

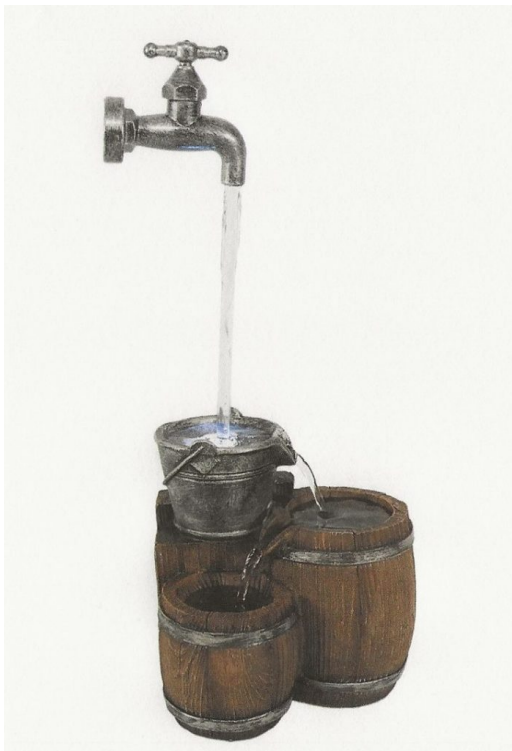
# Sermons

Seekers recognizes that any member of the community may be called upon by God to give us the Word, and thus we have an open pulpit with a different preacher each week. Sermons preached at Seekers, as well as sermons preached by Seekers at other churches or events, are posted here, beginning with the most recent.

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## [“Living Water” by Glen Yakushiji](#)



# The Third Sunday in Lent

March 12, 2023

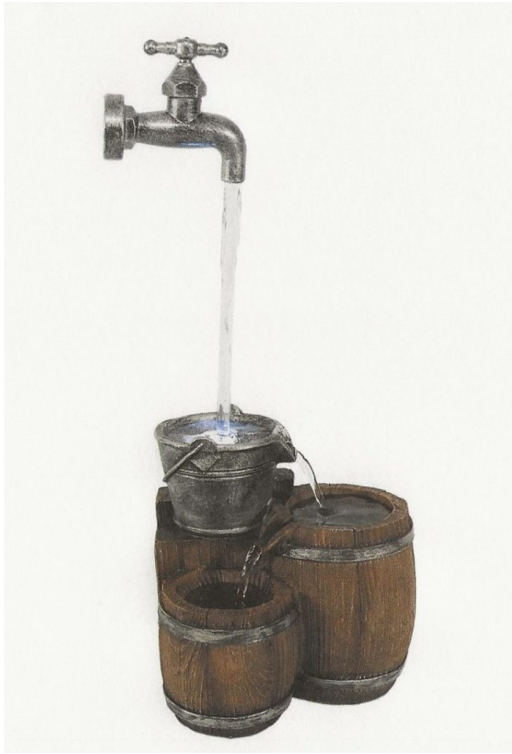
As our Lenten theme this year Celebration Circle has chosen It Depends on Faith. I like that idea. I am thinking of faith as the foundation of my spiritual life. Like the foundation under a building faith has to be rock solid.

Traditionally, Lent is a season of preparation for the celebration of Easter. These two liturgical seasons track the natural seasons of the northern hemisphere, winter becomes spring; the time to preserve energy for the next season of growth.

In the gospel scripture, when Jesus meets a Samaritan woman at a well he asks for a drink of water. As they talk she realizes who she is speaking to, and Jesus offers her living water with which she would never thirst again. Jesus then begins to tell her about her past, and she, amazed runs off to share the news. Jesus never gets the glass of water.

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**[“The Echoing Green” by John Morris](#)**



## The Second Sunday in Lent

March 5, 2023

The reading from Romans this morning seems very difficult to me. I wish I could transpose myself into the mind of a Greek-reading early Christian, so I could understand how these words were received! For us today, all we have is a translation of a language that was very different from ours in many ways, and separated from our era by two millennia. It's a hard gap to bridge.

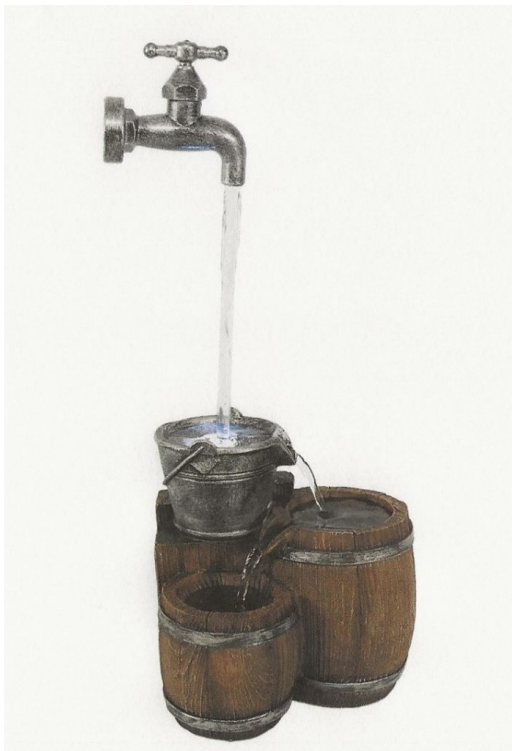
Not being a scholar, I'm just going to give you my sense of what the passage might mean, or at least what it means to me. The basic point seems to be a contrast between works, and faith. Paul tells us that a person who works *deserves* their wages – it's a matter of simple justice. But to have faith in “the one who justifies the ungodly” can give you the unearned gift of “inheriting the world.” It sounds to me like “justifying the ungodly” means showing favor even to those who don't obey the law, who don't “work.” Because that's the second big point that Paul seems to make here. Along with

“works” comes “the law,” and Paul is really radical here: “If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the inheritors, faith is null and the promise is void.”

What contrasts with law here? It’s the Greek word *charin*, usually translated as “grace.” This word has the same root as “charisma,” which we often forget refers to “a gift of divine grace.” So obeying the law will only get us so far; we need to ask God for grace, for favor, and Paul seems to be saying that in order to do that, we must have faith of a kind that goes beyond simply applying for our fair wages. It’s kind of unreasonable, in a way, but it’s just the sort of thing Jesus loved to tell parables about. Sure, any good worker can get their paycheck at the end of the day, but God is actually willing to love and bless us poor idiots who can’t get the job done.

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## [“Embodied Faith” by Erica Lloyd](#)



# The First Sunday in Lent

February 26, 2023

Today is the first Sunday in the liturgical season of Lent. Lent may be the most *embodied* of our seasons – okay, maybe second place after Advent, with all of its improbable conceptions, big pregnant bellies, and wearying journeys. But Lent is a close second: beginning with Jesus' weakened, weary body stumbling out of the wilderness, ending with his crucified corpse buried in the tomb. And in between, Christians have traditionally marked Lent with some kind of fast.

I feel very attuned to this this year, because I've been doing a lot of thinking about my relationship with my body. And as important as our bodies are – I mean, we live our whole lives in them! – they are hard to talk about sometimes. Even here! In this congregation where we regularly affirm the dignity and beauty of creation, extolling the essential goodness of the birds and the fish and the rivers and the mountains, how often do we include our own bodies in that mix?

Personally, I could use that reminder. And I also think it's the kind of thing we are called to as people of faith: speaking prophetic truth and love against the false stories told not only in American culture in general but also specifically in the American church. Because I think there is a gnostic-like disdain for the body alive and well in the church, particularly in evangelical Christianity. Gnosticism was a philosophy espoused by some in the early church that, among other things, defined material existence, including our physical bodies, as evil. Though the church ostensibly squashed this movement within the first century or two after Jesus, I think traces of it remain.

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# [“Imagining Transfiguration” by Deborah Sokolove](#)



## **Transfiguration Sunday**

**February 19, 2023**

It seems to me that lately we've been having a long run of very serious sermons, mostly drawn from every crisis that we hear about in the news. It makes my head swim just to remember the latest crisis. Particularly for the last couple weeks, I've barely been able to listen to the news or read the newspaper. I've been too distracted with what is right here in front of me. And while I applaud and cheer for all of you who are filled with passion to address these very real and very important issues, I confess that a lot of time I want to just



*Merwyn Austin Nunes, asked a number of people to join him in reflecting on Black History Month, and invited the children into a brief show-and-tell. What follows is the automatic transcript from zoom of what was said, lightly edited for clarity*

**Larry:** Thanks for that. So I always start off by saying, if you remember one thing that's said today I've done my job. And I'm going to start this sermon off just like I did 5 years ago.

I'm going to say, like 5 years ago, root for the Eagles.Yeah.

I've got a picture that I wanted to be on the screen, but it couldn't be on the screen [*holds up picture*] This is my good friend Elizabeth Noll. She died on July nineteenth. I worked for her for 15 years. This woman and I was taking care of the lawn. It was the perfect job, because she didn't want the managed look, she would have me. She would buy hundreds of dollars' worth of bulbs, and I put them deep in the ground in the squirrels and the deer and the rabbits to dig them out and eat them. She didn't care. She would just buy more, to love nature. She loved life, and so you know, so!

I was sad to see her go. She was a part of the Folklore Society here, you know, and she was a part of the Folk festival. She was Jewish, so she didn't come to Carroll Cafe that often. But she did come one time, maybe once or twice, but it is their Sabbath, so mostly she wouldn't do that. I actually asked her husband to come talk to the group today, he's an orthodox Jew. And so throughout my years, working for them, I knew about the Jewish holidays because she would tell them to me, but I could never repeat them back to her. I didn't understand the pronunciation, and I'm sorry.

Michelle knew her also, from the Hebrew home. Michele helped take care of this woman for the last 5 or 6 months or she was alive, so I asked Michele say a few words.



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