

Sunday, April 25, 2021
Fourth Sunday of Easter

ALTAR FLOWERS: *To the glory of God in memory of mom's passing a year ago. We miss you.
Carroll, Laurel Lee and Zane Goforth*

RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

Sharon Gray, organist

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APOSTLES' 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!**

WELCOMING SONG

"His Name Is Wonderful"

**His name is Wonderful
His name is Wonderful
His name is Wonderful**

Jesus my Lord

**He is the mighty King
Master of ev'rything
His name is Wonderful
Jesus my Lord**

**He's the Great Shepherd
The rock of all ages
Almighty God is He**

**Bow down before Him
Love and adore Him
His name is Wonderful
Jesus my Lord**

CCLI Song # 1122230 | Audrey Mieir

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GREETING

P *Alleluia! Christ is risen.*

C **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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

C **And also with you.**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

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**This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
whose blood set us free to be people of God.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Power, riches, wisdom and strength,
and honor, blessing, and glory are his.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Sing with all the people of God,
and join in the hymn of all creation:**

Blessing, honor, glory, and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign.
Alleluia.
This is the feast of victory for our God.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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!**

SPECIAL MUSIC

“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

Dave Newman, tenor

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FIRST READING – Kathy Wessler, reading

Acts 4:5-12

Peter and John had been arrested the previous day because they were proclaiming the news of the resurrection to the people. In today’s reading, Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit so that he can proclaim salvation in Jesus’ name to the religious authorities.

⁵The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷When they had made the prisoners Peter and John stand in their midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹This Jesus is

‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders;
it has become the cornerstone.’

¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.”

Reflection

This text is a narrative of what happened after Peter and John were arrested for preaching in the temple. For why they were arrested, read Acts 4:1-4. Who interrogated them the next day?

(verses 5-6) Surely this was an attempt to intimidate them! What was the question they asked them? (verse 7) How did Peter respond? (verses 8-9) What was their witness? (verses 10-11) In verse 11, Peter is quoting Psalm 118, which surely surprised them. Peter summed up what he wanted to say in verse 12. What enabled Peter to speak to those who had arrested them? Have you ever been in a situation when someone challenges you over your belief in Jesus? That might not happen so much to us. How do you know when the Holy Spirit is encouraging you to speak?

PSALM 23 – led by Jim Pierce

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

²The 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.

⁴Though 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.

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

Reflection

As you read this psalm, what is your response to it? Do you have a favorite verse? When I was a chaplain, I often recited it (from memory) when someone was dying, to comfort them or their loved ones if it was appropriate.

SECOND READING – Joyce Stroud, 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 God ²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and God knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from God whatever we ask, because we obey the commandments and do what pleases God.

²³And this is God's commandment, that we should believe in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and love one another, just as Jesus has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey God's commandments abide in God, and God abides in them. And by this we know that God abides in us, by the Spirit that God has given us.

Reflection

How does John the letter writer tell us that we know what love is? (verse 16) Who shows us what love is? If we know what love is, what will we do? John enlarges our idea of what it means to lay down our lives for our neighbors. What does he encourage? (verse 17) Why isn't saying, "I love you" enough? (verse 18) This reminds me of the passage from James about faith. (James 2:14-20) John says essentially the same thing about love—if you can't show love, you don't have love, no matter what you say. How does John say we can be confident in God's presence? (verses 19-20) I take John's saying that we can be confident even if our consciences condemn us as a comment on what the leaders of the Jewish people were trying to do to Peter and John—make them uncomfortable in their consciences for going against what they were taught before they became Jesus' disciples. How will we know that what we are doing is right? (verses 21-22) What are the commandments that John refers to? (verse 23) How do we know if we are following those commandments and doing right? (verse 24)

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

"Halle, Halle, Hallelujah"

ELW 172

**Halle, halle, hallelujah.
Halle, halle, hallelujah.
Halle, halle, hallelujah.
Hallelujah. Hallelujah.**

ELW Song #172

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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."

Reflection

What does Jesus call himself in this text? (verse 11) What makes a shepherd a good shepherd? How does someone who is not the shepherd treat the sheep? (verse 12) Why? (verse 13) What makes Jesus the good shepherd? (verse 14) Jesus compares his love for the sheep to God's love for Jesus. (verse 15) How does Jesus show his love for us? How is Jesus' love for the sheep

different from the sheep's love for one another? (verse 16) We don't know everyone who is in Jesus' flock, even though we belong together. Why does Jesus know that God loves Jesus? (verse 17) Who tells Jesus what to do in order that God will love him? (verse 18) What is God's command to Jesus? How would you compare that to Jesus' decision to lay down his life for the sheep?

SERMON

Rev. Keith Hohly

SONG OF THE DAY

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

ELW 502

**The King of love my shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine forever.**

**Where streams of living water flow,
my ransomed soul he leadeth
and, where the verdant pastures grow,
with food celestial feedeth.**

**Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid,
and home, rejoicing, brought me.**

**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.**

**Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
thine unction grace bestoweth;
and, oh, what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!**

**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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Lord, listen to your children praying,
 Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
 Lord, listen to your children praying,
 send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

*CCLI Song # 22829 | Ken Medema
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PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION –led by Debra & Keith Hohly

Pat Wessler (Kathy Wessler's mother), Gerald Clark, Sue Wagner (friend of Sharmyn Thompson), David Bezona, Kathy Wessler, Alan Dunning, Kay Howard, Keith Hohly, Rick & Cyndi Zebelean (friends of Sharmyn Thompson), Sylvia Rush (grandmother of Felicia Rush Blanc), Lynn Ann Flora (friend of Laurel Goforth), Keira Wall (great-niece of Irene Wall), Dorothy Masteller, Dee Rasmussen, the family of Rosalie Morse (John Lawrence's granddaughter), and the family of Helen Koch

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

A brief silence.

Loving Shepherd, you know your own and your own know you. Your voice calls us to your loving embrace. Strengthen your church throughout the world that we bear witness to your expansive love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gracious Shepherd, you are generous with the gifts of goodness and mercy. Restore your creation to wholeness so that cities and towns, countryside and wilderness, may abound with life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Hope-giving Shepherd, the nations and peoples are your heritage. Place into the hearts of all leaders and rulers the passion to serve. Crucify any desire to overpower others and give leaders joy in lifting up the lowly. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abiding Shepherd, your love flows as we reach out to those around us. Move us with your Spirit, so that we lay down our lives for those in need. In the midst of a global crisis, we look to you for strength, hope and help in fighting the coronavirus pandemic. We pray for those stricken with this disease and those who are treating them, for those mourning the loss of life and those facing death, and for those who urgently work to find effective treatments for cure. We lift up to you those in our faith community needing your care: Pat, Gerald, Sue, David, Kathy, Alan, Kay, Keith, Rick, Cyndi, Sylvia, Lynn Ann, Kiera, Dorothy, Dee, the family of Rosalie Morse, the family of Helen Koch, and those we name aloud or silently in our hearts. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Saving Shepherd, you restore us to wholeness. Help our community in our life together and give us vigor as a people of faith. In the midst of challenges and opportunities, fill us anew with you Holy Spirit. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal Shepherd, you hold us securely in your loving hands. In the assurance of resurrection hope, we remember our loved ones who have died in you. Bring us, with them, to dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen!

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

☐ *Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.*

*We thank you, risen Christ,
for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.*

*We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.*

*Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.*

*Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.*

*To you be given all praise,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God,
now and forever.*

☑ **Amen!**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P *The peace of Christ be with you always.*

C **And also with you!**

DIALOGUE

P *The Lord be with you.*

C **And also with you.**

P *Lift up your hearts.*

C **We lift them to the Lord.**

P *Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

C **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

P *It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;
who in dying has destroyed death,
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.
And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,
with earth and sea and all their creatures,
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

SANCTUS

pg. 207

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heav'n and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
hosanna in the highest.**

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P *Blessed are you, O God of the universe.
Your mercy is everlasting
and your faithfulness endures from age to age.

Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth.
Praise to you for saving the earth from the waters of the flood.*

*Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea.
Praise to you for leading your people through the wilderness
to the land of milk and honey.
Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one.
Praise to you for the death and resurrection of Christ.
Praise to you for your Spirit poured out on all nations.*

*In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.*

*With this bread and cup
we remember our Lord's passover from death to life
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:*

☞ Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

☞ O God of resurrection and new life:
*Pour out your Holy Spirit on us
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Bless this feast.
Grace our table with your presence.*

☞ Come, Holy Spirit.

☞ Reveal yourself to us in the breaking of the bread.
*Raise us up as the body of Christ for the world.
Breathe new life into us.
Send us forth,
burning with justice, peace, and love.*

☞ Come, Holy Spirit.

**☞ With your holy ones of all times and places,
with the earth and all its creatures,
with sun and moon and stars,
we praise you, O God,
blessed and holy Trinity,
now and forever.**

☞ Amen!

LORD'S PRAYER

☩ Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen!

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

☩ *The risen Christ invites us to this table. Come, eat and be satisfied. All are welcome.*

COMMUNION

BLESSING

☩ *May the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in His grace.*

☩ Amen!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

☩ *Wellspring of joy,*

☩ **through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts. Satisfy the hunger still around us,
and send us as joyful witnesses, that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!**

BENEDICTION

☩ *May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.*

The God of life,

Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit,

bless you now and forever.

☩ Amen!

SENDING SONG

"I Know That My Redeemer Lives!" vv. 1,2,7,8

ELW 619

I know that my Redeemer lives!
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, he lives, who once was dead;
he lives, my ever-living head!

He lives triumphant from the grave;
he lives eternally to save;
he lives exalted, throned above;
he lives to rule his church in love.

He lives and grants me daily breath;
he lives, and I shall conquer death;
he lives my mansion to prepare;
he lives to bring me safely there.

He lives, all glory to his name!
He lives, my Savior, still the same;
what joy this blest assurance gives:
I know that my Redeemer lives!

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DISMISSAL

- Alleluia! Christ is risen.*
- Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**
- Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!*
- Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

POSTLUDE

"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"

Sharon Gray, piano

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First Lutheran Church
302 South 10th St.
St. Joseph, MO 64503 / 816-232-8378 / flcsj302@gmail.com
www.flcsj.org
Rev. Keith Hohly, Interim Pastor

Instruments: Piano and Organ – Sharon Gray | Guitar – Roger Lenander | Guitar/Bass – Jim Pierce

Song leaders and vocal talents: Sharmyn Thompson, Keith Hohly, Deb Hohly,
Dave Newman, Jeff Langdon, Phil Lewis, Nancy Lewis, Jim Pierce, Juel Pierce, Jim Bunge,
Carol Bunge, Kathy Wessler, and Roger Lenander

Reflections on Today's Readings written by Rev. Juel Pierce

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