



Our Mission...

to be an accepting Christian community dedicated to living, sharing and teaching the Word of God.

We respect all aspects of people including race, ethnicity, gender expression, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, age, religion, mental wellness, and ability.

Fourth Sunday of Easter
April 25th, 2021

***Bold print** indicates a congregational response.*

WE GATHER IN COMMUNITY

WELCOME and ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE LAND

We acknowledge that we meet and work in Treaty 1 land, the traditional lands of the Anishinaabe, Cree and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Metis nation. We are thankful for these first inhabitants and we commit to working together towards justice, truth and reconciliation.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

*The light of Christ rises in glory,
overcoming the darkness of sin and death.*

PRELUDE: #747 VU "The Lord's My Shepherd" (cf. Psalm 23: 1-3) ~music by *Jessie Seymour Irvine* (Words reproduced & music played with permission under license #A-620529) ~*Michael McKay*

During the course of the week, we have wandered like sheep and turned to our own ways. As we come before God this morning, let us pray that Christ our Shepherd revive our spirits and guide us in right pathways.

- 1 The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want;
he makes me down to lie
in pastures green; he leadeth me,
the quiet waters by.
- 2 My soul he doth restore again;
and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness,
even for his own name's sake.

CALL TO WORSHIP

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 right paths for his name's sake.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

**Good Shepherd of the sheep,
by whom the lost are sought
and guided into the fold:
feed us and we shall be satisfied;
heal us and we shall be made whole;
and lead us, that we may be with you;
for you are alive and reign,
with the Father and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

CHILDREN'S TIME

(Sunday in-person service only)

THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Peter Latimer (Thursday & on-line); Carin Crowe (Sunday)

First Lesson

Acts 4: 5-12

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, 'By what power or by what name did you do this?' Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, 'Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let 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. This Jesus is "the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone."

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

Epistle

1 John 3: 16-24

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How 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?

Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

And 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. All 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.

RESPONSE: *This is the word of God.*

Thanks be to God

INTERLUDE: #594 VU— **“O Christian, Love”** (cf. I John 3:16, John 10:11) ~words by John Greenleaf Whittier
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We know love because Christ laid down his life for us. In response, let us follow him by laying down our lives for others in service to them. Let us resolve to love in truth and in action.

- 1 O Christian, love your sister and your brother!
 Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
 to worship rightly is to love each other,
 each smile a hymn, each kindly deed a prayer.
- 2 Follow with reverent steps the great example:
 Jesus whose holy work was doing good;
 so shall the wide earth seem a hallowed temple,
 each loving life a psalm of gratitude.
- 3 Then shall all shackles fall; the stormy clangour
 of wild war-music o'er the earth shall cease;
 love shall tread out the baleful fire of anger,
 and in its ashes plant the tree of peace.

The Gospel

John 10: 11-18

~Rev. Don Johnson

'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The 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. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I 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. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No 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.'

RESPONSE: *The Gospel of Christ.*

Thanks be to God.

SERMON: **“Jesus the Good Shepherd”**

~Rev. Don Johnson (see the attached sermon)

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

A New Creed

We are not alone; we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

who has created and is creating,

who has come in Jesus,

the Word made flesh,

to reconcile and make new,

who works in us and others by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,

to live with respect in Creation,

to love and serve others,

to seek justice and resist evil,

**to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.**

In life, in death, in life beyond death,

God is with us.

We are not alone. Thanks be to God.

PRAYERS

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, the power and the glory

forever and ever. Amen.

A PSALM OF BLESSING

VU #749 – Psalm 23

God is my shepherd,

there is nothing I shall lack.

You, God, make me lie down in green pastures;

you lead me beside peaceful waters;

you revive my spirit,

you guide me in right pathways for your name's sake.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you are with me,

your rod and your staff are my comfort.
You spread a table for me in the sight of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup is overflowing.
Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in God's house my whole life long.

THE BLESSING

*Christ the Good Shepherd,
who laid down his life for the sheep,
draw you and all who hear his voice
to be one people within one fold,
and the blessing of God the Holy Trinity
be with you now and always. Amen.*

POSTLUDE: "Surely Goodness and Mercy" (cf. Psalm 23:4, 6) ~words by John W. Peterson

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As we go out into the world to face the challenges of the coming week, let us take comfort that Christ is with us, that his rod and his staff will be our comfort, that his goodness and mercy shall follow us.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life;

When I walk through the dark lonesome valley,
My savior will walk with me there;
And safely His great hand will lead me
To the mansions He's gone to prepare.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever,
And I shall feast at the table spread for me;

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life.