





Queen Anne

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

2400 Eighth Avenue West • Seattle, Washington 98119

206.284.1960 • www.queenannelutheran.org

✘ *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

✘ *In Worship Today* ✘

Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Daniel Peterson
Cantor	Kyle Haugen
Lector	Svend Phillips

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.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 3, 2020

"Word Out #9" audio transcript

Prelude

Chorale sketch on ST. COLUMBA
The King of Love My Shepherd Is, ELW 502

Welcome

P: Welcome, this fourth Sunday of Easter. Wherever you are listening, we invite you into this space: one where we will hear the good news in proclamation, spoken and sung, a time where you can be still and know God is God.

P: Today is sometimes called “Good Shepherd Sunday.” Jesus is called “the gate of the sheep” in today’s gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world’s violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God’s tender care to all creation.

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.

Gospel Acclamation

John 10:14

C:

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Repeat alleluia

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

P:

Jesus says, “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me.”

C:

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

The Holy Gospel

John 10:1-10

A: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter.

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

[Jesus said:] ¹“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

A: The Gospel of the Lord.

G: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Good John, Bad John
Pastor Dan Peterson

When I was a professor at Seattle University, I had an officemate who was hired at the same time I was. He was also named Dan. The college on campus to which we belonged was small. It had about 20 faculty, full and part-time, most of whom had an office in the same suite.

You can imagine the challenge. As the weeks went by it became clear that our dean and other faculty would need to find a way, short of merely using our last names, to distinguish us. One day she landed on a solution. “You’re Bad Dan,” she said jokingly to me as the three of us were talking. “And he’s Good Dan,” pointing to my officemate.

“Bad Dan?” I remember blurting out in response. “What makes *him* Good Dan and *me* Bad Dan?”

“He just is,” she replied with a laugh.

I didn’t totally mind the label. It was pragmatic and funny. I even felt it gave me a bit of an edge! That said, I always wondered why she chose to call me Bad Dan and not my officemate. Upon becoming a pastor, I thought it best, well, to leave “Bad Dan” behind.

As was the case with the two Dans, the Fourth Gospel, from which today’s Scripture reading is taken, has, I submit, **two Johns**.

First, there is Bad John. Bad John occasionally says things that are cringeworthy. This doesn’t make him the exception. We all know there are other cringeworthy passages in the Bible – and not just in the Old Testament. Consider what Paul says, for instance, in Romans 12:20 about God heaping burning coals on the heads of your enemies! If it doesn’t make you wince, it should!

Fortunately, next to Bad John we have Good John. Good John not only tempers some of the things Bad John says. He can also change our understanding of them such that, upon further reflection, we read them differently. Let me give you a couple of examples.

According to Bad John, when Jesus is just about to die on the cross, he says, “It is accomplished.” Then Jesus bows his head and gives up his spirit (19:20). This is a problem. It contradicts what Mark 15:34 and Matthew 27:46 tell us, namely, that Jesus’ last words were not “It is accomplished,” but “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” More importantly, **it conceals Jesus’ humanity**. How does God in Christ identify with our woes, our cancers, our crosses, when in Jesus Christ he speaks only words of triumph on the cross? How can we relate to a savior who doesn’t relate to us, a savior who appears to be something other than fully human, a Christ who merely says “It is accomplished” and then breathes his last?

Enter Good John.

Good John reminds us earlier in the Gospel how *human* Jesus was. For all of his power, his status as the Christ, his kinship with God, indeed, his very divinity,

it's the Weeping Messiah of John 11 that reminds us not only that God is with us, as Matthew 1:23 says, but that **God is us in Jesus Christ!** You know the story: Jesus observes Mary and Martha weeping because Lazarus, the one Jesus loved, had died. John 11:33 tells us Jesus "was greatly disturbed and deeply moved." Then, according to verse 35, he began to weep. Good John reminds us here of Jesus' humanity; this side of Jesus balances the Messiah who, as one commentator puts it, retains his perfect "presence of mind" while dying on the cross.

But Good John does something more. If we believe Jesus, that He reveals something of God to us (see John 14:9), then imagine who the Weeping Messiah reveals God to be: not some cold, distant monarch who rules from His throne in splendid isolation above the clouds, but *The One Who Weeps* with us and for us, the One who accompanies us in our trials and hardest tribulations.

This, my friends, is the witness of Good John!

Good John speaks elsewhere in the Gospel as well. When Jesus identifies himself with God, absent any explanation, by saying things like "before Abraham was, I AM" (John 8:58), he leaves himself open to the understandable criticism of the Pharisees: namely, how can you identify yourself with God? That's idolatry! This is hard to refute. Fortunately, Good John reminds us that Jesus is not pointing to himself and saying, "Worship me." He's saying, rather, "Worship God *through* me." Jesus in John 12:44 speaks accordingly. "Whoever believes in me," he says, "believes not in me but in him who sent me."

Good John, as we have seen, has some victories. He balances the Triumphant Christ on the Cross with the Weeping Messiah of John 11. He undercuts turning Jesus into an idol in John 12. But what about Bad John and the way he views the Jews?

At first, it seems like Good John is in control. He acknowledges Jesus' Jewish identity in 4:9. He confirms Christ's Jewish identity by recording his participation in Jewish festivals, his use of quotations from the Hebrew Bible, and the location of his ministry in Palestine. He even refers to Christ's antagonists as the Pharisees – not "The Jews."

Unfortunately, Bad John begins to take over by chapter eight when he starts replacing the “Pharisees” with the “Jews.” The animosity toward the Jews culminates in verse 44 when Jesus tells them that they are the spawn of Satan, a link that has become what commentator Adele Reinhartz calls “a potent anti-Semitic symbol” (*The New Testament Fortress Commentary on the Bible*, p. 285). By the end of the story, of course, it’s “The Jews” who kill Jesus. John 18-19 cites them a breathtaking 21 times as responsible for his death (Gail Ramshaw, *Sundays and Seasons*, p. 142).

Our Gospel reading for today at first glance doesn’t help either. Here Jesus tells his followers that “All who came before me are thieves and bandits” (10:8). These words *ostensibly* confirm Bad John’s anti-Jewish sentiment: taken out of context, they appear to be about the Jews.

But sometimes Bad John is really Good John in disguise. We just need, when we hear something in John that sounds cringeworthy, to stop and examine the verse more closely – to take off its mask. In John 10, for example, we know that in the passage leading up to verse 8, Jesus is talking about how “bandits” lead the sheep astray. The translation “bandits,” however, can be misleading. The term in Greek connotes “violent revolutionary,” which is why the Gospels refer to Barabbas as a bandit. Violent revolutionaries lead the sheep – the people – astray because their rebellions invariably end in their slaughter.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd, the Prince of Peace, promises by contrast not to lead people to destruction and death. He will lead them to life – to “life abundant,” which he promises in verse 10.

Many other verses in John regarding “The Jews” are trickier. Scholars like Gail Ramshaw and Jack Elliott, one of my former professors, go to great lengths to show how these passages, though they look like the work of Bad John, are, in fact, **references not to the Jews as a whole but to the Judeans**, a regional group of men who tangled with Jesus and ultimately participated in his crucifixion. While more than a trace of Bad John remains in a verse like John 8:44, we would do well otherwise in the spirit of Good John to translate “Jews” as “Judeans.”

The good news, at least for today, is that John 8:44 does not have the last word. Our reading, rather, closes with a statement about Jesus' mission. "I came," he says in verse 10, "that they may have life, and have it abundantly." This is Good John – and it's Great News! As we continue to shelter in place and struggle against COVID-19, Jesus' words confirm here that God through him is *always* on the side of life; that God wants for us and for all creation wholeness, health, vitality, and well-being. God's will in this regard may sometimes be frustrated, but God, as was the case in Christ, continues to accompany us, promising, even in death, never to leave us.

It's true. There were two Dans, a Good Dan and a Bad Dan. And there were also two Johns – Bad John and Good John. We would do well to acknowledge the former, particularly when it comes to his seething animosity toward all the Judeans, if not the Jews as such. But Bad John doesn't win the day. Good John does.

Good John, it turns out, confirms throughout the Gospel that **God is good**, and that, my friends, is good news!

Amen.

Hymn of the Day
(see page 10)

My Shepherd, You Supply My Need
ELW 782

Prayers of the Church

☞: Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all places and times in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

☞: Shepherding God, we thank you for the educational ministries of your church. Enrich the work of teachers, professors, mentors, advisors, and faculty at colleges, seminaries, and learning sites, including our neighbor Seattle Pacific University. Lord, in your mercy,

☞: **hear our prayer.**

P: Creating God, we praise you for those who maintain and operate farm equipment, for those who plant and harvest crops, for local farmers' markets, and for those involved in agriculture of any kind. Strengthen their hands as they feed the world, especially in these trying times. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Guiding God, no one should be in want. Bid the nations to return to your paths of righteousness and inspire our leaders to walk in your ways, so that all may have the opportunity to live abundantly and sustainably. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Comforting God, you carry us tenderly. We pray for those who walk through dark valleys overshadowed by anxiety and overwhelmed with suffering, especially those most vulnerable to COVID-19. Give them patience and wisdom to remain isolated if necessary, Lord, and help those who can help others be instruments of your loving will. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Nurturing God, you desire justice for the hungry. Bless advocacy work, food pantries, and feeding ministries in our congregations, including those we support like Queen Anne Helpline and New Horizons. May none of our neighbors lack for basic needs. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: For who or what else do the people of God pray? We invite you listening to pray silently, or use this time to speak.

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

P: Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Everlasting God, your beloved have heard your voice; you empowered them in life and received them in death. We thank you for their lives of faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever.**

Amen.

Announcements

P: We thank you for joining us for this service. If you would like to hear other services or access the newest edition of *the Quill*, we invite you to go to our website at queenannelutheran.org.

Benediction

A: Let us bless the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

P: Almighty God, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
bless and preserve you.

C: **Amen.**

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

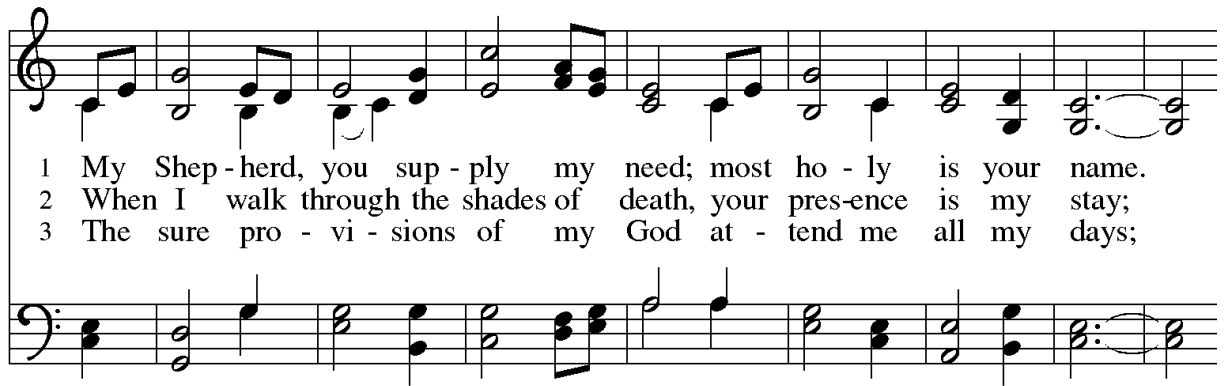
C: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

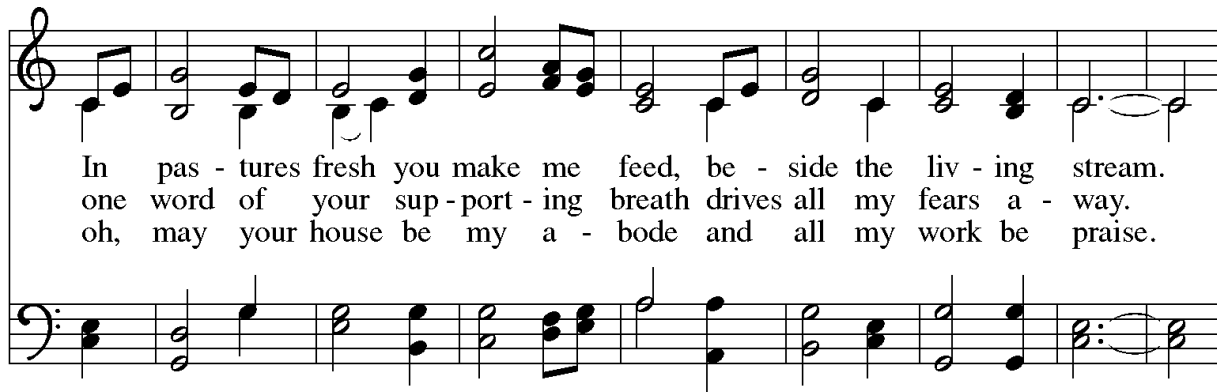
Chorale fantasia on GAUDEAMUS PARITER
Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain, ELW 363
Robert Buckley Farlee (b. 1950)

Hymn of the Day

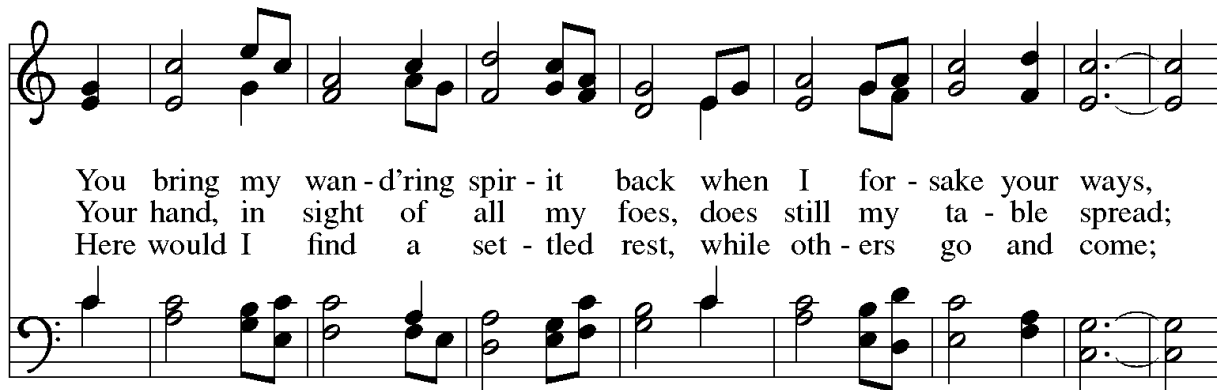
My Shepherd, You Supply My Need, ELW 782



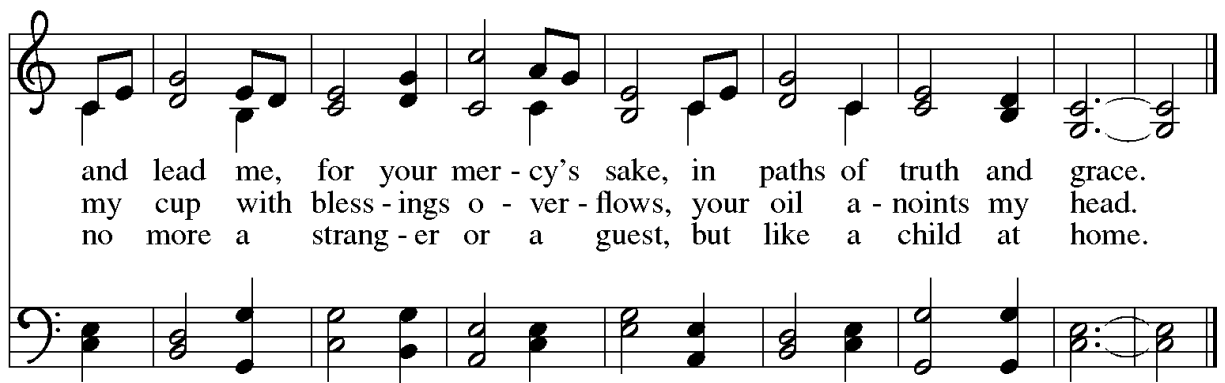
1 My Shep-herd, you sup-ply my need; most ho-ly is your name.
2 When I walk through the shades of death, your pres-ence is my stay;
3 The sure pro-vi-sions of my God at-tend me all my days;



In pas-tures fresh you make me feed, be-side the liv-ing stream.
one word of your sup-port-ing breath drives all my fears a-way.
oh, may your house be my a-bode and all my work be praise.



You bring my wan-d'ring spir-it back when I for-sake your ways,
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my ta-ble spread;
Here would I find a set-tled rest, while oth-ers go and come;



and lead me, for your mer-cy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.
my cup with bless-ings o-ver-flows, your oil a-noints my head.
no more a strang-er or a guest, but like a child at home.

