



Sunday, April 21, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Easter

The image of the good shepherd shows us how the risen Christ brings us to life. It is the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, one of mutual knowledge and love, that gives the shepherd authority. The shepherd's willingness to lay down his life for the sheep shows his love. First John illustrates what it means to lay down our lives for one another by the example of sharing our wealth with any sibling in need.

GATHERING

RESURRECTION PROCLAMATION

Alleluia! Chris is risen!
Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

(Please stand as you are able)

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, the life beyond all death, the joy beyond all sorrow, our everlasting home.
Amen.

Rejoicing in Christ's victory over sin and death, let us come before God who calls us to repentance.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of life,

by the resurrection of your Son you make everything new. Newness scares us, and we confess to shutting our doors in fear. We have not listened to voices that challenge us. We have resisted the Holy Spirit moving us in new directions. Our hearts are slow to believe your promises. Forgive us, O God, and renew us to embrace without fear the new life you have given us in Jesus Christ. Amen.

People of God: Christ is alive, and death has lost its power. Through the waters of baptism you have been born anew by the living word of God. Know that your sins are forgiven in + Jesus' name and that the Spirit of the risen Christ is alive in you both now and forever.

Amen.

OPENING SONG ELW 369 vs. 1,4 *Christ the Lord is Risen Today, Alleluia!*

1 Christ the Lord is ris'n today; Alleluia!
Christians, hasten on your way; Alleluia!
offer praise with love replete, Alleluia!
at the paschal victim's feet. Alleluia!

4 Christians, on this holy day, Alleluia!
all your grateful homage pay; Alleluia!
Christ the Lord is ris'n on high; Alleluia!
now he lives, no more to die. Alleluia!

Text: attr. Wipo of Burgundy, d. c. 1050; tr. Jane E. Leeson, 1807-1882, alt.

GREETING

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

CANTICLE OF PRAISE *Majesty*

Majesty, worship his majesty,
Unto Jesus be all glory, honor, and praise.
Majesty, kingdom authority
Flow from his throne unto His own;
His anthem raise.
So exalt, lift up on high the names of Jesus.
Magnify, come glorify Christ Jesus, the King.
Majesty, worship his majesty
Jesus who died, now glorified, King of all kings.

Text: Kevin Mayhew

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold.

Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

(Please be seated)

WORD

SPECIAL MUSIC

Reading: 1 John 3:16-24

Jesus' death on our behalf is the clearest demonstration of divine love. This is the very love we share with others, not just through our words but especially through our deeds. In sharing such love we fulfill God's commandments.

¹⁶We know love by this, that [Jesus Christ] laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one

another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

Word of God. Word of Life.

Thanks be to God.

(Please stand as you are able)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *Alleluia*

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.

Text: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

Gospel: John 10:11-18

In language that recalls the twenty-third psalm, Jesus describes himself as the shepherd who cares for his sheep. He is willing to die for them, and he is able to overcome death for them.

[Jesus said:] ¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

Music: *Jesus Loves Me* – ELW #595

CHILDREN’S SERMON

Music: *Lord, Listen to your Children Praying* – ELW #752

SERMON

SONG OF THE DAY ELW #385 vs.1, 4 *Good Christian Friends Rejoice and Sing!*

1 Good Christian friends, rejoice and sing!

Now is the triumph of our king!

To all the world glad news we bring:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

4 Your name we bless, O risen Lord,

and sing today with one accord,

the life laid down, the life restored:

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Text: Cyril A. Alington, 1872-1955, alt.

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(Please stand as you are able)

Let us confess our faith in the words of the

NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,

and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

A brief silence.

Shepherding God, gather your church whenever we wander from you and one another. Empower our church in ministries around the world to worship and serve alongside global companions as equal partners and coworkers in the gospel. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Nurturing God, preserve the health of biomes and ecosystems. Inspire scientists, researchers, conservation organizations, and all people entrusted with the task of caring for creation, that we may be better stewards of the world around us. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Almighty God, lead nations and communities to share resources, cooperate in solving conflicts, and listen to the wisdom of Indigenous peoples. Help all those with power to share it and to use such power for good. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Loving God, protect the very young and the very old, those living without housing, victims of domestic abuse, and all who live with chronic illness or compromised immune systems. Guide communities to actively care for people who are vulnerable. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Gracious God, help this and all communities of faith to listen for your voice. Call us away from things that distract us from following you. Invite us to more deeply love and serve people who are lonely, isolated, and on the margins. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Accept our thanksgiving for the people you surround us with, especially for those who celebrate their lives and birth this week:

Tom Guarino

Ezra Ortega

Nancy Gross

Russell Pope

Brian Kichline

enrich them with a sense of joy and grace for yet another year. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Save us from ourselves, from racism in all its hidden forms, from hollow words without actions, forgive us, renew us, call us to action God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For those fighting cancer and other serious illnesses, grant strength and grace. We pray for doctors, nurses, technicians, researchers and all who work toward treatments and cures. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For police officers and firefighters, for peacekeepers and military personnel, and for the leaders of governments, that they provide protection to all people, especially the most vulnerable. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For your people in the midst of war, civil unrest, or conflict, grant protection, strength and hope for a better tomorrow. Bring peace and an end to the conflict. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

For Vicar Tom Helmich this year, may your Spirit surround him with all that is needful and joy-filled. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Living God, we give thanks for our ancestors in faith (*including Anselm of Canterbury and all who labored to help generations understand the good news of the gospel*). Strengthen us to share the good news in our own day. God of grace,

hear our prayer.

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

Amen.

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Share the peace ...

(Please be seated)

MEAL

OFFERING

The Worship/Communion Registration Card may be placed in the offering plate as it is passed.

Thank you for your support of our ministry.

(Please stand as you are able)

OFFERTORY ELW #186 *Create In Me a Clean Heart*

Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with your free Spirit.

Text: Lutheran Book of Worship

THE LORD'S SUPPER: Words of Institution

Grace at the table: The Lord's Prayer

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

(Please stand as you are able)

COMMUNION SONG *Lamb of God*

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

Text: Evangelical Lutheran Worship

COMMUNION BLESSING

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE ELW #207 *Thankful Hearts and Voices*

Thankful hearts and voices raise;
tell ev'ryone what God has done.
Let ev'ryone who seeks the Lord rejoice
and bear the name of Christ.
Send us with your promises
and lead your people forth in joy
with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia, alleluia.

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Text © 1978, 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

SENDING

(Please be seated)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BLESSING

May the Lord bless you and keep you,
may the Lord smile upon you and be gracious to you,
may the Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace. + Amen.

SENDING SONG ACS 1062 vs 1 *Build A Longer Table*

1 Build a longer table, not a higher wall,
feeding those who hunger, making room for all.

Feasting together, stranger turns to friend,
Christ breaks walls to pieces; false divisions end.

Text: David Bjorlin, b. 1984

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DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!!

ADDITIONAL READINGS FOR THE DAY

Acts 4:5-12

Psalm 23

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS FOR

April 28, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 8:26-40

Philip teaches and baptizes an Ethiopian

Psalm 22:25-31

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the LORD. (*Ps. 22:27*)

1 John 4:7-21

God's love perfected in love for one another

John 15:1-8

Christ the vine

GOSPEL MESSAGE

April 21, 2024

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Always Room for One More

When Jesus says “I am” in the Gospel of John, he unlocks a new perspective on his love. In today’s reading, when Jesus declares, “I am the good shepherd,” we can imagine our Lord caring for us and guiding us. We picture ourselves as his sheep. It’s reassuring to hear that we aren’t alone to navigate the dangers and challenges of this world. We have a loving shepherd who is looking out for us.

Jesus loves us so much that he goes above and beyond the shepherd’s role as a caretaker. He gives up his own life so our sins can be forgiven and we can receive eternal life. That’s what being a good shepherd means—having such a close relationship with the sheep that the shepherd will stop at nothing to protect them. The shepherd will lay down his own life so his sheep can have life.

When we hear Jesus’ promise to be our good shepherd, we must not miss his commitment to gather up the sheep that aren’t yet part of his flock. They, too, will listen to Jesus’ voice. Responding to his loving call, they will become part of the one flock that follows Jesus as their good shepherd, their Savior, and their Lord. No matter how many sheep are already jostling for space, there is always room for one more. Just like there is always room at our holy communion table for one more person to eat the bread, drink the wine, and receive the gifts of God’s mercy and grace. We can always squeeze closer to the sheep around us to let one or more sheep enter Jesus’ flock, thankful that the flock is growing and that we get to listen to the loving voice of our good shepherd, together.

Upcoming Commemorations

Anselm, Bishop of Canterbury, died 1109

Sunday, April 21, 2024

This eleventh-century monk was one of the greatest theologians of the Middle Ages. He is remembered for emphasizing the maternal aspects of God, and for the theory that the Son of God became human in order to make the necessary payment for our sin.

Day of the Creation (Día de la Creación) (LLC)

Monday, April 22, 2024

This observance invites us to notice and give God thanks for the wonders of the created universe. As stewards of that creation, we are also challenged to be careful in our use of it.

Toyohiko Kagawa, renewer of society, died 1960

Tuesday, April 23, 2024

Born in Kobe, Japan, Kagawa was orphaned as a young child. Later, when he became Christian, he was disowned by the rest of his family. Wishing to bring Christian principles into society, he worked among poor people, established schools and hospitals, and worked for peace.

Mark, Evangelist

Thursday, April 25, 2024

He was not numbered among the twelve apostles, yet Mark was probably a member of the early church community. The gospel that bears his name is the shortest and most direct, and many scholars think it was the first to be written.

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