

The Quill

M A R C H 2 0 2 3



Queen Anne

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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The Quill can be viewed in full color online at queenannelutheran.org. If you would prefer to have a copy **mailed to you** each month, just contact the church office at 206-284-1960. Likewise, if you receive The Quill in the mail and would prefer **not** to, just contact the office.

Weekly, we are also mailing bulletins and sermon transcripts to households that are unable to attend church. If you would like to receive such a mailing, please let us know. And if you do **not** need to get the bulletin by mail, give us a call as well!

Please Note: All mail to the church must be sent to this address:

Queen Anne Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 17029
Seattle, WA 98127-0729



the Pastor's WORD

A New Thing

One of my favorite verses in Scripture appears in Isaiah. “Remember not the former things,” the prophet declares in the voice of God, “nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing . . . do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert (43:18-19).

What do we make of this passage? To whom did the prophet originally speak, and how, centuries later, might these words speak *to us* as a congregation? In what way(s) might God continue to be doing a “new thing” in our midst and through our ministry?

In context, Isaiah 43 belongs to a larger segment of text (chs 40-55) within the book as a whole that scholars refer to as “Second Isaiah” or the *Book of the Consolation of Israel*. This text appeared during the exile, a period of roughly fifty years during which the Babylonians overtook the Israelites and forced them to leave their homeland and submit to Babylonian rule. When the Persians subsequently conquered the Babylonians, a new hope emerged for the Israelites. God was up to something new, it would seem, working through the Persians to free them so they could return home.

Is it true, as Isaiah implies, that God speaks through events, not as the cause of suffering or defeat, but in terms of what the theologian Paul Tillich describes as “a creative and saving possibility implied in every situation,” the kind where new possibilities for liberation, renewal, and restoration *emerge* after the old has passed away?

Now on the other side of my mother’s death (she passed away in January), I find myself asking the same question. Will new opportunities for healing and growth emerge for me as the prophet predicted they would for ancient Israel, and if they do, might God be doing a “new thing” in my life?

I find myself likewise pondering new opportunities for us a congregation. Given that the most restrictive phase of the pandemic has passed, and we can worship in person, what new possibilities await discovery? Consider my preaching. During the pandemic when we could not worship in person, I wrote out every sermon in manuscript form so that those who were unable access our worship recordings would have access to them. This served a purpose. Now, however, I see God calling me to a “new thing” by preaching extemporaneously which, in turn, will free me up to do more visitation, pastoral care, and outreach.

Would you like to have coffee, receive a blessing on your home, or have me bring communion to a homebound friend or family member? Call the church office or email me at pastor@queenannelutheran.org so that we can usher in a new chapter of our life together!

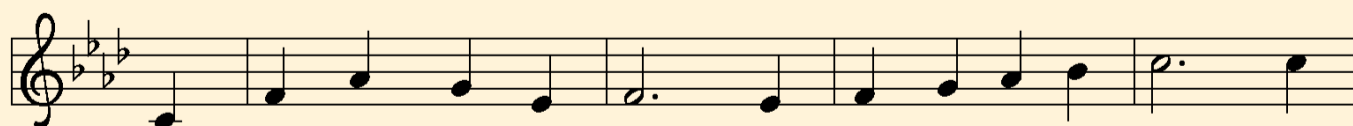
“Remember not the old things,” the prophet declares to us this Lent. Look ahead. God will make a path for us in the wilderness of uncertainty. God, indeed, will do among us a new thing!

Pastor Dan

Lenten greetings!

I find Lent to be (perhaps surprisingly) a time of refreshment in the Christian year as the texts, music, and topics draw me deeper into my faith. I was especially struck by the “rest of the story” beneath the surface of one of our Sunday Lenten hymns for March 5, “Restore in Us, O God” (ELW 328*). I found the deeper layers of meaning in this hymn meaningful to me as I consider my own keeping of Lent this year, and I hope you will likewise find what follows enriching—or even intriguing.

Restore in Us, O God



1 Re - store in us, O God, the splen - dor of your love; re -
 2 O Spir - it, wake in us the won - der of your pow'r; from
 3 Bring us, O Christ, to share the full - ness of your joy; bap -
 4 Three-per - soned God, ful - fill the prom - ise of your grace, that



new your im - age in our hearts, and all our sins re - move.
 fruit - less fear un - furl our lives like spring - time bud and flow'r.
 tize us in the ris - en life that death can - not de - stroy.
 we, when all our search - ing ends, may see you face to face.

Text: Carl P. Daw Jr., b. 1944

Music: BAYLOR, Hal H. Hopson, b. 1933

Text © 1989 Hope Publishing Company.

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The following paragraphs are indebted to *Hymnal Companion to Evangelical Lutheran Worship* by Paul Westermeyer. It's a resource I consult nearly every week, and it has a wealth of information in one compact volume.

“Restore in Us, O God” was written by Carl Daw (b. 1944), a prolific hymnwriter and former executive director of the Hymn Society of North America. The son of a Baptist minister, he attended an Episcopal Church during college, and was later ordained as an Episcopal priest in 1981. Here's the first stanza:

Restore in us, O God, / the splendor of your love;
 renew your image in our hearts, / and all our sins remove.

This initial stanza hearkens to Jeremiah 31:31–34, and perhaps especially verse 33: “I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” (We'll hear this text for the fifth Sunday in Lent next year, in fact.)

(continues next page)

FROM THE CANTOR

Stanza 2 points us to the Holy Spirit's power (see Acts 1:8), and to what Victorian-era Jesuit priest and poet Gerard Manley Hopkins referred to as the "inscape" of human life as it relates to what we observe in the landscape of the natural world:

O Spirit, wake in us / the wonder of your pow'r;
from fruitless fear unfurl our lives / like springtime bud and flow'r.

The third stanza connects Psalm 16:11, "In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore," to Romans 6:3-4: "Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Here is the text:

Bring us, O Christ, to share / the fullness of your joy;
baptize us in the risen life / that death cannot destroy.

Carl Daw comments that his inspiration for the fourth stanza comes "from the opening line of John Donne's Holy Sonnet XIV: 'Batter my heart, three-personed God...' and 'all our searching ends' reflects T. S. Eliot's lines in *The Four Quartets*...". Here's the text of this final stanza:

Three-personed God, fulfill / the promise of your grace,
that we, when all our searching ends, / may see you face to face.

This hymn takes barely two minutes to sing, yet within it there is a world of scripture and Christian teaching. Westermeyer sums it up so well: "Little hymns of this sort, which take up but half a page, can easily be seen as small in meaning and significance. The nature of good hymns, however, is to encompass large scope and layered substance in their few words." Perhaps consider praying the text of this hymn as part of your own Lenten devotions.

God's blessings to you this season as we consider what it means to "Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love" (Joel 2:13, Lenten Verse at the Gospel Acclamation, ELW Setting Four, p. 151).

See you in church!



Kyle Haugen, Cantor
cantor@queenannelutheran.org

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Triangle Project

The Triangle Project team has been hard at work developing a landscape plan for the front “triangle” of the church property. We now have a draft design we are excited to present to the church for discussion and consideration. We believe this plan incorporates the goals of the church to create a welcoming and relaxing place for people to gather and absorb nature. Please join us in the Fellowship Hall after the 10:30 service on **March 26** for a presentation by our landscape architect (and Magnolia resident) Kim Rooney and team followed by Q&A and coffee and snacks.

Welcome, Vannady!

We are thrilled to announce that Vannady Keo, whom some of you know from his work in our Sunday morning child care, has now been hired as our new Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator. Vannady's first official day in that position will be March 15, and he will be introduced in and after worship on Sunday, March 19. Welcome, Vannady!



Hello Queen Anne Lutheran Church,

My name is Vannady Keo and I am currently a student at Seattle Pacific University. I am pursuing a degree in Psychology and Clinical Counseling. I have a professional background in social work, particularly in working with youth populations. During my free time, I love to listen to music, and podcasts, read non-fiction, work out intensely at the gym, and if the weather permits, snowboard! I am excited to fulfill my new role as the Children and Youth Ministry Coordinator at Queen Anne Lutheran Church. I have always enjoyed working with children. The love and wisdom of Christ spans across all ages. I look forward to becoming a member of the Queen Anne Lutheran church community!

Our Church Directory

Barb is now working on updating our church directory with all the revisions members have made. If you didn't get around to checking your information, and need to update contacts, or if you would like to provide a new photo for the directory, you can still do that.

You can email the information or a new photo to the church office and Barb will add/replace it. Prints are okay, too; we can scan. Square format works best, but we can crop to fit. Our goal is to have directories out on Easter Sunday. Contact Barb at admin@queenannelutheran.org.

Book Group

Queen Anne Book Group will meet on Monday, March 27. They are reading *American Dirt: A Novel* by Jeanine Cummins. Discussion will be led by Sharon Longaker. All are welcome; meet in the narthex.

Youth! Project Phoenix Pie Project March 5 at 4:

As a preview for March “Pi Day” (3.14), all Project Phoenix (High School and Middle School) youth are invited for pie-making from 4-6 PM Sunday, March 5 at St. John United Lutheran Church. We'll create some baking teams to follow our leaders [Matt and Hana](#) (the founders of [Porto-Pies](#)) to create yummy treats. Each youth team will craft some delicious hand pies, and also enjoy pizza pie for dinner. When the baking is done, a special judge will crown a “star baker.” Please email projectphoenixboard@gmail.com if you plan to attend.



Bless Your Home

Would you like your house or apartment blessed? If so, Pastor Dan would be happy to do it. This brief service involves prayer, recites Scripture, and is a wonderful way to transition into a new home or bless the one you have. Please contact Pastor Dan if you are interested.

Free Tax Help:

This year, the AARP Tax-Aide program has returned to the Seattle libraries. Walk-ins are welcome at the Queen Anne Library every Saturday from 11:30 AM-3:00 PM through April 15. Flyers are in the narthex.

COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

Some Important Updates to Our Covid Protocols

Recently when someone tested positive for Covid following an event which included a meal in the Fellowship Hall, we realized that we needed to create some new procedures to help keep the community safe. With more events in our faith community sure to occur in the coming year, the following protocols and information should help us all work together to do that:

How do I notify the church if I was at an event and then tested positive for Covid?

As soon as you know there was an exposure, please **text Pastor Dan on his cell, 253-230-9695**. Leaving a message at the church office at 206-284-1960 and emailing both the office (admin@queenannelutheran.org) and Pastor Dan (pastor@queenannelutheran.org) are also useful, but the voice mail and emails are not monitored 24/7. Texting Pastor Dan will be most timely and effective.

How does the church notify those exposed, if someone has tested positive for Covid?

Barb Bash is training Pastor Dan and Cantor Kyle in how to send out an All-Church email notification, so that word can get out quickly to our faith community, even on a weekend. **One of these staff members will send word out.** When we can, we will work with event organizers to make sure we have notified all attendees. Members involved in the event who do not use the Internet will be informed by phone. The email will include a link to the Washington State Department of Health guidelines.

What do I need to know if I am hosting an event?

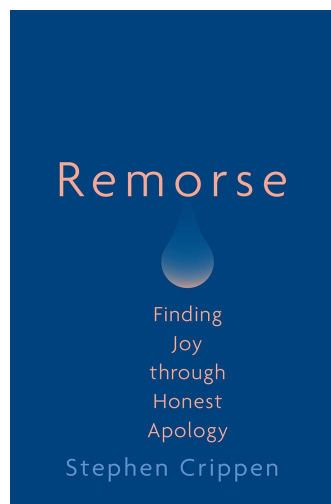
Because Covid has not gone away, we must still be mindful of the possibility that we will have to notify attendees after an event. For committees, it is often easy to remember who was present, but for other events, particularly when attendees may come from outside the congregation, **it is best practice to keep a list of attendees with their preferred contact information**, be it email or phone.

How do I decide whether to attend an event or worship?

For some, Covid symptoms can be mild. They may include headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, muscle pain, fatigue, fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, or loss of taste or smell. Other less-common symptoms include nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea. If you are experiencing *any* symptoms, however mild they may seem, and you have not tested yet for Covid, choosing to stay home from worship or an event is a caring response for yourself and others.

Our church still encourages, but does not require masking, as we follow the state of Washington Department of Health guidelines and there is currently no masking mandate. It is now up to attendees at an event to decide whether they do so; you need to determine your own level of risk and your comfort with those risks. Deciding to attend a meal at church, where masks will be off, is similar to deciding whether to eat at a restaurant. The exposure that occurred at the February event was a good reminder that Covid has not gone away, there *are* still risks involved, and individuals need to be mindful of that.

MARCH 05: Remorse and Its Remedies

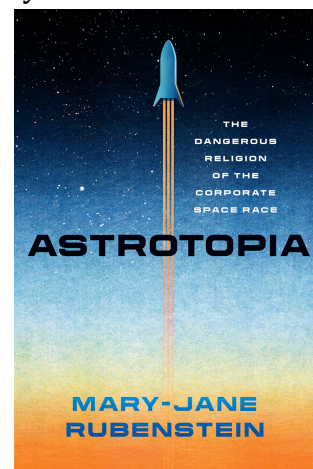


Does it matter if you are sorry for what you have done—or what you have not done? Does your being sorry—does your remorse—matter? If so, how? Who is helped or changed by it? Can spiritual leaders help people wrestle with some of the most challenging dilemmas of their lives?

Episcopal priest and licensed therapist Stephen Crippen will lead us in discussion around his forthcoming book, *Remorse: Finding Joy through Honest Apology*. Crippen describes remorse as the crisis—both destructive and creative—that erupts within the human spirit at the point where sin and grace collide. Through personal story and accessible biblical and theological reflection, he explores the experience of remorse, the recognition of this simple truth: “I did this thing, and I should not have done it,” and the deep and joyful relief that comes from healthy remorse.

MARCH 12: On *Astrotopia*

Mary-Jane Rubenstein will be reading and discussing some of the key passages from her new book *Astrotopia: The Dangerous Religion of the Corporate Space Race*. She will argue that the exploration and possible inhabitation of outer space should not be left to profiteers and messianic billionaires. Rather than seeking a way for the universe to belong to us, we should be seeking ways we might belong to the universe.



MARCH 19: A Table-Talk on Loss

Join us for an open-ended discussion on loss in our lives. What was loss like for you? What best helped you cope with your loss? What role (if any) did or does your faith play when it comes to loss?

MARCH 26: A Table-Talk on Life after Death

Is there life beyond the grave? Will there be a resurrection, or does death have the final word? What do we confess in our creeds? What does Scripture say? What do you say? Join us for an open-ended discussion on life after death.



WEDNESDAYS IN LENT, from March 1 through March 29:

NOON WORSHIP

Every Wednesday during Lent, we will have a brief worship service in the chapel beginning at noon. The order of worship for Morning Prayer is followed, which includes a lectionary reading, a brief homily and a hymn. All are welcome.

EVENING WORSHIP, 7:30PM

Every Wednesday we will also gather in the chapel in the evening at 7:30 PM. The order of worship for Night Prayer (Compline) is followed. The responsively-sung liturgy includes psalms and scripture.

LENTEN OFFERINGS

This year, offerings given on Ash Wednesday and our Wednesday Lenten services will be given to **Camp Lutherwood**. Pastor Kristy told us about exciting changes being made at our Synod's camp on Lake Samish, under the guidance of a new interim director. For the next few years, the main focus is on **accessibility**: paving some of the walkways and putting in ramps so everyone can access the buildings and participate in the campfire and waterfront. General funds are needed as well; in the last two years, the cost of summer staff for the camp has more than doubled. Donation checks can be made out to Queen Anne Lutheran with "Lutherwood" on the memo line.

HOLY WEEK SERVICES, April 2-9:

PALM SUNDAY, April 2 • 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM

Kids will ring bells at the 10:30 service during our special procession from outside the building into the nave during the singing of "All Glory, Laud and Honor." (At 8, adults will be invited to ring bells, too.)

GOOD FRIDAY, April 7 • 7:30 PM

EASTER: **Feast of the Resurrection**

Sunday, April 9 • 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM

9:00 AM Easter Breakfast

SOCIAL ACTION

New Horizons Dinner Dates— Our Next "Fifth Friday" Is March 31



We have pledged, going forward, to **provide dinner for 35 youth to New Horizons** on all months with "Fifth Fridays," with the next date being **March 31**. Please let Jim Margard know (jrm952@gmail.com) if you can contribute a main dish, a vegetable side, salad, bread, or dessert. Looking ahead in 2023, our "Fifth Friday" months will be June, September and December.

Support Your Local Planet!

Spring is coming (really!)—and with it come a number of exciting opportunities for us to support our community and our planet. Following up on the very satisfying work party we had last year at Martha Washington Park, this spring the Social Action committee invites you to participate in a spring **planting of traditional Native American foods and medicinal plants** at **Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center** (next to Discovery Park) on **March 25**, as part of our environmental stewardship commitment. See the sidebar for details and how to register. This promises to be an interesting and rewarding experience open to all ages. See Lisa Kjaer-Schade for more information—contact Lisa at lkjaer79@gmail.com or 206-484-5123.



The theme for Earth Day, (April 22), is “Invest in Our Planet.” There are quite a few opportunities to participate, from the Arboretum Foundation's clean up and restoration event (April 22, 9-12:30) to simply taking a family walk in your own neighborhood and picking up litter together. I think Seattle University's Center for Environmental Justice and Sustainability has it right—they are calling it “Earth Month”—but then again, maybe we should be calling it “Earth Year”? How do *you* plan to celebrate Earth Day?

We hope you will join us at church for the Adult Forum on April 30: Eco-theology with SPU professor and biologist, Dr. Eric Long.

Finally, mark your calendars for **May 7th**, the tentative date for the **Camas Celebration** at Martha Washington



Park, where last fall, we joined Columbia City Church of Hope members to remove ivy and blackberry vines, and to plant camas and giant camas bulbs. Now we are invited to come back and see the wildflowers resulting from our efforts.

Details to follow.

Come join other members of QALC for the Spring Planting at Daybreak Star Indian Cultural Center (next to Discovery Park) as they welcome their Plant Relatives to their new home! They have been working to restore the Food and Medicine Forest at Daybreak Star Cultural Center for the last few years; this year they will be planting over 4,000 traditional food and medicines. They need our help in this work! Please bring a good mind, good heart, and a willingness to work together.

Open to the public

All ages OK - under 18 please see waiver on website.

What to Bring

1. Good mind, good heart, and a willingness to work together!
2. Water bottle
3. A rain jacket and or warm layer
4. Tools will be provided, and you are welcome to bring your own if they will make your time more enjoyable and full of ease.

Where to Meet

In the Parking Lot at Daybreak Star Cultural Center.

Where to Park

North parking lot and/or Daybreak Star's parking lot (depending on availability).

Date & Time

March 25, 2023 11am - 3pm

Contacts

Na'ah Illahee Fund

shanoa@naahillahee.org

shanoa@naahillahee.org & shameka.gagnier@gmail.com

Event Safety Measures

For more information on what to expect during your Green Seattle Partnership event, including current COVID-19 safety measures, please visit: seattlegreencitypartnerships.org/get-involved/volunteer

GO HERE TO JOIN THIS EVENT

<https://seattlegreencitypartnerships.org/event/22113/>

SOCIAL ACTION—LWR

LWR Spring Updates:



Many thanks to those who have found **bath towels for the Personal Care Kits**. We now need only 35 more. The LWR specifications are “ONE light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27")”, dark colors recommended” Many of the kits go to people in refugee camps or places without washers or dryers, so darker colors are preferred. Also, “light-weight” is important because most recipients will air-dry their bath towels in sometimes-humid locations. The heavy, plush bath towels often sold in the U.S. are not what is needed in places without washers and dryers.

- Target has dark gray bath-towels (52" x 26") for \$3.50. (Last year, they sold 20" x 40" which were \$2.50.)
- Amazon has “spa towels” that are 20" x 40", 100% cotton, but they cost \$3.80-\$4.
- Carol Ann found 30" x 52" bath towels at Big Lots. Price is \$4, but she noted that if you shop at Big Lots often, you may have discounts that bring the towel price down below \$3.

The **other Personal Care Kit items** are purchased in bulk, so if you want to contribute funds to offset those costs, please place a check to “QALC Women” with memo line “LWR kits” in the Sunday offering (or specify “QALC Women—LWR Kits” if you use PayPal).

School Kits—we try to purchase items from July to September when Fred Meyer, Walmart, etc. have “back to school specials.” We have enough School Kit supplies for spring 2023.

—Rich Mathes
206-384-1183

MEN'S MINISTRY

The first scheduled service project is assembling LWR kits—Personal Care & School Kits—on Saturday, March 18, from 9 to 11 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Use the NW doors, unless you know the McGraw St. cipher code.

The LWR Spring Ingathering will be at Our Redeemers' Lutheran on May 5/6. If you can spare a couple of hours, we are open there 8 AM –2 PM Friday, and 8 AM –11:30 AM Saturday. We can always use a few more people to move boxes from the delivery vehicles to the containers, or to work in the containers. This photo (taken by LWR drone) shows the parking lot layout last fall. Next page photos show loaders and traffic directors—many thanks to all who help so willingly, rain or shine. Last fall we loaded 50,000 pounds—that included 450 boxes from Northern California that were trucked here. We had enough room to fit them in and totally fill our two 53' containers.



—Rich Mathes

PHOTOS—LWR INGATHERING



At the fall LWR Ingathering, two crews of volunteers; close-ups at right, top to bottom: Rev. Doug Stensby, Paul Robinson, Rev. Paul Hoffman, Denny Alfson; next page, Anne & Barth Olson, Steve Burdick; and Jackie Thomsen. Thanks to Rowland Adeniyi for taking photos.

Next page at Lenten Breakfast: Gretchen Richey, Jenna Del Vento; Rev. Deb Squires at the podium; Sallie Wilson speaks about CORE Tanzania; the gathering; the theme ("The Way of Love," from a book by Scott Gunn.)

PHOTOS—LWR INGATHERING & QALCW LENTEN BREAKFAST



QALC WOMEN'S MINISTRY

From *Daily Grace*, "Lent is walking on a journey with your faith community to become closer to God. Lent calls us to faith practices to deepen our prayer life and our study of Scripture."

I want tell each of you who attended the women's Lenten Brunch, thank you. When Gretchen Davis and Dolly Smith responded "yes" to my request for help, they said, "How many will be there?" and I had to say, "I don't know!"

So, thank you for coming, AND for bringing friends to our annual Lenten Breakfast. We had a great turn-out. We thank Rev. Deb Squires for her inspiring message. Deb is part of Northern Lights Circle. We also thank Dolly's sister Pinky for flying in from Colorado to help with the scrumptious breakfast. At the official QALCW meeting portion of the event, the women agreed to continue to support CORE Tanzania, including giving them \$1,000.00 per year.

The QALCW Evening Circle continues to meet by Zoom. Check with Barb Bach or Candy Mathes if you would like to join us. This month, Circles are continuing the discussion of the Ten Commandments. Our March Bible Study, "Sanctity of Life and Love," is the third in a series of four on the Ten Commandments. Come join us.

"As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society, and the world."

Your Women's Committee

Sallie Wilson, Pat Sobeck, Barb Bach and Candy Mathes

Excitement builds as registration opens for the Just Love gathering in Phoenix!



WOMEN OF THE ELCA GATHERING
SEPTEMBER 21-24, 2023 | PHOENIX
WELCATG.ORG

Excitement is building for the **Just Love gathering** as we finally meet in person with our sisters.

Registration for the **Just Love gathering** scheduled for September 21-24, 2023, in Phoenix, Ariz. opens **March 1**.

This special in-person gathering is an opportunity to live out the message that the Rev. Angela Khabeb left us with in Minneapolis in 2017 and virtually in 2021, "Christianity is not comfortable. If you are comfortable in Jesus, you are doing it wrong."

We are different from the people we were in 2017 and 2021. Yet we know that as people of faith, we are still called to justice and love. It is up to us to carry this work forward.

See some of our photos from our last in-person event in **2017 in Minneapolis**.

Registration opens March 1.

Office Hours—Vacations

Main Office (Barb Bash): The office will be open Tuesdays–Fridays, 9:00–5:30. Barb will be away on vacation from Thursday, March 16 through Wednesday, March 22. Please contact Pastor Dan by text, 253.230.9695, if you need access during that time.

Cantor Kyle will be in the office Wednesdays—Thursdays. Feel free to contact Kyle if you wish to make an appointment; email cantor@queenannelutheran.org

Pastor Dan is available Tuesday through Thursday, and Saturdays. Feel free to contact him if you wish to make an appointment; email pastor@queenannelutheran.org.

If an immediate response is needed, text Pastor Dan at 253.230.9695.

Contacts:

Pastor Daniel Peterson	pastor@queenannelutheran.org
Cantor Kyle Haugen	cantor@queenannelutheran.org
Parish Administrator Barbara Bash	admin@queenannelutheran.org
Office Phone:	206.284.1960

For emergency pastoral needs, text Pastor Dan at 253-230-9695.

Mailing Address:

Queen Anne Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 17029
Seattle, WA 98127

Street Address:

Queen Anne Lutheran Church
2400 8th Avenue West
Seattle, WA 98119



The 10-year-old girl at the school we were visiting was asked, “When was the last time you went to the beach?” She paused, thought, and finally said rather quietly, “I think when I was three.”

This might not seem like a huge deal. Many people choose to not visit bodies of water. But you see, this little girl is a Lutheran Palestinian attending one of our Lutheran School in the West Bank. She is fluent in English. She is warm and engaging. She has dreams and aspirations. Her family is dedicated to her education, and they are faithful

Christians. And she cannot get to the water that historically was her people’s land because of checkpoints and government policies. She is literally a few miles from the water that she cannot swim in.

In January, seventeen ELCA Bishops traveled to the Holy Land on a “Living Stones” listening tour. Bishop Azur of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) invited us to come and see the Lutheran Church in the Holy Land and for us to witness firsthand how the Lutheran Church is positively impacting thousands of people.

On this tour we didn’t have time to visit many “holy sites.” Instead, this was a working trip that was designed to meet with those who are living in the Holy Land today—or as Palestinians say—to meet with the Living Stones of the Holy Land. During our time with our siblings in Christ, we learned and listened; prayed and contemplated; laughed and wept. These beautiful and courageous people welcomed us into their lives with grace and dignity. We were given an abundance of food, gifts, laughter, worship, and dancing.

And the stories. The stories were rich and beautiful ... and devastating. Like so many people throughout history whose lives have been ripped apart by oppressive powers, the Palestinian Christians have had their land, their identity, and their freedoms radically diminished. In some cases, completely erased.

Excerpts of stories I heard:

- The men whose family homes have been demolished because they cannot produce paperwork from the Ottoman Empire that their family has owned their land for over a century.
- The fourteen-year-old boy who was killed in a refugee camp. In his pocket was a piece of paper where he had written his last will and testament. Many young people are now carrying wills in their pockets as they fear they will be killed.
- Concern that the Holy Land will become a museum rather than a living expression of the rich diversity of people who call this land their home.
- A principal at one of the Lutheran schools stating proudly: “We are educating the next creative leaders in Palestine and in the Middle East.”

Truly a highlight of this trip was the ordination of Pastor Sally Azur. Pastor Sally is the first Palestinian woman pastor in the Holy Land. She is called to serve two Lutheran Churches in the Holy Land and we are excited to see her flourish.

We were able to visit with a Jewish human rights organization, the United States Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs, the Palestinian Authority Prime Minister, the General Secretary of the Lutheran World Federation, and many others who listened to our concerns and who also stated their deep dedication to working for peace and justice in this land.

I confess that what I have written here barely touches on the complexity of the situation in the Holy Land. Hundreds if not thousands of books have been written. I am no expert. But as I continue to reflect on this trip—and as I hope to plan a trip for this synod in the next year or so—I hold this verse in my heart from Isaiah, “Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow.” Isaiah 1:17 May we all learn, seek, rescue, defend and plead for all of God’s beloved children. For the little girl who longs to see water. For the little boy whose life was cut short. For the men who want their family homes. For those who daily work for justice. For those who daily pray for peace. Oh God, we pray, Kyrie eleison.

MARCH 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
			10:00am Sewing & Service (Fireside) 12:00pm Worship 7:30pm Worship 8:00pm AA Counterbalance (FH)	5:30pm Worship & Music Committee 7:00pm Choir Rehearsal		10:30am Alanon Women (upstairs) 7:00pm Shanty Trudgers (upstairs)
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8:00am Worship 9:00am Forum 10:30am Worship 4:00pm Pies! with Project Phoenix Youth	7:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery	7:00pm Executive Committee (Zoom)	10:00am Sewing & Service (Fireside) 12:00pm Worship 7:30pm Worship 8:00pm AA Counterbalance (FH)	7:00pm Choir Rehearsal		10:30am Alanon Women (upstairs) 7:00pm Shanty Trudgers (upstairs)
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8:00am Worship 9:00am Forum 10:30am Worship	5:30pm PDQ Quilting (Fireside) 7:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery	7:00pm Church Council (Zoom)	10:00am Sewing & Service (Fireside) 12:00pm Worship 7:30pm Worship 8:00pm AA Counterbalance (FH)	7:00pm Choir Rehearsal		9:00am LWR Kit Assembly 10:30am Alanon Women (upstairs) 7:00pm Shanty Trudgers (upstairs)
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
8:00am Worship 9:00am Forum 10:30am Worship	7:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery 7:00pm Northern Lights	7:00pm QALCW Circle (Library/Zoom)	10:00am Sewing & Service (Fireside) 12:00pm Worship 7:30pm Worship 8:00pm AA Counterbalance (FH)	7:00pm Choir Rehearsal		10:30am Alanon Women (upstairs) 11:00am Join Spring Planting at Daybreak Star 7:00pm Shanty Trudgers (upstairs)
26	27	28	29	30	31	
					New Horizons - D...	
8:00am Worship 9:00am Forum 10:30am Worship	7:00pm Food Addicts in Recovery 7:00pm Queen Anne Book Group (Narthex)		10:00am Sewing & Service (Fireside) 12:00pm Worship 7:30pm Worship 8:00pm AA Counterbalance (FH)	7:00pm Choir Rehearsal		