



Queen Anne

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

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✧ *In Worship Today* ✧

Pastor	The Rev. Dr. Dan Peterson
Cantor	Kyle Haugen
Gospel and Prayers	Jacqui Darroch

This service of worship can also be seen online. Go to queenannelutheran.org and click on "WORD OUT" to find audio, video, and print resources for worship at home, as well as resources to use with children.

FIRST SUNDAY OF CHRISTMAS

December 27, 2020

“Word Out” audio transcript



Prelude

Improvisation on TODA LA TIERRA and ANTIOCH

Welcome

P: Welcome, this First Sunday of Christmas, to Queen Anne Lutheran Church. Wherever you are listening, whatever challenges you might be facing, we invite you into this space: one where you can hear the good news in proclamation, spoken and sung; a time where you can be still, and know God is God.

Psalm 148 calls on the natural world, celestial bodies, fire and earth, creatures, and all humanity to praise God. The voices of Simeon and 84-year-old Anna join the chorus in today’s Gospel, recognizing what God is doing in Jesus. Simeon’s song is one sung after communion, for we remember God’s salvation in the assembled community and have held Jesus in our hands in the bread. Like the prophet Anna, we tell of Jesus to all who look for the healing of the world.

Apostolic 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

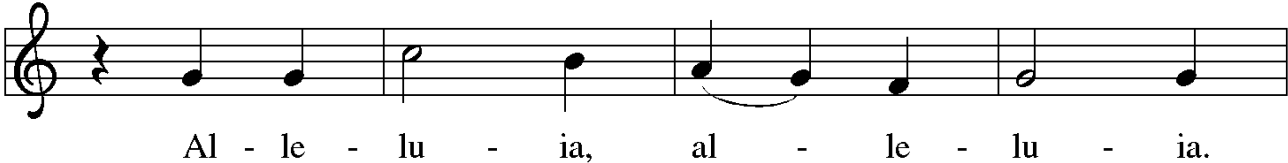
Colossians 3:15, 16

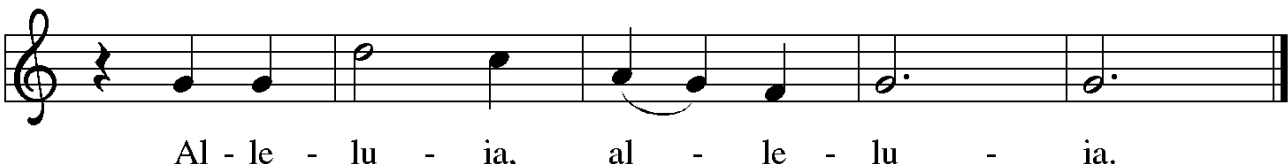
G: 
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.


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


Repeat alleluia

P: Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,
and let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

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


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

The Holy Gospel:

Luke 2:22-40

A: The Holy Gospel according to Luke, the second chapter.

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

A: ²²When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, [Joseph and Mary] brought [Jesus] up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord"), ²⁴and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man

was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, ²⁹"Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; ³⁰for my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

³³And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. ³⁴Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, "This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed ³⁵so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed – and a sword will pierce your own soul too."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped there with fasting and prayer night and day. ³⁸At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.

A: The Gospel of the Lord.

G: Praise to you, O Christ.

I see a pattern. Perhaps you will recognize it too.

Looking back on nearly five years of preaching (gulp), I notice a fascination I have with the minor characters of the New Testament, especially men and women we meet in Paul's letters and the four Gospels. I want to know who these people were. What can we say about them based on upon the little information we have? It's easy by comparison, say, to reconstruct the life of Paul. But what about the men and women he identifies in his letters as relatives, compatriots, or co-workers in Christ (Rom 16:7, 9)? Who were they?

My interest in the minor characters of the New Testament probably began with Onesimus whose name means "useful" in Greek. He was a slave who belonged to Philemon, another co-worker in Christ according to Paul and the intended recipient of the shortest letter by Paul (355 words) we have. Who was this man, that he would lack even a proper name? What was his back-story? How did he become a slave, and what became of him after Paul sought his release? Was he the same Onesimus identified near the end of the first century by Ignatius of Antioch as the bishop of Ephesus? If so, could he have been the one, as a team of biblical scholars suggest, who gathered Paul's letters out of gratitude for the freedom he obtained thanks to Paul, forming the earliest layer of what would become our New Testament?

Other minor characters quickly come to mind.

I think of Lazarus. He plays a pretty important role in Jesus' ministry, yet only the Fourth Gospel names him. John's Gospel is also unique in that its author speaks of the Beloved Disciple. This disciple is never given a name, even though he (or she) appears in the foreground at the most decisive moments of Jesus' ministry, sitting next to him at the Last Supper, standing at his feet during the crucifixion, and discovering (after Mary) the empty tomb. I wonder. Earlier in the story, Martha and Mary indicate

that Lazarus is the one whom Jesus loves (John 11:3). Could *he* have been the Beloved Disciple?

John, of course, is not the first Gospel to mention the empty tomb. That honor belongs to Mark. The oldest version of this Gospel ends abruptly at 16:8, possibly (some speculate) because the author of this Gospel was martyred for his faith during the brutal and notorious reign of Emperor Nero.

According to Mark 16, three women have gone to anoint Christ after his death: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome. Their identities merge in the Gospel of Luke, who refers to them merely as a group of women. John mentions Mary Magdalene only, and Matthew simply speaks of “Mary Magdalene and the other Mary” (28:1). So who was Salome, and why was she left out in later accounts? Was she among the women who supported Jesus financially (Luke 8:3), yet who were classified merely as “followers” rather than “disciples” of Jesus by subsequent *patriarchal* Christian tradition?

Of the majority of Jesus’ 12 male disciples we also know relatively little. Sure, like Paul, we know a fair amount about Peter, that, for example, he was married (Luke 4:38-39). We know as well that Judas handed Jesus over to the authorities, although what became of him (whether he died by suicide or by accident) and whether he was truly repentant remain a mystery. James and John were the “sons of thunder” who argued about their place in the coming kingdom. But what do we really know, especially of the disciples who received even less attention, like Andrew, Peter’s brother, or Bartholomew, who gets more attention in the 2016 movie *Risen* starring Joseph Fiennes than he does in *all four Gospels* put together?

In today’s Gospel, Luke 2:22–40, we have another fascinating minor character, the prophetess Anna, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher (v. 36). None of the other Gospels mention her. Luke tells us she was pious (indeed, she never left the temple), and that “she was a widow of 84 years.” This number, as J.K. Elliott observes, is symbolic. It’s the product

of 7 X 12. These numbers have profound significance in Jewish tradition. The first is God's number: it takes God six days to create the world and on the seventh God rests (see Gen 2:2). The second refers to the number of tribes belonging to Israel. We also learn that the widow was married for seven years. No wonder Luke refers to her as a woman of "great age." If she was around 14 when she got married (fairly standard for the time), married for seven years, and then a widow for 84 more, she would have been 105!

We also know that she comes from rare stock: the tribe of Asher was one the lost ten tribes of Israel, thanks to the Assyrians who overtook them in 722 BCE, forcing the majority into exile bound in chains.

The Gospels and Paul's letters give us absolutely fascinating glimpses into the lives of women like Anna and men like Lazarus. We learn of so many others too: of Junia, whom Paul identifies as "prominent among the Apostles," or Joseph, who stood by his wife even though she was pregnant with Jesus out of wedlock. In the end, of course, all we have are glimmers and reflections of the light that stood at the center of them all, the reason for this Christmas season, Christ, who gleams from the beginning in a manger, grows in the light of wisdom, loves the undeserving, and witnesses to it even in his death on the cross (see Luke 23:34).

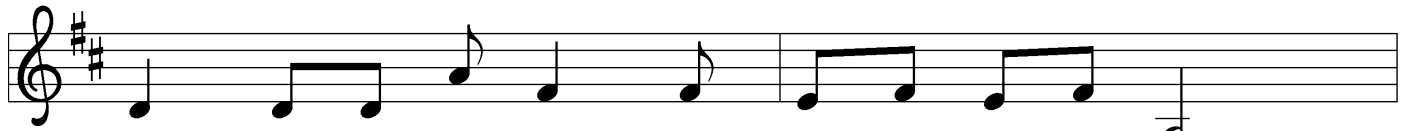
About him, yes, we do know something, for in the biblical picture of he who is the Christ, we see what Simeon sees in today's reading: salvation from God, healing from the core of life's deepest ground, which God has "prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and glory to [God's] people Israel" (2:30-32).

May the light of this major character – *the* major character – of the New Testament be yours this Christmas season, and may you cling as I do to the promise that the darkness has not and will not overcome it.

Amen.

Hymn of the Day
stanzas 1, 2 & 4

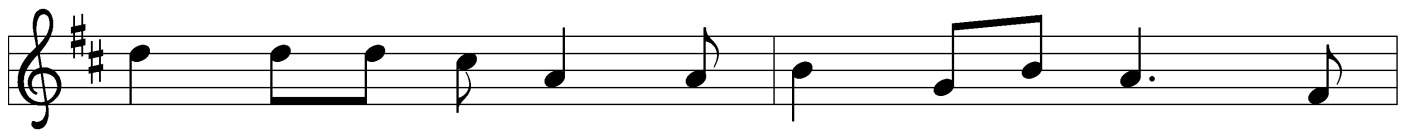
All Earth Is Hopeful (Toda la tierra)
ELW 266



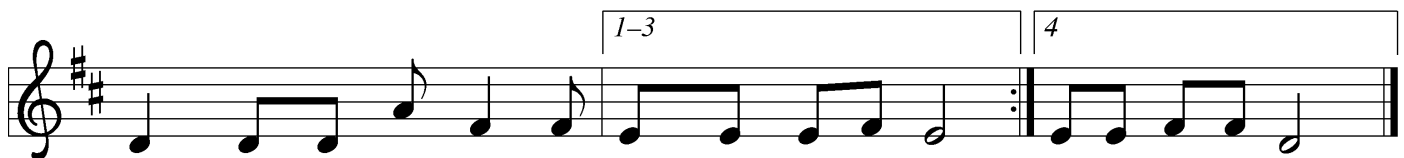
To - da la tie - rra es - pe - ra al Sal - va - dor
 1 All earth is hope - ful, the Sav - ior comes at last!
 2 Peo - ple of Is - rael, you heard the proph - et tell:
 3 Moun - tains and val - leys will have to be pre - pared;
 4 We first saw Je - sus a ba - by in a crib.



y el sur - co a - bier - to, la ob - ra del Se - ñor; es el
 Fur - rows lie o - pen for God's cre - a - tive task: this, the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em - man - u - el"; she con -
 new high - ways o - pened, new pro - to - cols de - clared. Al - most
 This same Lord Je - sus to - day has come to live in our



mun - do que lu - cha por la li - ber - tad, re -
 la - bor of peo - ple who strug - gle to see how
 ceived him, "God with us," our broth - er, whose birth re -
 here! God is near - ing, in beau - ty and grace! All
 world; he is pres - ent, in neigh - bors we see our



cla - ma jus - ti - cia y bus - ca la ver - dad. dar - nos li - ber - tad.
 God's truth and jus - tice set ev - 'ry - bod - y free.
 stores hope and cour - age to chil - dren of this earth.
 clear ev - 'ry gate - way, in haste, come out in haste!
 Je - sus is with us, and ev - er sets us free.

Prayers of the Church

A: Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

A: Night and day, all creation praises you, O God. Strengthen your church across nations, denominations, and traditions. Fill us with wisdom and unify our proclamation of your forgiveness and mercy.

Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: All creation is holy to you, O God. You cause the earth to bring forth its shoots and gardens to spring up. Protect hibernating animals and frozen lands that wait earnestly for longer days of awakening and growth.

Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: The nations are upheld by your hand, O God. Cause righteousness and praise to spring forth, inspiring leaders to serve with compassion and integrity. Send your spirit of discernment upon legislators grappling with complex decisions for the sake of the common good. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: Send the spirit of your Son into our hearts, O God. Come quickly to hearts that race with fear, hearts that break with grief, and hearts that long for wholeness. Reveal your power to heal and to save. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: Adopt us into your family, O God. Bless our elders with the peace and joy of Simeon and Anna. Strengthen those who have retired, those who work in older age, and those in need of income, food, company, or health care. Connect young and old across generations. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

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

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

A: Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: Let us depart in peace, O God, according to your word. For all your saints, we give you thanks. Prepare our salvation in the sight of all your witnesses of every time and place. Lord, in your mercy,

G: **hear our prayer.**

A: God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

G: **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

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

G: **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,

and 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*, our newsletter, we invite you to go to our website at queenannelutheran.org.

P: Receive now the blessing:

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.

G: **Amen.**

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

G: **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

First and last variations from *Noël X: Quand Dieu naquit à Noël*
or *Bon Joseph, écoutez-moi*

(“When God Was Born at Christmas” or “Good Joseph, Listen to Me”)

Louis-Claude Daquin (1694–1772)

About Today’s Music

Today is the third day of Christmas – a celebration that lasts twelve days, until the Epiphany of our Lord on January 6. Our Hymn of the Day is likely new to QALC. The author and composer are the same person, Alberta Tualé (b. 1932), who grew up in the Catalan region of Spain. The text has some Advent themes we omit today, but much of the text is poignant for the days immediately following the festival of the Nativity of Our Lord. To help introduce the hymn, today’s prelude focuses on its melody along with the tune from “Joy to the World.” Like last week, today’s postlude is another gem from Christmastide in France. Today we hear excerpts from the tenth of twelve organ noels by Louis-Claude Daquin, which is perhaps the most famous work of the French “organ noel” genre.

– Cantor Kyle Haugen