@hotmail.com.

**For emergencies**, please call

## [DONATE to Good Shepherd](#)

The above takes you to the Parish page where you can find instructions or donate on-line via PayPal, If you have a preference, please indicate on the the "Add special instructions to the seller" section the purpose of the donation -- e.g. organ fund, plate collection, etc.

Check out the Church's

The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at  
937-689-8895.

**NON-emergency messages**  
can be left on the church's  
answering machine (740-593-  
6877).

**The parish office**  
**administrator** is Barbara  
Martin (740-593-6877) or  
barbara@chogs.org.

**The Episcopal Church of the**  
**Good Shepherd**, 64 University  
Terrace, Athens OH 45701

740-593-6877  
chogs@chogs.org  
[www.chogs.org](http://www.chogs.org)

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[the Good Shepherd](#)  
[45701](#)

**Office Hours:**  
Masks are required.

10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Monday - Thursday  
740-593-6877  
chogs@chogs.org

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Blessings !

Church of the Good Shepherd | 64 University Terrace, Athens, OH 45701

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