



# **We are the Buckets**

A Sermon By  
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March 15, 2020  
Lent 3 – Year A

Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church  
Lawton, Oklahoma

An audio recording of this sermon can be found on Saint Andrew's Church website at:  
<https://www.saintandrewslawton.org/copy-of-st-andrew-s-current-events>

# We are the Buckets!

## John 4: 5-42 & Psalm 121

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“Sir, You have no bucket!” This is one of my favorite stories in scripture, Jesus’ encounter with an unnamed Samaritan woman that he meets on this way to Galilee. It’s quite a conversation – with the line that makes me laugh out loud every time I read or listen to it.

For the gospel of John, it’s a story about the universally restorative role that Jesus offers to those who can see it. Yes Jesus is a Jew, but his message extends beyond the Jewish people. John’s gospel wastes no time in making this eschatological point --- the kingdom is no longer being waited for, it has arrived in the person of Jesus! Even to the Samaritans, a people that for centuries have been at odds with the Jewish people over the correct place to worship the Holy One ... If you are a Samaritan it was understood that you worshipped at Mt Gerizim rather than the temple in Jerusalem. In fact, the Jews had destroyed the temple at Mt Gerizim to make their point. And the dispute between the two people continued on for centuries.

Yet here Jesus is offering life giving water and telling this woman, this Samaritan woman saying, “But the hour is coming and , is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Given our current cultural experience or slowing the spread of the Corona Virus that has raced us into not gathering in a physical building thru the fifth Sunday of Lent, these words Jesus offered to the Samaritan woman so long ago bring me into a deeper place of hope ... with “when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for God is spirit.” The Spirit knows no boundaries; we know this as Christians.

And yet, I can hear the echo of the Samaritan women in my head ... “Sir, you have no bucket!”

“Ma’am, you’ve shut the church building!!”

Where are we going to find this lifegiving water if you don't open the doors of the church building? .... Which is a very real and fair question.

To which I would say, not gathering incarnationally on these coming Sunday mornings does kind of feel like I don't have a bucket.

But here's the thing --- while beautiful church buildings have been, are and will remain vital to our common life as St Andrew's --- the church more than anything is the people. Jesus is telling us in today's Gospel --- worship in spirit and truth, wherever you are, and God is there.

And so, for these next few weeks, reach out to your friends, family and neighbors in the ways that you are able. Pick up the phone, write and send some snail mail, play a game or read stories aloud with your family if you are homebound with others, offer to shop for people who you know need a little extra help.

We'll be doing our part to for the church. I've got things in the works for how to support us (spiritual, emotionally, as well as basic human needs) as a church family during these next days.

Open your day and close you day with prayer

Discover a new buckets. Let yourself become the bucket to receive all the lifegiving water you can hold and offer. Fill your bucket up, empty it and then fill it up again ... and pour out all that is in it, share it with the world, and we'll get through this together.

Amen.