

YEAR A

The Season of Lent is a period of 40 days, begins on Ash Wednesday, and is a period of introspection and reflection on the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus. Episcopal author and theologian Barbara Brown Taylor says that Lent is a "springtime for the soul...Forty days to cleanse the system and open the eyes to what remains when all comfort is gone. Forty days to remember what it is like to live by the grace of God alone and not by what we can supply for ourselves."



Scripture

So he 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."

(16-38 omitted)

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."



Questions

- Today is the third Sunday in Lent, the six weeks (40 days plus Sundays) leading up to Easter, and the time we intentionally remember and follow Jesus to the cross and empty tomb. In the story, where did Jesus and his disciples stop for a rest during their travels?
- What did you notice about the conversation Jesus and the woman had?
- When have you been welcomed by someone from a background or culture different from yours?
- Through their conversation, the woman learns Jesus is the Messiah. Can you remember a conversation where you learned something important about someone?
- After meeting Jesus, the woman shared her story of Jesus welcoming her despite their differences and boundaries. What are some ways you can welcome people across differences and boundaries?

Look it Up!

Look up Rafer Johnson and C.K. Yang, participants in the 1960 Rome Olympics.

While Johnson was born in America and Yang in Taiwan, the two met at UCLA and connected. Though they were competitors, they were also friends.



mini
REVOLUTIONS





Activity

Materials:

Whiteboard (or large paper) Writing utensils

During the season of Lent, we learn more about who Jesus is and practice skills that can help us follow him better. We'll look closely at today's story to notice how someone can move from feeling like an outsider to feeling welcome and known.

Read through today's story again; then, draw a horizontal line on your whiteboard. As a group, identify the key events happening at the beginning, middle, and end of the story, paying close attention to how each action leads to the next. Can you identify three or four scenes that occur?

Once you have created your timeline by adding three or four key events, reenact the story together. Be sure to assign roles for each character. If the story is hard to remember, choose someone to be the narrator who can read the story aloud as the characters act out the events. After acting out the story (feel free to do it several times and switch up your actors!), discuss the following questions together.

- Who were the outsiders in this story? Could there be multiple ways to view who the outsiders were?
- What happened to make someone on the outside feel like they were welcome and part of a community?
- Where do you see evidence of someone trusting or sharing vulnerably in the story? What happened when the person trusted or shared?
- What are some ways you can make others feel welcome and known?

Alternate Activity

Materials:

Notecards
Marbles
Scissors

Cardboard, string, straws,
tape, paper, cups, etc.

In today's story, we see how a chain reaction can begin when someone shows assertiveness, kindness, trust, and/or love. A chain reaction is a series of events that begins with one thing and leads to another and then another. We will use materials like marbles, straws, and cups

to create miniature Rube Goldberg machines to show the movement of those actions from our story. These machines start with one small action that leads to other small actions to accomplish a task. Feel free to research a few examples of Rube Goldberg machines—they're amazing!

In small groups, or a large group, use the story booklet and cut out the four scenes so you have four separate cards for each group. These cards will mark four points of the machine you build. Then sketch out a course for a marble to move through. Use the available materials to build a course for your marble. In the first scene of our story, the woman walks toward the well where Jesus is. Does your marble begin at the top of a tower and roll into a cup, which then tips out onto a ramp? In the second scene, we see Jesus asking for water. Do you blow on your marble through a straw to steer it toward a tube and up a hill? As the conversation progresses between Jesus and the woman in scene three, does your marble follow a windy path or in a direct line?

Create any machine you'd like to move your marble from the beginning spot to the end, as long as there are three (or more) steps! Tape your scene cards near the beginning, end, and transition spots of your machine. After your machines are finished, discuss what chain reactions you noticed resulting from building this machine alongside the story.



Micropractice

We do not know everyone's lived experience. The next time someone surprises you with their words or behavior, practice curiosity! Take a moment to wonder why someone might behave that way. If you have an opportunity, ask a question.



Download a graphic to share with your community and on social media. You can download it here:

illustratedministry.com/minirevA Lent3



Prayer

Dear God, we are grateful your love is for everyone. Thank you for making us feel welcome and known. Help us use our love, assertiveness, kindness, and vulnerability to make others feel welcome and known. Amen.

THE WOMAN SAID TO HIM,



"I KNOW
THE MESSIAH
IS COMING.

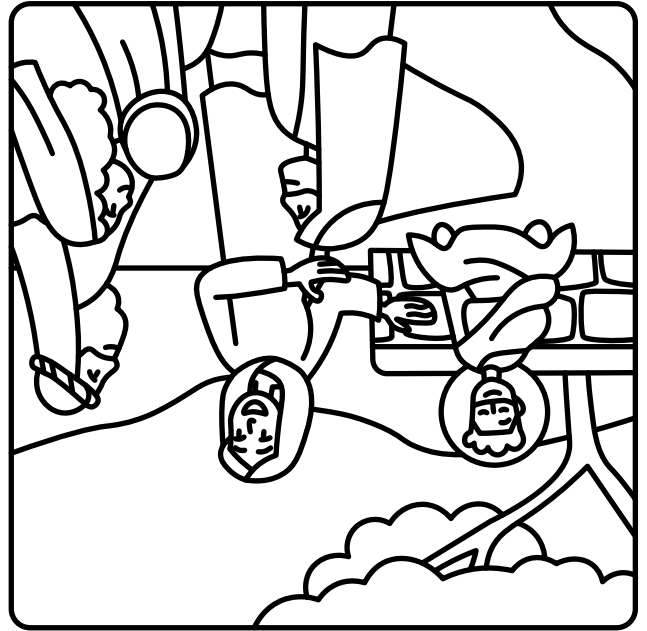
WHEN HE COMES,
HE WILL PROCLAIM
ALL THINGS TO US.

JESUS SAID TO HER,

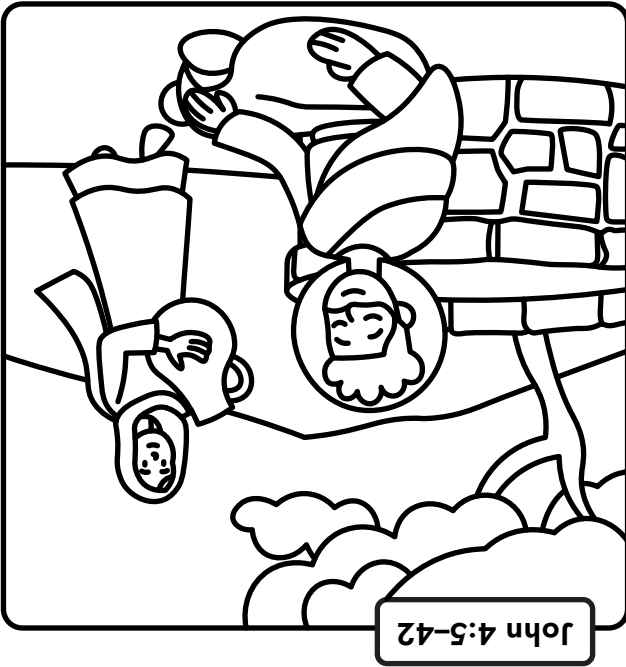
"I AM HE,
THE ONE WHO
IS SPEAKING TO YOU."



4. When the woman returned home, she shared her experience, and many became believers in Jesus. When other Samaritans came to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them. Her words inspired them to have their own interactions with Jesus.



1. Jesus traveled through a Samaritan city on his way to Galilee. Tired out by his trip, he rested by a well. His disciples went to buy food, and he was all alone. A Samaritan woman came to get water.



3. Jesus talked with the woman, telling her things about her past and things to come. He told her he was the Messiah. When the disciples came back, they were surprised Jesus was speaking with a woman, but they said nothing.



2. Jesus asked for a drink. The woman was confused. Jesus was a Jew, and Jews and Samaritans didn't usually do things for each other. Jesus told her if she really knew who he was, she'd be asking him for things.