

# Third Sunday in Lent

*O God, you are my God, I seek you, my soul thirsts for you.*—Psalm 63:1 NRSV

## Explore

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bowls of salty or sweet treats, napkins, cups

### Creating a Thirst

*Have bowls of treats available for your class: pretzels, peanut butter and crackers, something sweet and sticky, or whatever you can come up with to create a thirst. Have on the table napkins and cups, but no drink. Students will snack as you introduce the lesson. If they ask for a drink, have them wait.*

The lesson (as the students munch and build up a thirst) will be about water and how important it is to us individually, as a community, and in our world. Comment on your local rainfall. Mention that various parts of the world struggle with severe drought.

The need for water controls us. Our bodies and our world seek a balance. Seventy-five percent water is the rule both for our body and our world. That 75 percent relationship is a delicate balance. Scientists worry about global warming because it could cause devastation to our world. You are dehydrated if your body loses its 75 percent balance. Dehydration is a killer. Many infants and elderly people are hospitalized suffering from dehydration. The test is to pinch your hand or arm gently, then release. If the skin remains in that pinched position, you are dehydrated and your body is no longer in balance. Check yourself. *Comment that everyone is balanced, then continue.*

Expect God  
to satisfy your  
thirsty soul.

## Extract

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### Precious Water

Map of Israel or Middle East

Jesus lived in a country that constantly struggled with a need for water. We have grown up with the convenience of indoor plumbing. Just turn the tap and water is abundantly present, but water was a precious commodity for the Israelites. Much of their land was desert-like and either grew nothing or just scrubby little plants of no worth to people or their animals. Some of the land was mountainous. No water was available except when the snow melted and caused torrential flooding, which was neither predictable nor safe. So the land struggled with its need for water. The Dead Sea was “dead” because it did not empty into any other outlet. That water was stagnant and so salty that it was useless for many tasks.

Water for cooking, laundry, cleaning, and bathing had to be carried from a well or other good water sources. Women and children hauled water in jars to their home. The people living in this land learned to depend on God for survival. Jesus often used the concept of water to communicate humanity’s need for God, who offered eternal water and drink from an ever-flowing fountain that gave eternal life.

## Quenching Thirst

Offer the class members water, and comment on how thirsty they must be after snacking and listening to you talk about water. Pull out two clear pitchers. One should be full of nasty water—dirty with sediment gathered at the bottom. One should be icy, cold water. Ask each class member which they prefer. Ask the class if they know what the different pitchers represent in our world. Remind them that the lesson today is “Thirsting for God.” Hopefully, someone will suggest the cold, icy, clean water represents the everlasting water that Christ is offering. The dirtier, sediment-filled pitcher is what the world offers. You can’t trust the dirty water. Who knows what it has in it? Perhaps disease and dangers are waiting for us if we drink it. We put no hope in our future if this water is all we have to drink.

Bible, two pitchers, dirty water, clean ice water, cups

Psalm 63:1–8

On the other hand, the clean pure water, the everlasting water that Christ offers, can be trusted. Our life would be better if we could drink from this water. Today to quench your thirst, you had a choice, and you all chose the everlasting water.

Read Psalm 63:1–8 or tell it like this: “God’s water nourishes us. God’s purity balances us. As we drink of the everlasting water, we receive peace, feel hope, and trust in the future God has for us. The water is available to us all. We thirst, we ask, and God supplies our every need. The world cannot make those promises, yet many continue to drink from what the world offers.”

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## Experience

### Reviving Water

Bring a wilted plant to class. While the class watches, comment on how this plant has lost its hope for the future. Like many people, it seems to have given up. Water it. In about an hour, certainly before the class and worship service are over, the plant will be revived and standing straight. Leave the plant out in a conspicuous spot so the students can see it later. Leave a sign beside it that says, “I drank from the everlasting water.”

wilted plant, water, sign

### How Thirsty Are You?

You drank from the water earlier to quench your body’s thirst. How about your soul’s search for God, answers to your hurts, and your future? It seems we are so busy sometimes, we forget to drink. We may be thirstier than we realize.

test strips from three or four different brands of paper towels, bowl of water

How thirsty is your soul right now? Do a little test. Cut paper towel strips from three to four brands. (*You are experimenting with different amounts of absorbency. Practice at home before class.*) Dip just the end of the towel into a shallow bowl of water. The water will begin to move through the paper towel. Probably the cheapest towel will absorb the least. The more expensive towels will “drink deeply.” Ask students to compare the paper towels to their lives. Ask: “Which strip of paper towel represents you?”

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## Expand

### Take the Drink Jesus Offers

Say: “Look at the two pitchers of water used earlier. Instead of me offering the water, imagine it’s Jesus. He says to you, ‘Drink and you will thirst no more.’ What words does he say to you? Most importantly, what are the words you say to him?” Respond on the paper provided. Ask a volunteer to read Doctrine and Covenants 18:2n–o and another to offer a prayer as a closing.

two pitchers used earlier, paper, pens, Doctrine and Covenants 18:2n–o

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**Lectionary scriptures**—Isaiah 55:1–9; Psalm 63:1–8; 1 Corinthians 10:1–13; Luke 13:1–9