

Sunday, April 25, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Easter

ELW Service of the Word



Introduction to the day

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

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

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.

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.

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy: Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy: Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy: Lord, have mercy.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Glory to God in the highest; and peace to God's people on earth.

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

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.**

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Acts 4:5-12

A reading from Acts.

⁵The next day [the] 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 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."

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

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 John 3:16-24

A reading from 1 John.

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.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL: John 10:11-18

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[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.**

SERMON

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

On this fourth Sunday of Easter, let us pray for the church, the earth, and all in any need, responding to each petition with the words, “Abide with us in love.”

A brief silence.

God of goodness and mercy, we pray for the church: that bishops, pastors, and deacons be upheld in their tasks as shepherds of your flock; and that congregations persevere in their ministries of nurture of the young and care for the aging. *A brief silence.*

O God, steadfast shepherd of the church, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We pray for members of other world religions: that there be an end to interreligious strife; that Sikhs be comforted in their sorrow; and that during Ramadan Muslims be strengthened for lives of prayer and service. *A brief silence.*

O God, gracious keeper of many flocks, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We pray for the earth: that green pastures and clear waters be provided for herds and flocks, those raised for human use and those living wild; and that farm fields be saved from storm or drought. *A brief silence.*

O God, mighty preserver of the universe, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We pray for the nations of the earth: that governments cease aggression against their neighbors; that peace come to Afghanistan, Syria, and Myanmar; and that China, Russia, and the United States coexist in concord with each other. *A brief silence:*

O God, the true cornerstone of society, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We pray for justice in our land: that our criminal justice system continue to be reformed; that ethnic and economic prejudices cease their holds on our people; and that there be peace in our streets. *A brief silence.*

O God, almighty judge of righteousness, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We pray for those who are hungry: the unemployed, the underemployed, those living in refugee camps or on our streets, the migrants seeking a better life; that they be fed. *A brief silence.*

O God, benevolent table of food and fellowship, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We pray for all who are sick or suffering: for those stricken with the coronavirus, especially in India and Brazil; for the children who have known continual sorrow; and for those we name here before you. . . . *A brief silence.*

O God, healer of our every ill, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We pray finally for ourselves: that you will receive the petitions of our hearts.

A longer period of silence.

O God, tender shepherd of each of us, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

We praise you for all the sheep of your fold, each lamb of your own flock. Especially today we thank you for the evangelist Mark and for his gospel book of faith. Bring us with all the saints to dwell in your house forever. *A brief silence.*

O God, eternal giver of life, we pray: **Abide with us in love.**

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 Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

THANKSGIVING

OFFERING

As forgiven and reconciled people, we offer ourselves and our gifts to God. **Amen**

OFFERING PRAYER

God of love,

you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;

for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ. Amen.

CANTICLE OF THANKSGIVING

Salvation belongs to our God

and to Christ the Lamb forever and ever.

Great and wonderful are your deeds,

O God of the universe; just and true are your ways,

O Ruler of all the nations.

Who can fail to honor you, Lord, and sing the glory of your name?

For you alone are the Holy One,

and blessed is the one whose name is the Word of God.

All praise and thanks to you, holy God!

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Praise to you, O God, for your Word of life:

creating a wondrous universe,

proclaiming freedom from captivity,

becoming the song of your people.

We praise you, O God, for your Word.

We praise you, O God, for your Word.

Psalm 92:5

Exodus 5:1

Psalm 118:4

Your Word is made flesh among us:

with Mary in the garden, you call us by name.

John 20:16

With Thomas beholding your wounds, you call us to believe.

John 20:17

With sheep of others folds, we are gathered by your voice. John 10:16
Your Word names our death and our life: John 5:24
a seed that falls into the earth and dies, John 12:24
rain and snow that come down from heaven to water the earth, Isaiah 55:10
a vine in which we abide. John 15:5
Through your Word, you appoint us to bear fruit, fruit that will last. John 15:16
We bless you, O God, for your Word.
We bless you, O God, for your Word.

By your living Word, we are witnesses of these things. Luke 24:48
Breathe into us your Holy Spirit. John 20:22
Open our minds to understand the scriptures. Luke 24:45
Give us wisdom to declare what we have heard,
what we have seen with our eyes,
what we have looked at and touched with our hands
concerning the word of life. 1 John 1:1
Fill us with strength to love, not in word or speech alone,
but in truth and action. 1 John 3:18–7 –
With every creature in heaven and on earth
and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, Rev 5:13
we join in the hymn of all creation, as
we thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word.
We thank you, O God, for your life-giving Word. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIRTHDAY PRAYER (Cary)

Watch over your child(ren)____, O Lord as (his/her/their) days increase; bless and guide (him/her/them) wherever (he/she/they) may be. Strengthen (him/her/them) when (he/she/they) stand(s); comfort (him/her/them) when discouraged or sorrowful; raise (him/her/them) up if (he/she/they) fall(s); and in (his/her/their) heart(s) may your peace which passes understanding abide all the days of (his/her/their) life (lives); through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

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.

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

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