



Queen Anne

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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✘ *In Worship Today* ✘

Guest Preacher	Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee
Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Daniel Peterson
Cantor	Kyle Haugen
Lector	Jacqui Darroch

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SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 24, 2020

"Word Out #12 audio transcript

Prelude

*Prelude in D Major
Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707)*

Welcome

P: Welcome, this seventh 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 when you can be still and know God is God.

P: In today's gospel Jesus prays for his followers and for their mission in his name. Amid religious, social, and economic divisions, we seek the unity that Jesus had with his Father. Made one in baptism, we go forth to live our faith in the world, hopeful for the unity that God intends for the whole human family.


Greeting


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

G: And also with you.

Gospel Acclamation


John 14:18


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


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

P: 
Repeat alleluia

I will not leave you orphaned, says the Lord. I am coming to you.

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


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

- A:** The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the seventeenth chapter.
G: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹After Jesus had spoken these words [to the disciples], he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. ⁵So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

⁶"I have made known your name to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; ⁸for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. ⁹I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. ¹⁰All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. ¹¹And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

- A:** The Gospel of the Lord.
G: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

Grace and peace to you, beloved children of God. I am Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee and it is my pleasure and joy to be with you today. This last week was supposed to be a time for rest and community for the pastors and deacons in this synod. We normally have Bishop's Convocation at Seabeck for three days with dedicated times for learning, hiking, laughing, resting and being with one another. But, just as COVID-19 has disrupted other plans, COVID disrupted these plans, too. Obviously, we could not meet. So, in order to provide a little respite for the rostered ministers, I'm happy to bring God's Word to you today and I am so glad that I can be with you as we worship, pray, sing and are the body of Christ together in this world.

Let us take a moment and pray this prayer together:

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer: When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer, O lord hear my prayer: Come and listen to me. Amen

As a pastor for 26 years, I have sat at bedsides of the dying more times than I can count. I have sat with so many who wanted me to promise that I would look after their spouse or children or parents or whoever they held close to their hearts. I have held hands of people who were worried that their children will never speak to one another because they would not be there to navigate the tension. I have prayed with those who just wanted more time here on earth. And I have celebrated with others who were so ready to enter into the communion of the saints. As I look back on all of these beloved people, so many of their desires came from one place: They wanted to make sure that their loved ones would be safe as they saw death hovering around them.

I don't think Jesus was much different than these people I just mentioned. In today's gospel Jesus is facing the reality of his imminent death. He is gathered with his disciples on what we know as the Last Supper. He washed the disciples' feet, he gave them bread and wine, he told them that he was going to die - and that he would be resurrected, he promised them the Holy Spirit, and he gave them a new commandment to love one another. For three chapters Jesus has been talking to his disciples nonstop. You can tell in his words and actions from

chapter 13 on that Jesus was worried for his followers. He was concerned about their faith, the community they formed, the disunity he feared, the harm that might come to them, the knowledge that he wouldn't be there in the same way he had been. And Jesus knew time was running out.

And so, after he shares his teachings, Jesus began to pray. And what a prayer it is! If you have your Bibles open – Jesus' prayer is all of chapter 17 in the gospel of John – 26 verses –that's quite a prayer. Jesus' prayer in chapter 17 is long, convoluted, somewhat hard to understand and quite moving. This prayer is often known as the Farewell Prayer or the High Priestly Prayer. While the gospel reading today was the first eleven verses of chapter 17, I encourage you to read and meditate on all of chapter 17 this coming week. It truly is a beautiful prayer and it deserves deep reading and reflection.

This last week, as I meditated on verses 1-11, the verse that caught me was verse 11. *“All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”* Jesus, facing betrayal, facing denial, facing disciples running away, hiding in fear, and not believing the women who preached following his resurrection, Jesus sits among the eleven disciples on that Last Supper night and Jesus prays to God *“Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.” ... Protect them ...*

As you are well aware, since March we have been living in a world where death seems to be more of a reality than before. Since March, the foundation has shaken beneath our feet and we have been bruised, wounded, shaken, and dazed. I find myself saying to the grocery store clerk as I pay for my groceries, “Be well. Be safe,” as I stand there in my mask and wonder how I can make a debit card purchase without touching the keys on the keypad. The clerk thanks me from behind their mask and the plastic shield that is between us. We don't know what is safe and what is not. Who is sick and who is not. And so we pray, “Be well. Be safe.”

Is this prayer enough? Is praying enough? When we pray, like Jesus, “protect them in the name of God,” is anything happening at all? Are my loved ones being kept safe when I pray, “protect them?”

To ask about prayer – and what prayer does – is one of those questions I have in my back pocket when I stand before God one day. In this world with pain and illness, economic hardship, relationship difficulties, racism, sexism, so many things and in this particular present situation, what does prayer accomplish? Can prayer change God? Change circumstances? Change us? There are many books and sermons and treatises on these questions. And the way we answer these questions goes to the heart of who we are and what we believe.

The thing is – in whatever way we answer these questions, we know one thing for sure: Jesus prayed. Jesus asked. Jesus pleaded. Jesus fell on his knees before God and Jesus prayed – he prayed for his friends’ safety, he prayed for this world, he prayed that we would love one another and he prayed that we would be unified – one with another.

Do you notice what Jesus doesn’t do? Jesus doesn’t end his ministry with some great big firework display of God’s grandeur. There is not some big miracle here – some feeding the 5000 or healing ten lepers or turning water into wine. No, as much as the disciples might have been hoping for a sign of triumph – a trophy lifted in victory, a fist bump to the sky – instead Jesus turns to his beloved friends and he prays to God what is deep in his heart, *“Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.”* In his last moments with his disciples, knowing he is about to be arrested, Jesus prays to God, “I am asking for this,” ... “I am asking for this.” And then he turns his friends over to God’s keeping.

In the end, Jesus asks. Jesus hopes. Jesus prays.

So with all of our questions about prayer, maybe this is what we take away from Jesus’ actions. When all else fails, prayer remains. So, like Jesus, we ask. We hope. We pray. We say, “God, I don’t know what you will do this. I know you answer all prayer. But I don’t know how you will answer this one. And I know I can’t make you do something. But I trust in you. I love you. And I know that you

are good. I cannot do anything more than this. I give you this prayer. I am asking.”

For when we pray, our relationship with God continues. We turn to God and to one another. We are unified in our grief and in our love for one another. As Jesus prayed for us to be unified, in prayer we become unified as we love and support one another. Together we are nourished so that we can be nourishment for others. We lift up our concerns and prayer gives us the strength and the courage to do the actions needed. As Pope Francis once said, “You pray for the hungry. And then you feed them. This is how prayer works.”

And so, we pray. We pray for each other. I am called to pray. You are called to pray. I hope you pray for me. I assure you, I am praying for each of you. As the pastor of this synod and as the body of Christ together, I pray for you, your congregation, and this synod daily. Let me tell you some of what I pray:

I pray that you are well and that you are safe. I pray for your health and for your perseverance. I pray that you are able to find human contact and community. May you feel God’s presence with you – in this strange, scary, and frustrating time.

I pray for your congregation and for the neighborhoods surrounding your congregation. I pray that you are in holy community with one another in whatever form is working for your particular place. I pray that in this time when we are not going to church buildings, that your congregation is being the church in your community. That you are reaching out to one another, praying for one another, and collaborating with one another.

I pray for all of the people in this synod – and all those who live in the geographical area of this synod. I pray for essential workers to remain healthy, I pray that business owners are not devastated by this pandemic, I pray for children to learn and parents to remain sane, I pray for those still driving to work and those sitting at kitchen tables next to their spouse on Zoom calls, I pray for those who have not touched another human in weeks and I pray for those who live in tiny spaces with too many bodies. I pray for the lonely and the scared, the tired and the frustrated, those in unsafe homes and those who do not have

permanent housing, those whose resources are running out, those who are unable to receive government help, and those who just want out of this and those who cannot see any hope. I pray for those graduating and those who cannot find work. I pray for pastors and chaplains, deacons and worship leaders, Sunday School teachers, preschool teachers, tech people and accompanists, I pray for those who are sick, those who are dying, those who cannot be with their loved ones who are sick and dying. I pray for those who are being prejudiced against and for those who, in their fear, cannot see beyond their terror. I pray for our government leaders that they lead compassionately and courageously. I pray that we do what is right and not what is easy. I pray that we always place loving our neighbor above loving our comfort and privilege. And I pray that we truly see others with the eyes of Jesus. And I pray, God you know what I pray, even when I don't have words to pray anymore.

I pray for you, you, beloved child of God.

You are in my daily prayers and you are in my heart. May you feel God's peace. May you trust that Jesus walks with you. May you know that the Spirit is holding you. And may we trust that God hears us, just as he heard Jesus on that long ago night. *Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.*" May we be protected and may we be one in Christ's love, compassion and grace.

As we trust in God, we continue to pray, we continue to be in relationship with God and with one another, we continue to live into the promise that we will all be one – as we are being the Church in the world:

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord hear my prayer: When I call, answer me.

O Lord, hear my prayer, O lord hear my prayer: Come and listen to me.

Amen.

1 Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris - tian love;
 2 Be - fore our Fa - ther's throne we pour our ar - dent prayers;
 3 We share our mu - tual woes, our mu - tual bur - dens bear,
 4 From sor - row, toil, and pain, and sin we shall be free;

the u - ni - ty of heart and mind is like to that a - bove.
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com - forts and our cares.
 and of - ten for each oth - er flows the sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
 and per - fect love and friend - ship reign through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Text: John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt.
 Music: DENNIS, Johann G. Nägeli, 1773–1836, adapt.

Prayers of the Church

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

A brief silence.

P: O God, call your people to be one, as you are one. Unite your church in the truth of your gospel, the love of our neighbor, and the call to proclaim your reign to all people. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

P: Breathe life into your creation. Guide your people as we explore the mysteries of the universe. We pray for the work of scientists and mathematicians whose skill enriches our understanding. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

P: Make your justice known among the nations of the earth. Protect the vulnerable, especially in nations that are hit hardest by the COVID19 crisis. Redirect those who use violence and greed as weapons. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

P: Come to the aid of your children. We pray for those engulfed in grief, those without supportive families, and for all who are isolated, powerless, or afraid, that all may rest their anxieties in your care. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

P: Give courage to all who embark on new ventures. We especially remember this day those who risked their lives to serve in our armed forces. Grant safety to those serving at home or abroad, and assure them of your never-failing strength. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

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

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

P: Lord, in your mercy,

C: **hear our prayer.**

P: Raise all your saints to eternal life. Until that day, we give you thanks for the faithful examples of those who have listened to your voice and now rest in you. 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 announcements concerning our upcoming Forum series, as well as other opportunities for gathering while we are apart, 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

Fugue in D Major
Dietrich Buxtehude