



Queen Anne

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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✘ *Staff* ✘

Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Daniel Peterson
Cantor	Kyle Haugen
Children's Ministry Coordinator	Terry Anderson
Parish Administrator	Barbara Bash
Sexton	John Bryant
Lutheran Counseling Network	Sarah Tatterson
<i>Serving as Assisting Ministers today</i>	TBD

Thanks to these who worshiped with us: Mark Dibble, Jean Oplinger, Jennifer Jones, Meg Shaw, Jackie Thomsen, Virginia Stamey-Johnson, and Joel Matter

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.

FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT

March 29, 2020

"Word Out #4" audio transcript

↑ **Greeting**

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

C: **And also with you.**

¹The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ²He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. ³He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." ⁴Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶I will lay sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD."

⁷So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

¹¹Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' ¹²Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

A: Word of God, Word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading

Romans 8:6-11

⁶To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. ⁷For this reason the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law – indeed it cannot, ⁸and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

⁹But you are not in the flesh; you are in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. ¹⁰But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. ¹¹If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit that dwells in you.

A: Word of God, Word of life.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Resurrection While Living
Pastor Dan Peterson

Pastor Charlie May died on March 5, 2009 after a short battle with cancer. His obituary tells us that he loved his work. He served congregations across the country, including two here in Washington state. Yet when it comes to his character, the kind of person he was, Charlie's obituary provides only a glimpse.

"He advocated tirelessly for a new and fair society," it says. "He was a scholar who enjoyed learning and teaching until the last day of his life."

I never knew Charlie. He was mentioned by a colleague of mine who was present at the weekly clergy Bible Study I regularly attend. They were close friends, and as you might guess, there was a lot more to Charlie than a couple sentences in an obituary. Charlie, you see, had a profound view of faith. He shared it with my colleague as he lay dying.

"You know," he said, "I'm not really interested . . . in all this talk about the resurrection of the dead."

I imagine my colleague pausing here, as I would, a bit surprised, eager to hear him elaborate.

“I know it’s there and it’s going to happen,” Charlie continued, “but God has *already* taken care of it. What’s important to me has been my life now, shaped and formed by the love of Jesus Christ. He has continually called me to smell, to touch, to taste, to hear, to see, to serve and do.”

It’s a rather remarkable affirmation, if you think about it. A pastor of the Christian faith focused, even in the final hours of life, not on the *world to come* but on *this world, this earth, this life*. It’s certainly not the majority view. Indeed, Christianity has long been under the spell of a world-*denying* spirit. The kind that devalues Earth by describing heaven as our *true home*. The kind that says when we die we go to a *better place*.

The kind that informs, among others, megachurch Pastor Rick Warren when he tells his readers that this life is merely *a rehearsal* for the “trillions and trillions of years” Christians will spend with God after they die. That is the majority view.

It wasn’t Charlie’s. Now don’t get him wrong. Charlie didn’t *deny* his future with God. But that’s the thing, he told my colleague: when the end comes--which for Charlie was just a few breaths away--when the end comes, God has *already* taken care of what happens. It’s totally in God’s hands, and that’s good news, great news, incredible news! You and I no longer need to fear the unknown. What will happen to us has *already* been determined by God. Death, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:55, has lost its sting.

So rise, child of God: knowing that your final destiny is in God’s hands, you have been released from the grip of fear to live fully and totally *in this world*. To touch and smell, to taste, to hear, to see, to serve and to do. It’s a strange message to hear at the heart of Lent, a time that begins with a reminder that we are nothing but ash and ends with the crucifixion of our Lord on the cross. For someone of my skeptical disposition, moreover, it’s honestly quite difficult to believe. No longer fearing the unknown, especially death, is far easier said than done. But there’s something about what Charlie said that, hearing it from my colleague, really hooked me. What if what happens after we die is *already* determined? What if God has *already* taken care of everything? What if my eternal destiny and yours is *totally* in God’s hands? Would that not free us to live more fully in the world, to be released from whatever fear of death we may harbor, to exist more completely in the here and now? To live a life where death has truly lost its sting? Would this not be a *resurrection while living*?

Dear friends in Christ: This is *precisely* the kind of life to which the Apostle Paul is calling us in Romans 8:11, the last verse of our reading today

There he writes, “Since the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Jesus from the dead *will give life to your mortal bodies* also through his Spirit that dwells in you.”

The resurrection, in other words, is not just something that awaits us in the future. It is a kind of life, as Charlie knew, available to us *now*, one where God renews our “mortal bodies,” the bodies we *presently* have, giving us what Paul calls elsewhere “newness of life” *here*, on this side of the grave. The experience of this newness of life gave Paul the strength to face incredible adversity – to endure, by his own testimony, multiple beatings and sleepless nights, never sure of where his mission would lead but *always, always* pressing on. Imagine what this newness of life could do for us today! What greater *spiritual* antidote to the fear and the uncertainty all around us than the *total affirmation of life*, even in the face of death?

Pastor Charlie May died on March 5, 2009 after a short battle with cancer. He was a scholar and a teacher, according to his obituary, a person who advocated tirelessly for a fair society. Beyond that, however, he was an example, even in just the few words he shared with my colleague on his dying day.

Don’t fret over the world to come, he said. God has taken care of that.

Walk in the newness of life. Live in the here and now.

Smell, touch, taste, hear, see, serve and do.

Amen.

Hymn of the Day

What Wondrous Love Is This, ELW 666

(Stanzas 1, 3 and 4. See last page)

Prayers of the Church

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

A: God of life, bind your faithful people into one body. Enliven the church with your Spirit and bless the work of those who work for its renewal, especially within, and out, of these days of uncertainty. Accomplish your work of salvation in us and through us, for the sake of the world. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

A: God of life, you love the world you have made and you grieve when creation suffers. Restore polluted lands and waterways. Heal areas of the world ravaged by storms, floods, wildfires, droughts, or other natural disasters. Bring all things to new life. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

A: God of life, show redemption to all who watch and wait with eager expectation: those longing for wars to cease, those waiting for immigration paperwork to finalize, those seeking election, those in dire need of humanitarian relief, and everyone waiting for the scare of the coronavirus to pass. Come quickly with your hope. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

A: God of life, you weep with those who grieve. Unbind all who are held captive by anxiety, despair, or pain, especially members and friends of our congregation who suffer from cancer. Fill us with compassion and empathy for those who struggle, and keep us faithful in prayer. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

A: God of life, we give thanks for opportunities for this congregation to collaborate with our community in caring for the needs of our neighbors. Strengthen our ties with other local congregations, agencies, and services, including those of New Horizons, Queen Anne Helpline, Compass Housing Alliance, and others we already support. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

A: For who or what else do the people of God pray?

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

P: Holy God, we again pray for those who are struggling with life-threatening diseases like cancer; we ask that you be with them and tend to them. We also pray for those who are traveling, particularly those who are traveling back to the United States after the outbreak of the virus. We ask that you be with

them and keep them safe. Be with those Lord who are unemployed; give them hope and patience to endure this difficult time. Give us also patience as we await things to return to what used to be. Lord, in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

A: God of life, you are our resurrection. We remember all those who have died and trust that, in you, they will live again. Breathe new life into our dry bones, that we, too, might live with you forever. 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

What Wondrous Love Is This ELW 666

(Stanzas 1, 3 and 4)



1 What won-drous love is this, O my soul, O my soul! What
2 When I was sink - ing down, sink-ing down, sink-ing down, when
3 To God and to the Lamb I will sing, I will sing; to
4 And when from death I'm free, I'll sing on, I'll sing on; and



won - drous love is this, O my soul! What won-drous love is this
I was sink - ing down, sink-ing down, when I was sink - ing down
God and to the Lamb I will sing; to God and to the Lamb,
when from death I'm free, I'll sing on; and when from death I'm free,



that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dread-ful curse for my
be - neath God's righ-teous frown, Christ laid a - side his crown for my
who is the great I AM, while mil - lions join the theme, I will
I'll sing God's love for me, and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing



soul, for my soul, to bear the dread-ful curse for my soul?
soul, for my soul, Christ laid a - side his crown for my soul.
sing, I will sing, while mil - lions join the theme, I will sing.
on, I'll sing on; and through e - ter - ni - ty I'll sing on.

