

Devotion, Week of March 1, 2026—Lent 2
Rev. Jeanne Simpson

“Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, ‘Get up and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’ (This is a wilderness road.) So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. Then the Spirit said to Philip, ‘Go over to this chariot and join it.’ So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, ‘Do you understand what you are reading?’ He replied, ‘How can I, unless someone guides me?’ And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him....

“Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, ‘Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?’ He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.”

We looked at Nicodemus, a Rabbi, this past Sunday, who is confused about who Jesus is. This passage from Acts 8 is about a eunuch, who is considered unclean by the Jews, and Philip’s baptism of him. God has shown in this conversion of someone who is not only a Gentile but someone frowned upon, that God’s love and mercy are open to everyone. God broke down this barrier with his instruction to Philip to go toward Gaza and join the eunuch in his chariot. The eunuch is reading Isaiah, surprisingly, and Philip interprets the scripture for him. And the eunuch becomes a believer and is baptized. As Nicodemus and the eunuch have shown us, we are reminded to ask for guidance when we don’t understand. God will show us the way. We are also reminded to show love toward all those who believe, even those we may not think of as members of our beloved community.

Jeanne