

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | Service of the Word

First Lutheran Church, Lynn, MA

May 3, 2020



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.

Welcome to worship!

Yes, *this is worship!* It is not the way any of us *want* it to be, but God is alive and present in this virtual gathering. God's work will still speak to us through the Holy Spirit, and we are still the Body of Christ, joined together in a fellowship of love, even if it is not in person.

Create a sacred space in your home.

Light a candle. Pour yourself a warm beverage. Welcome the presence of God into your dwelling. Set aside this time for worship as if you were in church. Put away the cell phone (unless you are watching on your cell phone!) Adopt a posture of prayer that works for you.

We will get through this.

This is temporary. This is not the "new normal." This may last several weeks, but we will be back together soon. We are blessed to be living in a time with technology that allows us to gather in this way. For that we can rejoice!

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God

PRELUDE

Chorale Prelude on LITTLE FLOCK
Anne Krentz Organ

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

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.

GATHERING HYMN

*The minister announces God's forgiveness, to which the assembly responds:
Amen.*

Day By Day



1 Day by day, your mer-cies, Lord, at-tend me, bring-ing com-fort
2 Day by day, I know you will pro-vide me strength to serve and
3 Oh, what joy to know that you are near me when my bur-dens



to my anx-ious soul. Day by day, the bless-ings, Lord, you send me
wis-dom to o-bey; I will seek your lov-ing will to guide me
grow too great to bear; oh, what joy to know that you will hear me



draw me near-er to my heav'n-ly goal. Love di-vine, be-yond all
o'er the paths I strug-gle day by day. I will fear no e-vil
when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer. Day by day, no mat-ter



mor-tal mea-sure, brings to naught the bur-dens of my quest; Sav-ior,
of the mor-row, I will trust in your en-dur-ing grace. Sav-ior,
what be-tide me, you will hold me ev-er in your hand. Sav-ior,



lead me to the home I trea-sure, where at last I'll find e-ter-nal rest.
help me bear life's pain and sor-row till in glo-ry I be-hold your face.
with your pres-ence here to guide me, I will reach at last the prom-ised land.



GREETING

Alleluia, Christ is risen!
Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

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

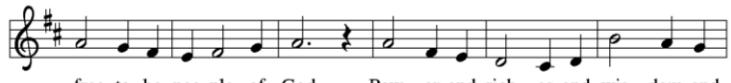
During the Sundays of Easter we sing this song of praise drawn from the rich imagery of God's victory over sin and death in the book of Revelation.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



1 Wor-thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow-er and rich-es and wis-dom and



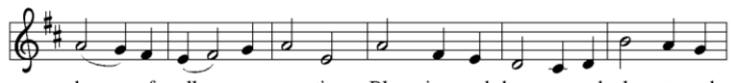
strength, and hon-or and bless-ing and glo-ry are his.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le-lu-ia.



2 Sing with all the peo-ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre-a-tion: Bless-ing and hon-or and glo-ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for-ev-er. A-men.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be-gun his reign. Al-le-lu-ia. Al-le-lu-ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God speaks to us in scripture readings, preaching, and song

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.

PSALM

Psalm 23

The psalms were the original prayer book of God's people and capture the full gamut of human emotion.

The cantors sing the refrain, which is repeated by the assembly. The choir sings the verses.

The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day 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, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



The Lord is my shep-herd, the Lord is my shep-herd, the



Lord is my shep-herd; there is noth-ing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me; he revives my soul.
2. He guides me along the right path, for the sake of his name. Though I should walk in the valley of the shadow of death, no evil would I fear, for you are with me. Your crook and your staff will give me comfort.
3. You have prepared a table before me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.
4. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for length of days unending.

SECOND READING

1 Peter 1:17-23

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.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

We stand to welcome Christ, the living word of God, in the gospel reading.

For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If 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. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When 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. He 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. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.



Verse: O Lord, open our hearts
to listen to the words of your Son.

GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

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.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SERMON

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

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. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

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

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.



HYMN OF THE DAY

The King of Love My Shepherd Is



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed
3 In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear
4 And so through all the length of days, thy good - ness



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant
Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my
fail - eth nev - er; Good Shep - - herd may I



I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.
pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.
sing thy praise with - in thy house for - ev - er.

NICENE CREED

The word "creed" comes from the Latin credo which simply means "I believe."

By professing our faith with these ecumenical words, we are one with Christians all around the world, no matter what else might divide us.

With the whole church let us confess our faith:

**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

Throughout our prayer we sing this refrain:



Still wa-ters re - store my soul. Calm wa-ters re -
vive my spir - it. Still wa - ters re -
store my soul. My cup o - ver - flows.

After each petition:

O God, _____,
restore our life.

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

OFFERTORY

You are invited to make your offering online at www.flc-lynn.org/give or by mail. Please continue to give during this time to support the ongoing ministry of our congregation.

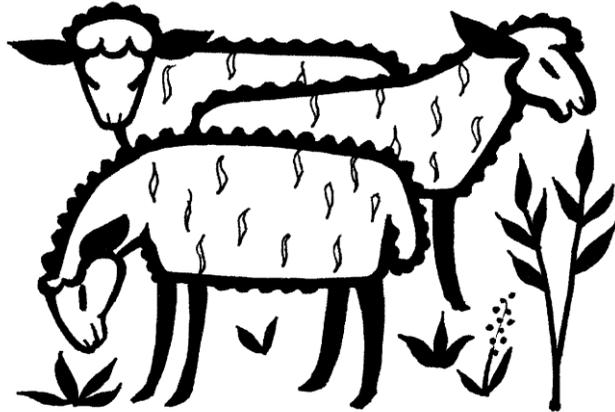
Sheep May Safely Graze
J.S Bach

Sheep may safely graze in pastures in a faithful shepherd's sight;
So may we, while God is guiding, live secure in peace abiding,
In a land with joy made bright. In a faithful shepherd's sight.

When I walk in death's dark valley, I will fear no evil,
For his rod and staff will comfort me.

He spreads a table here before me, and my cup is overflowing.
Goodness shall follow me, and I will dwell in the house of God forever.

Sheep may safely graze in pastures in a faithful shepherd's sight;
So may we, while God is guiding, live secure in peace abiding,
In a land with joy made bright. In a faithful shepherd's sight.



SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission for the world

BLESSING

SENDING SONG

Have No Fear, Little Flock



1 Have no fear, lit - tle flock; have no fear, lit - tle
2 Have good cheer, lit - tle flock; have good cheer, lit - tle
3 Praise the Lord high a - bove; praise the Lord high a -
4 Thank - ful hearts raise to God; thank - ful hearts raise to



flock, for the Fa - ther has cho - sen to
flock, for the Fa - ther will keep you in
bove, for he stoops down to heal you, up -
God, for he stays close be - side you, in



give you the king - dom; have no fear, lit - tle flock!
his love for - ev - er; have good cheer, lit - tle flock!
lift and re - store you; praise the Lord high a - bove!
all things works with you; thank - ful hearts raise to God!

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

You are the body of Christ raised up for the world.

Be at peace and share the good news.

Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Meditation on ST. COLUMBA
Jeanne Cotter

Join us for virtual coffee hour!

Following worship at 11:30 AM, you are invited to grab a cup of coffee and a snack and join us on Zoom for a virtual coffee hour! If your computer has a camera and you'd like to use video chat, go to <https://zoom.us/j/3808184970> and follow the instructions. You may need to install a free piece of software. If you would like to call in on your phone, dial **(929) 205-6099** and enter meeting ID **380 818 4970**. It won't be as good as the Fireside Room, but it will allow us to check in!

Music notes

Today's prelude, based on the melody of our sending hymn, was written by Anne Krentz Organ, a contemporary American church musician and composer. The postlude for today is based on the melody of our Hymn of the Day, *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*. This hymn tune, a traditional Irish melody, is named after St. Columba (521-597), an Irish priest who was among the first people to spread the Christian faith to Scotland. Columba was also the great-great-grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, one of the High Kings of Ireland during the fifth century. In his mission to the people of Scotland, Columba founded Iona, a monastery in the Hebrides Islands of Scotland in 563 which remains to this day as spiritual community and retreat center. It was written by Jeanne Cotter, a contemporary American pianist and composer.

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***We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation,
welcoming and serving all people.***

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