



Queen Anne

LUTHERAN CHURCH

Called to Proclaim God's Love in Christ for Every Person

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✠ *Staff* ✠

Pastor

Cantor

Children's Ministry Coordinator

Parish Administrator

Sexton

Lutheran Counseling Network

Serving as Assisting Ministers today

Thanks to these who worshiped with us: Susan Evans, Joel Matter, Erich Patten, Lori Lynn Phillips, and Virginia Stamey-Johnson

The Rev. Dr. Daniel Peterson

Kyle Haugen

Terry Anderson

Barbara Bash

John Bryant

Sarah Tatterson

Svend Phillips; Jean Oplinger

This service of worship can also be heard online. Go to queenannelutheran.org and click on "WORD OUT" to find both audio and print resources for worship at home.

THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT

March 15, 2020

"Word Out" audio transcript

↑ Greeting

☪: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

☪: **And also with you.**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the fourth chapter.

G: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

⁵[Jesus] came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph.⁶Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

⁷A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸(His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) ⁹The 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.) ¹⁰Jesus 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." ¹¹The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? ¹²Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" ¹³Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴but 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." ¹⁵The 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."

¹⁶Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." ¹⁷The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" ¹⁹The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. ²⁰Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." ²¹Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. ²²You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. ²⁴God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." ²⁶Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

²⁷Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” ²⁸Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ²⁹“Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” ³⁰They left the city and were on their way to him.

³¹Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” ³²But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” ³³So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” ³⁴Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. ³⁵Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. ³⁶The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. ³⁷For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor.”

³⁹Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” ⁴⁰So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. ⁴¹And many more believed because of his word. ⁴²They 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.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

Triple Transgression
Pastor Dan Peterson

It seems pretty harmless. Jesus, leaving Judea to avoid the opposition of the Pharisees, takes the shortest route back to Galilee through Samaria. Tired from his journey, he sits by a well in the Samaritan city of Sychar. A Samaritan woman comes to draw water. Jesus asks her for a drink. They exchange just a few words, yet by the end of their brief conversation it becomes clear that Jesus has violated not one...not two...but at least three boundaries. *Three boundaries*. See if you can

guess what they are. As you do, remember the basic elements of the story: Jesus, a Jewish man, is talking with a Samaritan woman who lives with someone out of wedlock and who, before that, was divorced...five times.

Jesus' boundary crossing literally begins several verses prior to our reading. There Jesus decides to leave Judea to avoid the opposition of the Pharisees and return to Galilee. To get to Galilee, however, he has to cross the boundary between Judea and Samaria, according to verse four. Now Samaria was inhabited by remnants of the northern tribes of ancient Israel, who worshipped the Lord God and used the Pentateuch (that is, the first five books of the Bible) like the Jews did. Yet in spite of these similarities, these parallels, the Jews looked down on the Samaritans. They regarded them as "half-breeds," sons and daughters, as Ezra and Nehemiah put it, of men who mingled with foreign wives. They also rejected the validity of their religious observances, as verse nine of the Gospel reading confirms: "Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans." So when Jesus, a Jew, speaks with a Samaritan, he clearly violates a boundary that divides many of us even today. He transgresses the boundary of ethnicity, and the response of the Samaritans is, well, unexpected, to say the least. They show him hospitality. They ask him to stay with them. And many of them come to believe. So, if you guessed ethnicity or race as a boundary Jesus crosses in speaking with a Samaritan, you are one for one.

Jesus, secondly, transgresses the boundary of...gender. This is evident in the reaction of the disciples when they discover the company Jesus keeps by the well. "Just then," we read in verse 27, "his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman. . . ." Their astonishment of course is based on the fact that they lived in a patriarchal culture. Women were second-class citizens. The woman in this story accordingly doesn't even have a name. Yet it is *this* woman whose testimony and faith-sharing will make her, in Christian terms, an *apostle*, that is, someone who is "sent forth" to deliver the good news. But you don't have to take it from me. As John Chrysotom, a bishop and theologian writing in the fourth century puts it, this woman, nameless to posterity, displays nevertheless "the actions of an apostle, preaching the gospel to everyone she could and calling them to Jesus. She even drew a whole city to hear him."

So, if you guessed gender as a boundary Jesus crosses in speaking with the woman at the well, you are two for two.

We have now seen how Jesus crosses two boundaries in speaking to the Samaritan woman at the well. I believe however he transgresses also a third.

Can you guess what it is? Think about the kind of woman people perceived the woman at the well to be. Not only has she been divorced five times.... *she is also, by her own admission, co-habiting*. That makes her, according to the standards of the day, a woman of ill-repute.

Her relationship history, however, is not the only clue we have regarding her status. The story tells us that Jesus, after a long journey, was sitting by the well at a particular time of day. Do you remember what time of day that was? ...Noon.... High noon, the hottest time of the day. People of status don't go to the well at high noon because of the heat. Only people of lesser status go at this time, which is why Jesus meets this *particular woman* at the well. The third boundary Jesus breaks is accordingly a socio-religious one. He keeps the company...of "sinners," people of low regard, outcasts, pariahs – leaving his disciples virtually speechless and leaving us with a clear mandate, as followers of The Way, to go and do likewise.

So there you have it: A Triple Transgression. In merely speaking with the woman at the well, Jesus violates boundaries of race, gender and social class. But it's not simply Jesus who crosses these boundaries – and here is the Good News: It's God. In verse 25, the woman at the well speaks of the Messiah. "When he comes," she says, "he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus replies by saying, according to our translation, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you." Here's what's fascinating. In the original language of the New Testament, Greek, guess what's missing in the phrase, "I am he?" The answer is "He!" The accurate translation goes like this: "Jesus said to her, 'I AM, the one who is speaking to you.' I AM – the "name" of God according Exodus 3:14, the One who crosses all kinds of boundaries to be present to us, the one who is specially present to *this woman, a woman on the margins, a woman of ill-repute, a woman ostracized because of gender, race and social class*.

We bear the presence, knowingly or not, of this very same God whenever we reach out – as Jesus did – to people on the margins, "to the least of these," as he says in Matthew 25. The outbreak of the Coronavirus, of course, makes this difficult. It is good and right that we should take every precaution necessary to stop the spread of this virus, a point I made last week when sharing Martin Luther's response to a plague that swept across Germany and through his tiny town of Wittenberg. Safety is first. Yet we are also the hands and feet of Christ, as the mystic Teresa of Avila puts it. So what can we do?

Here, finally, I have to confess. I don't yet know. It's one thing to care for our own—we're calling members and friends of the congregation, for example, to make sure they are okay. It's another to reach out to those, like the woman, who live on the margins, men, women and children who will be most affected by this virus. How do we reach them? What boundaries do we need to cross? Let us pray here for wisdom, so that we can be open to creative possibilities without putting ourselves unnecessarily at risk.

It seems pretty harmless. Jesus, leaving Judea to avoid the opposition of the Pharisees, takes the shortest route back to Galilee through Samaria. Tired from his journey, he sits by a well in the Samaritan city of Sychar. A Samaritan woman comes to draw water, and Jesus asks her for a drink. By the end of the encounter, he will have transgressed a gender boundary, an ethnic boundary, and a social boundary. We, the body of Christ in this world, are invited to do the same. Amen.

Hymn of the Day

Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty, ELW 777

(See last page – verses 1, 4 and 6 are sung)

Prayers of the Church

A: With our hearts turned to God who is gracious and merciful, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence is given.

A: God of living water, send your church beyond boundaries to proclaim your grace. May its witness be a source of refreshment for thirsty souls. Strengthen our voices, that all people can know and believe that Jesus is truly the savior of the world. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: God of living water, protect from pollution or misuse of rivers, lakes, oceans, and streams, including all of those around Puget Sound. Bless the work of those who dig wells and those who advocate for access to clean water, that all people and animals have enough to drink. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: God of living water, open the hearts of leaders and authorities, that they hear the cries of the suffering and act with compassion towards them.

Keep them especially mindful of the vulnerable during the outbreak of the coronavirus. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of living water, mend the hearts of those who grieve broken relationships, whether by conflict, abuse, divorce, or death. Draw near to all who are ill and be with all of us, whether due to precautions or infirmities, who must remain homebound for at least a few weeks, if not months, ahead. Assure those questioning your presence in the midst of doubt or suffering. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of living water, renew us in the promise of baptism. Join us together in worship, fellowship, and sharing your good news. Embolden us to serve others and to work for justice and peace. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: For who or what else do the people of God listening today to this service, pray? We invite you to do so verbally or in silence.

A silence is given so that your prayers may be offered.

A: God of living water, we thank you for those who endured suffering and who now boast in the glory of God. Pour your Holy Spirit into our hearts and give us peace as we live in the hope of our salvation. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: According to your steadfast love, O God, hear these and all our prayers as we commend them to you; through Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

Benediction

P: And now may the Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor,
and grant you peace.

C: Amen.

Dismissal

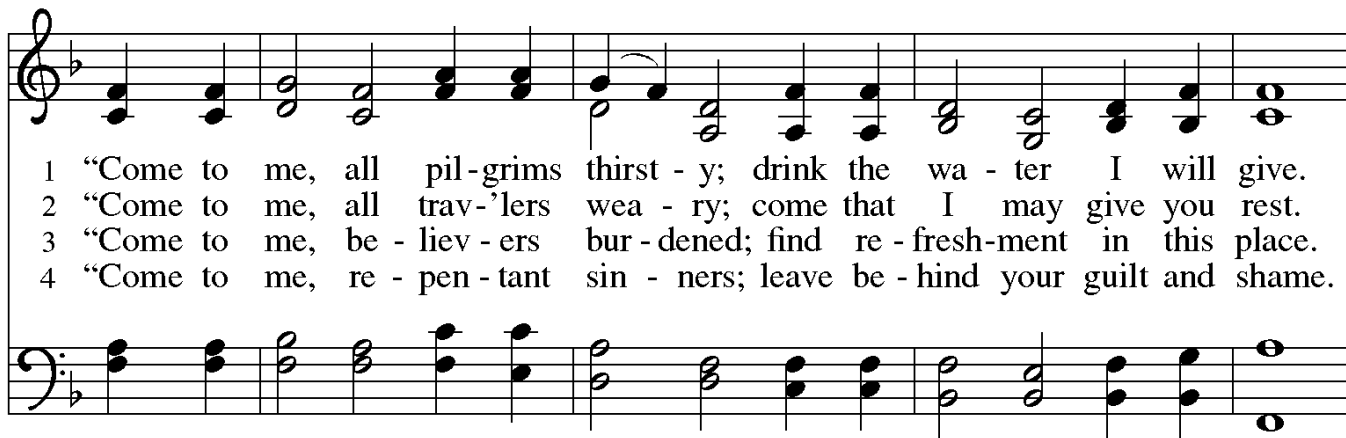
A: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Hymn of the Day

Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty, ELW 777

(verses 1, 4 and 6 are sung)

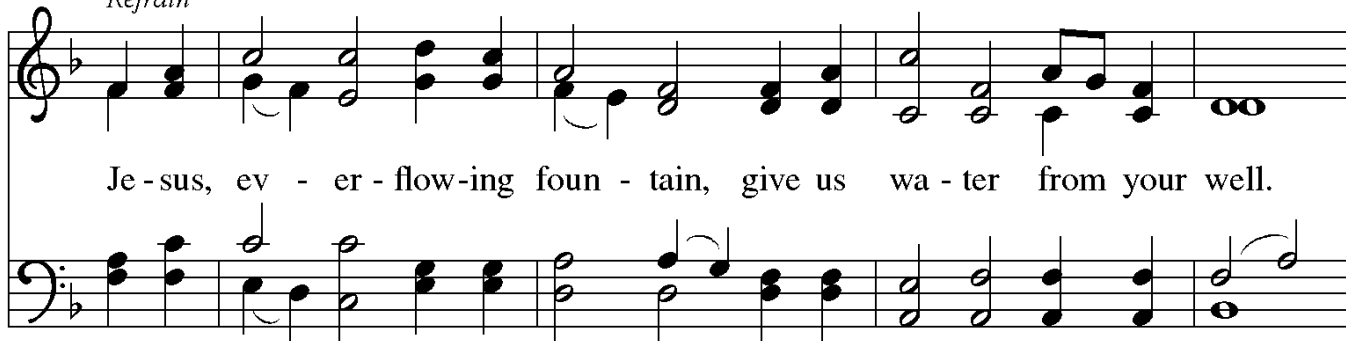


1 "Come to me, all pil-grims thirst - y; drink the wa - ter I will give.
2 "Come to me, all trav-'lers wea - ry; come that I may give you rest.
3 "Come to me, be - liev - ers bur - dened; find re - fresh - ment in this place.
4 "Come to me, re - pen - tant sin - ners; leave be - hind your guilt and shame.

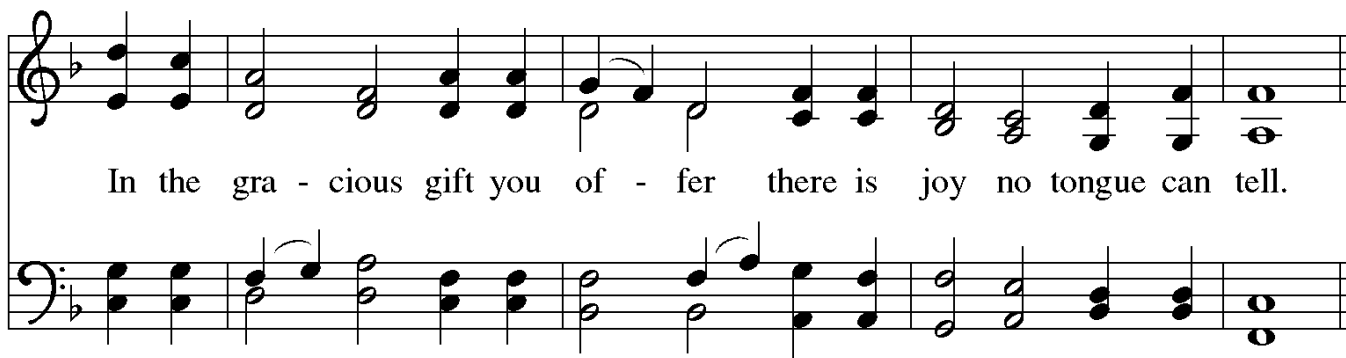


If you knew what gift I of - fer, you would come to me and live."
Drink the cup of life I of - fer; at this ta - ble be my guest."
Come, re - ceive the gift I of - fer, turn to me and seek my face."
Come and know di - vine com - pas - sion, turn to me, I call your name."

Refrain



Je - sus, ev - er - flow - ing foun - tain, give us wa - ter from your well.



In the gra - cious gift you of - fer there is joy no tongue can tell.

5 "Come to me, distressed and needy;
I would be your trusted friend.
Come and seek the gift I offer,
come, your open hands extend." *Refrain*

6 "Come to me, abandoned, orphaned;
lonely ways no longer roam.
Come and take the gift I offer,
let me make in you my home." *Refrain*