

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 30, 2023

10:30 am

Prelude

Welcome

Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.

Announcements

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, by whose hand we are given new birth, by whose speaking we are given new life. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are welcomed, restored, and supported as citizens of the new creation. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism. Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and mighty, you are the river of life, you are the everlasting wellspring. In mercy and might you have freed us from death and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead. In baptismal waters our old life is washed away, and in them we are born anew.

Glory to you for oceans and lakes, for rivers and streams. Honor to you for waters that wash us clean, quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and creatures. Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism, the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you. Empower our witness to your resurrection. Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all. Satisfy the world's need through this living water.

Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment. Where despair prevails, grant hope. Where chaos reigns, bring peace. We ask this through Christ, who with you and the Spirit reigns forever. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn ELW #385

"Good Christian Friends Rejoice and Sing"

- 1. Good Christians all, rejoice and sing! Now is the triumph of our King!
To all the world glad news we bring: "Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"**

- 2. The Lord of life is ris'n this day; death's mighty stone is rolled away; let all the earth rejoice and say: "Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!"**
- 3. Praise we in songs of victory that love, that life, which cannot die, and sing with hearts uplifted high: "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!"**

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Prayer of the Day

O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Readings and Psalm

First Reading: Acts 2:42-47

Today's reading is a description of life in the community following Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out on God's people. The new community is sustained in worship and fellowship, shares what they have, and ensures that everyone has enough.

⁴²[The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Psalm: Psalm 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.**

³You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:19-25

Doing the right things does not guarantee that one will not experience difficulties, hardships, rejection, or even suffering. Here Christ is presented as the model for our path of endurance and loyalty to God, particularly amid adversity.

¹⁹It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. ²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

²²"He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. Jesus says, I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. *Alleluia.* (John 10:14)

The Holy Gospel according to the book of John, beginning with the Tenth chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Gospel: John 10:1-10

Jesus uses an image familiar to the people of his day to make a point about spiritual leadership. Those who listen to Jesus are led to abundant life.

[Jesus said:] ¹"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

The Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Hymn of the Day: ELW #502

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

- 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; they cross before to guide me.**
- 5. Thou spreadst a table in my sight; thin 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.**

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Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.*
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Offering/Offering Hymn ELW #462 "Now We Join in Celebration"

- 1. Now we join in celebration at our Savior's invitation, dressed no more in
spirit somber, clothed instead in joy and wonder; for the Lord of all
existence, putting off divine transcendence, stoops again in love to meet us,
with his very life to feed us.**
- 2. Lord, as round this feast we gather, fill our hearts with holy rapture! For
this bread and cup of blessing are for us the sure possessing of your loving**

deed on Calv'ry, of your living self, our vict'ry, pledge of your unfailing presence, foretaste here of heav'nly gladness.

3. Lord, we share in this communion as one fam'ly of God's children, reconciled through you, our brother, one in you with God our Father. Give us grace to live for others, serving all, both friends and strangers, seeing justice, love, and mercy till you come in final glory.

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Offering Prayer

God of good gifts, receive these and all our offerings as we present them in faithful service for the sake of your gospel. Prepare our hearts to receive you in this meal as you pour out your very presence through Christ Jesus, the wellspring of eternal life. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

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.

Blessing

The God of all, who raised ✝ Jesus from the dead, bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation. **Amen.**

Sending Hymn: ELW #361 "The Day of Resurrection"

1. The day of resurrection! Earth, tell it out abroad, the passover of gladness, the passover of God. From death to life eternal, from sin's dominion free, our Christ has brought us over with hymns of victory.
2. Let hearts be purged of evil that we may see aright the Lord in rays eternal of resurrection light, and list'ning to his accents, may hear, so calm and plain, for Christ the Lord has risen, our joy that has no end!
3. Now let the heav'ns be joyful, let earth its song begin, the round world keep high triumph and all that is therein. Let all things, seen and unseen, their notes of gladness blend; for Christ the Lord has risen, our joy that has no end!
4. All praise to God the Father, all praise to Christ the Son, all Praise to God the Spirit, eternal Three in One! Let all the ransomed number fall down before the throne, and honor, pow'r and Glory ascribe to God alone!

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Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Risen One. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

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