



FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Bethel Lutheran Church

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 in the midst of the world’s violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God’s tender care to all creation.

✠GATHERING✠

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P. We are gathered in the name of the Father, and of the +Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

P. Rejoicing in the resurrection, let us seek God’s forgiveness, that dying to sin, we may walk in newness of life.

Silence is kept for reflection and self-examination.

P. Loving God,

C. we fear, we doubt, we do not trust You; we do not love our neighbors as ourselves; we have failed to recognize You in the poor and needy; we sin against You in thought, word, and deed. We pray for Your mercy, forgiveness, and grace. We hope in the gift of Your Spirit and we rejoice in the resurrection promise of Jesus Christ, our living Savior. Amen.

P. God, Who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin and made us alive with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, I declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins. May you be strengthen daily with the power to walk in God’s light and love. C.Amen.

GREETING

P. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C. Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

P. The grace of our risen Savior, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C. And also with you.

HYMN OF PRAISE *This is the Feast of Victory for Our God*

P. This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia

C. Worthy is Christ, the Lamb Who was slain,
Whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Power and riches and wisdom and strength,
and honor and blessing and glory are His.

This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia.

Sing with all the people of God
and join in the hymn of all creation.

Blessing and honor and glory and might
be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen.

This is the feast of victory for our God,
for the Lamb Who was slain has begun His reign.

Alleluia. Alleluia!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. 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 Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. Amen

✠ WORD ✠

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 outpoured on God's people. This new community is founded on the teachings of the apostles and sustained in the breaking of the bread.

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.

The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.

³He revives my soul

and guides me along right pathways for His 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 spread a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

You have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶Surely Your 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 in the midst of adversity.

¹⁹For it 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.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Hallelujah! Jesus lives! He is now the Living One;
From the gloomy halls of death Christ, the Conqueror, has gone,
Bright forerunner to the skies of His people, yet to rise.

HOLY GOSPEL: John 10:1–10

Jesus uses an image familiar to the people of his day to make a point about spiritual leadership. Good shepherds bring people to life through Jesus, but those who avoid Jesus are dangerous to the flock.

C. (spoken) **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] 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.

P. The Gospel of the Lord.

GOSPEL RESPONSE

Hallelujah! Jesus lives! Praise Him, ransomed of the earth.
Praise Him in a nobler song, Cherubim of heav'nly birth.
Praise the victor King, Whose sway sin and death and hell obey

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY *My Shepherd, You Supply My Need*



1 My Shep - herd, you sup - ply my need; most ho - ly
2 When I walk through the shades of death, your pres - ence
3 The sure pro - vi - sions of my God at - tend me



is your name. In pas - tures fresh you make me feed,
is my stay; one word of your sup - port - ing breath
all my days; oh, may your house be my a - bode



be - side the liv - ing stream. You bring my wan - d'ring
drives all my fears a - way. Your hand, in sight of
and all my work be praise. Here would I find a



spir - it back when I for - sake your ways, and lead me,
all my foes, does still my ta - ble spread; my cup with
set - tled rest, while oth - ers go and come; no more a



for your mer - cy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.
bless - ings o - ver - flows, your oil a - noints my head.
strang - er or a guest, but like a child at home.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

On the third day He rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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

✠ PRAYER ✠

OFFERING

If you have not signed up for electronic giving, you can mail your offering in to Bethel (P.O. Box 126, Porter, 56280), you may drop it in the offering box at the church, or you may make your offering online at our website (www.bethelofporter.com).

OFFERTORY *He Is Arisen, Glorious Word*

He is arisen! Glorious Word! Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
the gates of heav'n are open. My Jesus rose triumphantly,
and Satan's arrows broken lie, destroyed hell's fiercest weapon.
Oh, hear, what cheer! Christ victorious, rising glorious,
life is giving. He was dead, but now is living!

OFFERTORY PRAYER

P. Blessed are You, O God, ruler of heaven and earth.

C. Day by day You shower us with blessings. As You raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise You and to respond to those in need through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Separated in our homes but united in the one flock of believers and uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the earth, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

Shepherding God, we pray that we will hear and follow Your voice calling to us in the Word; that bishops and pastors be sustained for their shepherding tasks; that churches devastated by the virus be upheld; and that churches find ways to continue their ministries of education and service. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

God of creation, we praise You for those who maintain and operate farm equipment, for those who plant and harvest crops, and for those involved in agriculture of any kind. Support and uphold those who are struggling to find markets for their goods and those facing the devastating decision of whether to cull their herds. Strengthen all who work to feed the world. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Generous God, no one should be in want. Bid the nations to return to Your paths of righteousness and inspire our leaders to walk in Your ways, that heads of state and legislators cooperate for the good of all, medical experts are heeded and government moneys serve the nations' greatest needs so all may have the opportunity to live abundantly and sustainably. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

God of justice, we pray for a world so economically divided: that the millions of those unemployed be given food and shelter now and jobs in the future; that children find a fruitful means of education; that refugees be safeguarded from violence and prejudice; that, inspired by the early Christians, those who have means become ever more generous to those who endure great want. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Comforting God, You carry us tenderly in Your arms. We pray for all who walk through dark valleys overshadowed by anxiety and need: that those afflicted with the coronavirus be cared for; that the sick be healed; that those in despair find hope; that those who are lonely be comforted and that medical workers be safeguarded. We pray especially for Bea, Merv, Emily, Dick, Angie, Shirley, and Lynette. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Nurturing God, You desire green pasture for all. Bless advocacy work, food pantries and feeding ministries here and around the country. May none of our neighbors lack for basic needs. Lord in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Everlasting God, Your beloved have heard Your voice; You have called them by name and guided them to Your side in death. We thank You for their lives of faithful witness and we pray that at our end, as sheep of Your own fold, as lambs of Your own flock, we will be gathered with them into Your loving arms. Lord, in Your mercy,

C. hear our prayer.

Almighty God, You give us the joy of celebrating our Lord's resurrection. With bold confidence in Your love we place all for whom we pray into Your eternal care. Give us the joys of life in Your service, and bring us at last to the full joy of life eternal, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C. Amen

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.

✠ SENDING ✠

BLESSING

P. The God of all grace, Who has called you to eternal glory in Christ, restore, support, strengthen, and ✠ bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

C. Amen

CLOSING HYMN *Praise the Lord, Rise Up Rejoicing*



1 Praise the Lord, rise up re - joic - ing, wor - ship, thanks, de -
2 Scat - tered flock, one shep - herd shar - ing, lost and lone - ly,
3 Sins for - giv - en, wrongs for - giv - ing, we go forth a -



vo - tion voic - ing: glo - ry be to God on high!
one voice hear - ing, ears at - ten - tive to your word;
lert and liv - ing in your Spir - it, strong and free.



Christ, your cross and pas - sion shar - ing, by this eu - cha -
by your blood new life re - ceiv - ing, in your bod - y,
Part - ners in your new cre - a - tion, seek - ing peace in



rist de - clar - ing yours the fi - nal vic - to - ry.
firm be - liev - ing, we are yours, and you the Lord.
ev - 'ry na - tion, may we faith - ful fol - l'wers be.

DISMISSAL

P. Christ is Risen!

C. He is Risen indeed!

P. Go in peace. Share the good news.

C. Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia

Those who Serve:

Ministers: All the People of God
Organist: Terry Dybsetter

Presider: Pastor Ellen Munter
Reader: Sara Wollum

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Offering: During this period of suspended in-person worship services, Bethel and Hemnes continue to have recurring expenses. Please remember to give financially to support the ministry of our congregations. For Bethel, you may mail your offering to the church office or give online at <http://bit.ly/givebethel>



Bea Heise Merv Anderson Emily Morton,
Dick Anderson Angie Denelsbeck Anderson
Shirlee Gabbert Lynette Christie

Acknowledgements

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