

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
April 20 and 21, 2024
Communion Sunday

AS WE GATHER

Flocks of sheep can number in the hundreds or even thousands. An annual trek from winter quarters to summer pastures and back again at a location in rural Idaho consistently draws hundreds of spectators to a location where the sheep must cross a major highway to reach their destination. Keeping track of two or three thousand sheep on the move is quite a task! Jesus, our Good Shepherd, knows how to care for not just thousands but millions of His sheeplike people. The prophet Isaiah says of the Lord God that He “will tend His flock like a shepherd” (40:11). Assured and reassured that we are part of His flock, we travel through life following the guidance of our caring Shepherd!

+ **PREPARATION** +

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

8AM

“Feed My Lambs”

WELCOME AND MINISTRY MOMENT

HYMN

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” *LSB 686*

1. Come, Thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise.
While the hope of endless glory Fills my heart with joy and love,
Teach me ever to adore Thee; May I still Thy goodness prove.
2. Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I've come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure, Safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, Wand'ring from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, Interposed His precious blood.
3. Oh, to grace how great a debtor Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace now, like a fetter Bind my wand'ring heart to Thee:
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; Prone to leave the God I love.
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above.
4. Oh, that day when freed from sinning, I shall see Thy lovely face;
Clothed then in the blood washed linen, How I'll sing Thy wondrous grace!
Come, my Lord, no longer tarry; Take my ransom'd soul away;
Send Thine angels soon to carry Me to realms of endless day.

INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: **Amen.**

OPENING SENTENCES

John 12:26; Ephesians 4:15;

Psalm 25:1–3, 5, 10; 106:48

Pastor: Jesus said: “If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.”

People: **Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ.**

Pastor: To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, in You I trust.

People: **Indeed, none who wait for You shall be put to shame.**

Pastor: Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation.

People: **All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.**

Pastor: Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!

People: **And let all the people say, “Amen!” Praise the LORD!**

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.

People: **O Lord God Almighty, we confess that we are sinful human beings by nature and by deed. We have not put You first at all times. We have not followed in the ways You have set forth for us. We have not always been thoughtful caretakers of Your creation and have not shared its bounty on all occasions. We have not kept our thoughts, words, and deeds fully pure and honorable. We have sinned in ways we know and in ways we do not even recognize. We have not honored those in authority and have not without reservation encouraged them. We have not completely put the best construction on all things and on all people. Have mercy on us, O Lord. Forgive us all our sins, and finally by Your grace, bring us to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: The almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

HYMN “Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us” LSB 711

1. Savior, like a shepherd lead us; Much we need Your tender care.
In Your pleasant pastures feed us, For our use Your fold prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, You have bought us; we are Yours.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, You have bought us; we are Yours.
2. We are Yours; in love befriend us, Be the guardian of our way;
Keep Your flock, from sin defend us, Seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Hear us children when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Hear us children when we pray.
3. You have promised to receive us, Poor and sinful though we be;
You have mercy to relieve us, Grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Early let us turn to You.
4. Early let us seek Your favor, Early let us do Your will;
Blessed Lord and only Savior, With Your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, You have loved us, love us still.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, You have loved us, love us still.

+ **WORD** +

SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Risen and ascended Lord, You are the Good Shepherd. You lay down Your life for the sheep; they are Yours. Empower Your church to reach every sheep that belongs to You and to give witness until You have brought all Your sheep into one fold; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts 4:1–12

(Peter and John are brought before the Jerusalem Council.)

¹The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people.

²They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead.

³They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day.

⁴But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

⁵The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem.

⁶Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest’s family.

⁷They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: “By what power or what name did you do this?”

⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people!

⁹If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed,

¹⁰then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed.

¹¹Jesus is

“the stone you builders rejected,
which has become the cornerstone.”

¹²Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM

Psalm 23

People: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Men: He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

Women: He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

People: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Men: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Women: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

People: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

8AM

“Hymn of the Shepherd”

EPISTLE

1 John 3:16–24

(Followers of Christ are called to love in deed and in truth.)

¹⁶ This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?

¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

¹⁹ This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence:

²⁰ If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God

²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him.

²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us.

²⁴ The one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

VERSE

Romans 6:9; John 10:14

Pastor: Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him.

People: Alleluia. I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me. Alleluia.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 10:11–18

(Jesus prays for and about His disciples.)

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

People: Glory to You, O Lord.

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.

¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴ “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—

¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.

¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again.

¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY “The King of Love My Shepherd Is” *LSB 709*

1. The King of Love my Shepherd is, Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His And He is mine forever.
2. Where streams of living water flow, My ransomed soul He leadeth
And, where the verdant pastures grow, With food celestial feedeth.
3. Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, But yet in love He sought me
And on His shoulder gently laid And home rejoicing brought me.
4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill With Thee, dear Lord, beside me,
Thy rod and staff my comfort still, Thy cross before to guide me.
5. Thou spreadst a table in my sight; Thine unction grace bestoweth;
And oh, what transport of delight From Thy pure chalice floweth!
6. And so through all the length of days Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise Within Thy house forever!

SERMON

Pastor Matthew Kusch

CREED

The First Article

Pastor: As our Good Shepherd leads us, even so our heavenly Father hears the prayers of His people. Assured of His fatherly care, let us speak together the words of the Apostles' Creed regarding the First Person of the Holy Trinity.

People: **I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

Pastor: What does this mean?

People: **I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife**

and children, land, animals, and all I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life. He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me from all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor: In peace, let us pray to the Lord, beseeching Him for the needs of ourselves and others.
Trusting in God's loving response, we pray for the church and all who are called to lives of service to God's people, asking that the Lord will bless His undershepherds and all who care for His flock.

People: **Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Pastor: We pray for ourselves, that the Holy Spirit guide us into gracious ways and instill in us a holy confidence in the goodness of our God, aiding us in our prayers. With thanks for the faithful examples set by those whose earthly journeys are complete and whose witness to Christ yet inspires us, let us pray to the Lord:

People: **Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Pastor: We pray for the blessing of God upon our nation and its leaders that we may lead peaceable lives, and we pray for the needs of ourselves and others for healing and restoration, for solace and comfort, [*especially . . .*].

People: **Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

Pastor: These things and all else that we should have asked grant us according to Your gracious will, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

People: **Amen.**

OFFERING

+ SACRAMENT +

PREFACE

2 Timothy 4:22

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

PROPER PREFACE

Pastor: It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, Lord our God. You call us to be Your people and invite us to bring our cares to You in prayer. You did so love the world that You sent Your only Son to be our Redeemer. By His sacrificial life and death and glorious resurrection He has brought us salvation and has shown us the path to life eternal. Pour upon us now the gift of the Holy Spirit that we may receive the body and blood of our Lord with true devotion in this sacred fellowship of Your pilgrim people. Grant us a foretaste of the feast to come, heavenly Father, that we may with increased faith joyfully await a blessed eternity in Your glorious presence.

People: Amen.

THE WORDS OF OUR LORD *Matthew 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

Pastor: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST *1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 22:20*

Pastor: As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until He comes.

People: Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Pastor: O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

**People: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

PAX DOMINI

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People: **Amen.**

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness” *LSB 809*

1. Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with Thee.
Thou changest not: Thy compassions, they fail not;
As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt be.
Refrain:
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!
2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. **[Refrain]**
3. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;

Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! [**Refrain**]

“Praise to You and Adoration”

LSB 692

1. Praise to You and adoration,
Blessed Jesus, Son of God,
Who, to serve Your own creation,
Came to share our flesh and blood.
Guide me that I never may
From Your fold or pastures stray,
But with zeal and joy exceeding
Follow where Your steps are leading.
2. Hold me ever in Your keeping;
Comfort me in pain and strife.
In my laughter and my weeping
Be with me throughout my life.
Give me greater love for You,
And my faith and hope renew
In Your birth, Your life, and passion,
In Your death and resurrection.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

Pastor: Let us pray.

Almighty and ever-living God, we thank You for having fed us with the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ, assuring us thereby that we are truly members of His Body, the church. And we ask You to help us by Your Holy Spirit that we may continue in this fellowship and do the good works which You desire us to do; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

8AM *“Shine, Jesus Shine” St. Paul School*

BENEDICTION*Numbers 6:24–26*

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

People: **Amen.**

HYMN**“Beautiful Savior”*****LSB 537***

1. Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love Thee, Truly I'd serve Thee,
Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.
2. Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands,
Robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer;
He makes our sorr'wing spirit sing.
3. Fair is the sunshine, Fair is the moonlight,
Bright the sparkling stars on high;
Jesus shines brighter, Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels in the sky.
4. Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, Praise, adoration,
Now and forevermore be Thine!

Creative Worship for the Lutheran Parish, Series B, Quarter 2.
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