

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 8, 2022

IN THE NAME OF JESUS, WELCOME TO ST. PAUL'S!

8:30 & 10:30 a.m.



*THE ENTRANCE RITE*

*PRELUDE*

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring  
J. S. Bach

*WELCOME*

Alleluia! Christ is risen!  
**He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

*ENTRANCE HYMN #737*

*Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing*

- 1 Rejoice, my heart, be glad and sing,  
A cheerful trust maintain;  
For God, the source of ev'rything,  
Your portion shall remain.
- 2 He is your treasure, He your joy,  
Your life and light and Lord,  
Your counselor when doubts annoy,  
Your shield and great reward.
- 3 Why spend the day in blank despair,  
In restless thought the night?  
On your Creator cast your care;  
He makes your burdens light.
- 4 Did not His love and truth and pow'r  
Guard ev'ry childhood day?  
And did He not in threat'ning hour  
Turn dreaded ills away?

- 5 He only will with patience chide,  
His rod falls gently down;  
And all your sins He casts aside  
In ocean depths to drown.
- 6 His wisdom never plans in vain  
Nor falters nor mistakes.  
All that His counsels may ordain  
A blessed ending makes.
- 7 Upon your lips, then, lay your hand,  
And trust His guiding love;  
Then like a rock your peace shall stand  
Here and in heav'n above.

*CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION*

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In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

*Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.*

Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

**Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.**

Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

In peace let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

For this holy house and for all who offer here their worship and praise let us pray to the Lord.

**Lord, have mercy.**

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

**Amen.**

*HYMN OF PRAISE - "This is the Feast"*

**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.**

## THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray. Almighty God, merciful Father,

**since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**



## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST LESSON (*Be seated*)

Acts 20:17-35

Now from Miletus [Paul] sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. And when they came to him, he said to them:

“You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears. And now I commend

you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*PSALM 23 (Read responsively, by whole verse)*

The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son**

**and to the Holy Spirit;**

**as it was in the beginning,**

**is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

*SECOND LESSON*

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying

out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, "Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen."

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have they come?" I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"Therefore they are before the throne of God,  
and serve him day and night in his temple;  
and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.  
They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore;  
the sun shall not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat.  
For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of living water,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

*(10:30) CHILDREN'S SERMON*

*ALLELUIA VERSE (Stand)*

**Alleluia.  
Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life.  
Alleluia, alleluia.**

*GOSPEL*

John 10:22-30

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter  
**Glory to You, O Lord.**

At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell

us plainly.” Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ**

*SERMON (Be seated)*

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus. Amen. Dear friends in Christ:

Today we remember that Jesus is like a Shepherd to us. Just as a shepherd helps sheep in many ways, so also Jesus helps us in many ways. The metaphor is a particularly apt one, because like sheep we need a lot of help.

Jesus our Shepherd gives us the help of God himself. God had always been a Shepherd to his people. “The Lord is my Shepherd,” says the Psalm. In Jesus, God continues his shepherding. And adds to it as well.

In the Gospel lesson just read, some questioned this special role of Jesus. “If you are the Christ, tell us plainly,” they said – not because they were confused but because they didn’t believe. Jesus responded to them by pointing to his works: “The works that I do bear witness to me.”

You and I are believers. But we continually need our faith reinforced. To work toward this today, let’s heed the advice of Jesus and consider again some of those works which bear witness to him.

Jesus said: “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” One of Jesus’ works is to communicate with his people. He speaks to us. He makes himself and his messages known. Jesus doesn’t remain silent and aloof but comes to us with the messages we need.

He does this, first of all, through the scriptures. Particularly, he does this as the central message of the scriptures – the Gospel – is proclaimed. When the Gospel is proclaimed, the words become what Christian theology calls “the living voice of the Gospel” – viva

vox evangelii, to use the famous Latin phrase. The Gospel is the good news of what God has done for us in Jesus. The fact that the Good News is among us in a living voice reminds us that the risen Christ is among his people today – speaking to them in real time and in a real way.

The living voice of the Gospel comes first through preaching. Christian preachers are under-shepherds of Christ – “pastors” being the word that best makes this connection. They proclaim the Gospel in ever-new ways – doing so with new energy, addressing new concerns, bringing the message into new contexts. Christian congregations will provide for preaching among them as of first importance, for Christ’s flock needs to hear his voice.

But preaching isn’t the only living voice of the Gospel. As Martin Luther made very clear, music also carries the Gospel. Luther said: “God has preached the Gospel through music, too.” Certainly this is done as music carries the text of the scriptures. But even beyond this, the Gospel can also be carried through the beauty of the music itself. When Luther said the words

just quoted, he went on to extoll the music of a certain composer (Josquin), saying of him: “all of whose compositions flow freely, gently, and cheerfully, are not forced or cramped by rules, and are like the song of the finch” (Luther’s Works, AE, Vol. 55, pp. 129-130).

Our second lesson today, from Revelation 7, points to all this by describing a scene of joyful worship in heaven. The gathering is large, diverse, united and centered upon God. A loud voice cries out: “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” And then everyone responds with a great hymn, saying: “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” This worship, as we see, is characterized by beauty and is not just a word-based message.

Such worship, though it be enacted among us as our work, is really the work of God. God makes it possible. His Spirit is the one leading the praise.

As such, this is one of the those works which gives testimony to Jesus. It witnesses to his power and position. It witnesses to his special calling as one sent by God.



“My sheep hear my voice,” said Jesus. “And I know them, and they follow me.” And here we note that the fact of sheep following the shepherd is a second work giving testimony to Jesus.

Jesus, as we see in his ministry, made the gathering of a flock a top priority. He approached people and called them to follow him. He did this throughout his ministry, inviting more and more people to join him.

Not that Jesus was all about the numbers. He would never sacrifice his message for the sake of more followers.

But numbers were still important to him. He would leave ninety-nine to go after one. He would eat with sinners in order to seek and save the lost. He would endure the misunderstandings of his disciples, the assaults of his rivals and the fickleness of the crowds all while building his flock.

Jesus knew, too, that his flock would need defending. This is one of the primary jobs of a shepherd. Paul’s words to the church at Ephesus, as recorded in our first reading, could serve as words of Jesus himself. Paul said to the under-shepherds there: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert.”

Jesus’ flock has always faced attacks from wolves. Wolves are those who devour innocent sheep for their own pleasure. They are those who care not for the sheep, but only themselves. As Paul reminds us, some of these wolves will come from outside the flock, but others will come from within.

Christ’s flock must always sound the voice of danger when it arises. Pointing out error and giving warning may not make one popular, but these are necessary things. They are one of the ways in which Christ accomplishes his promise that “no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

So far today we’ve twice referred to Christ’s under-shepherds in the church, who indeed play an important role in that flock. But let’s not forget those who serve this role in the home. Parents serve as shepherds of their children in much the same way – protecting, guiding and leading their children.

And today we think especially of mothers. Mothers bring unique gifts and have special opportunities to impact their children – more opportunities than any other for sure. Today I think fondly of my own mother, who sacrificed so much for me and loved me with such commitment. Specifically, I remember how she put me to bed as a child by singing: “I am Jesus’ Little Lamb” – a song that brought me such comfort and one I sang to my own children as well. I encourage you to reflect on how your mother cared for and loved you – protecting, guiding and leading you in her own unique way with her own unique gifts.

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.” Of all the works done by Jesus that gives witness to him, the earning of eternal life for us sinners is no doubt his greatest.

Jesus gives his followers eternal life by paying for their sins. This he did once and for all when he died upon the cross. His death was a payment for sins – the perfect sacrifice to offset sin’s consequences.

Because Jesus did this, we call him the “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.” He was sacrificed, just like a lamb. And here we have a great irony. For Jesus our Shepherd was also a lamb.

And yet, is it really a matter of irony? For who could be a better shepherd than one who was a Lamb? The writer of the Hebrews once said: “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin” (4:15). By that same logic, we do not have a Shepherd who is unable to sympathize with us, but one who knows our needs for he has been a lamb himself.

Our reading from Revelation tells of the greatness of the Lamb by showing him as an equal with God. “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” cry the people of heaven. The people know of the great salvation that has been won by Jesus.

“The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me,” said Jesus. And Jesus does the works of speaking to us, calling us together as a flock, protecting us from danger and giving us eternal life. He is a shepherd to us – the Good Shepherd – one who is always faithful and always just.

Jesus our Good Shepherd gives us the help of God. He can do this because he is God. As he said: "I and the Father are one." Christ's shepherding is God's shepherding.

All of us need a shepherd. We all have times when we stray from the right path. We all have times when we listen to the wrong voices. We are all vulnerable to attack by wolves.

When we turn to God in faith – praying, worshiping, listening to his voice – we are soliciting the help of the Good Shepherd. And our Good Shepherd always delivers.

May God then bless the living voice of the Gospel among us, that we may listen to our Good Shepherd's voice and trust in his care. And may God use this voice to keep us in faith. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

*HYMN OF THE DAY #711 (Stand)*

*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*

- 1 Savior, like a shepherd lead us;  
Much we need Your tender care.  
In Your pleasant pastures feed us,  
For our use Your fold prepare.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
You have bought us; we are Yours.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
You have bought us; we are Yours.**
  
- 2 We are Yours; in love befriend us,  
Be the guardian of our way;  
Keep Your flock, from sin defend us,  
Seek us when we go astray.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
Hear us children when we pray.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
Hear us children when we pray.**

- 3** You have promised to receive us,  
Poor and sinful though we be;  
You have mercy to relieve us,  
Grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
Early let us turn to You.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
Early let us turn to You.
- 4** Early let us seek Your favor,  
Early let us do Your will;  
Blessèd Lord and only Savior,  
With Your love our spirits fill.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
You have loved us, love us still.  
Blessèd Jesus, blessèd Jesus,  
You have loved us, love us still.

*NICENE CREED*

*Hymnal, back cover*

**I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.**

**And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God,  
begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures**

and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father.  
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the  
dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.

And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life ✠ of the world to come. Amen.

#### OFFERING

*Offerings support the church's mission work – both here and through our many partners. Offerings may be placed in the box at the sanctuary entrance or sent to the church through our website or the mail. Fellowship Cards help us welcome new people and track participation. Please fill one out and place it in the offering box following the service.*

#### PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

In peace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the Holy Spirit in rich measure, that hearing and following Christ, our Shepherd, we would pass through every tribulation to our eternal heavenly home, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the flock of Christ, that God would bless her under the care of her shepherds and leaders, and instill in her wisdom, fortitude, humility and grace, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all mothers, that they would be strengthened and encouraged in their tasks and know the love of their children; and for those mothers who are pregnant, all those who have suffered miscarriage or the death of a child, and all those who have yearned for a child and lived with the pain of unfulfilled longing, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For wise and faithful leaders in our land, that they would govern according to Your Law, and that they would defend the lives of the unborn, the orphaned and the widowed, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For the sick, the suffering and the dying, and for all those on our prayer list and those we name in our hearts at this time... that they would be delivered and comforted, guarded against despair, and given patience as they await God's perfect healing, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who commune this day, that as they receive the same body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that was given into death and raised again for our justification, they be granted the joy of forgiveness and the power of endless life; and that they would live out their baptismal lives dying to sin through repentance and being raised in faith, let us pray to the Lord: **Lord, have mercy.**

All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**



*SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT*

*PREFACE*

*LSB 160*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

It is truly good right and salutary...evermore praising You and saying:

*SANCTUS*

*LSB 161*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:**

**Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.**

**Hosanna. Hosanna.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

*PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING*

*LSB 161*

*THE WORDS OF OUR LORD*

*PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST*

*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.**

*PAX DOMINI*

*LSB 163*

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**Amen.**

*AGNUS DEI*

*LSB 163*

**Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.**

*THE COMMUNION (Be seated)*

*DISTRIBUTION MUSIC*

*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us*  
Setting: Paul Grime

*PRAYER (Stand)*

*BENEDICTION*

SENDING HYMN #211 (One and All Rejoice)

Rejoice, Angelic Choirs



1 Re - joice, an - gel - ic choirs! Cre - a - tion,  
2 In ra - diance of His light, The ev - er -  
3 O Church of Christ, re - joice! God's faith - ful



join and sing; Sound forth the trum - pet  
last - ing King Earth's an - cient dark - ness  
peo - ple, sing; Clothed in the bright - ness



to pro - claim The tri - umph of our King!  
o - ver - throws, For - ev - er ban - ish - ing!  
of this light, God's house with prais - es ring!

*Refrain*



Re - joice! Re - joice! Re - joice, give thanks, and sing!

*DISMISSAL*

P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

*POSTLUDE*

*Rejoice, Angelic Choirs*

Setting: Allan Mahnke



Those serving:

Sunday, May 8, 8:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Christine M. Bell  
Comm. assist: Judy Koucky  
Reader: Melissa Hecht

10:30 a.m.:

Greeter: Janice Sebring  
Comm. assist: Jill Hecht  
Reader: Bill Muller

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