

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church
229 South Broad Street
Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Sunday, April 30, 2023
4th Sunday of Easter



INTRODUCTON

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

PRELUDE

Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God,
by whose hand we are given new birth,
by whose speaking we are given new life.

Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,
we are welcomed, restored, and supported
as citizens of the new creation.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Holy God,

holy and merciful,

holy and mighty,

you are the river of life,

you are the everlasting wellspring.

In mercy and might you have freed us from death
and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead.

In baptismal waters our old life is washed away,
and in them we are born anew.

Glory to you for oceans and lakes,
for rivers and streams.

Honor to you for waters that wash us clean,
quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and creatures.

Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism,
the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you.

Empower our witness to your resurrection.

Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.

Satisfy the world’s need through this living water.

Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment.
Where despair prevails, grant hope.
Where chaos reigns, bring peace.
We ask this through Christ,
who with you and the Spirit reigns forever. **Amen.**

GATHERING SONG *I Know that My Redeemer Lives!* 619

Greeting

P: Christ is risen!

C: **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

HYMN OF PRAISE: *The King of Love My Shepherd Is* 502

PRAYER OF THE DAY

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 Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

WORD

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

L: A reading from Acts

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 poured out on God's people. The new community is sustained in worship and fellowship, shares what they have, and ensures that everyone has enough.

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.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

L Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse

Psalm 23

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.**

L: A reading from First Peter

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 amid adversity.

¹⁹It 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.

L: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION p.142

P: The holy gospel according to St. John.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: John 10:1-10

Jesus uses an image familiar to the people of his day to make a point about spiritual leadership. Those who listen to Jesus are led to abundant life.

[Jesus said:] ¹“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.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

The assembly will stand.

HYMN OF THE DAY *Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us* 789

THE NICENE CREED p.104

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

L: United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

You are the shepherd who gathers us in your mighty and loving arms. Help your church to listen for your voice, especially when the voices of sin, idolatry, and oppression threaten to overpower us. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: The green pastures, still waters, and dark valleys of this earth all belong to you, O Lord. Sustain your creation with a love that is both mighty and just. Where there is destruction, bring healing. Where there is desolation, bring abundance. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: You proclaim shepherding love, comfort, and protection for all people and all of creation. Direct leaders in our own time to learn from your example and instruction. Give them servant hearts, that they generously seek the good of all. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: You journey with us wherever our paths may lead. We pray for those feeling overwhelmed by anxiety or depression or suffering in any way (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

L: You are the sheeppath that gives safety to your beloved flocks. Provide protection for refugees, victims of domestic violence, those who are imprisoned, and all people who are vulnerable to violence and mistreatment. (*Local concerns may be named.*) Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

Holy and Gracious God, we uplift the work of Seafarers International and the chaplains who help the seafarers as they come seeking asylum or are in need of medical care. Guide the workers and volunteers who offer support, prayer and encouragement for all who are working on the sea.

Hear us, O God

C: Your mercy is great.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

L: You call your sheep by name and lead them through the valley of death. We give you thanks for those who have died and now dwell in your house forever (*especially*). Be with those who mourn, and give them hope in the promise of resurrection. Hear us, O God.

C: Your mercy is great.

P: Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHOIR ANTHEM *The Shepherd Became a Man*

The assembly stands.

OFFERTORY

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit with me.

Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with your free Spirit.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Generous God,

in this meal you offer your very self.

We give thanks for these gifts of the earth.

In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One.

In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING P.144 (*in the beginning of the hymnal*)

Dialogue

Preface by the Pastor

Holy Holy Holy

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Words of Institution

The Lord's Prayer p. 145

Invitation to Communion

P: Come and know Christ,
broken and poured out for you.

The assembly is seated.

Communion

When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say

The body of Christ, given for you.

The blood of Christ, shed for you.

and each person may respond **Amen.**

SONG AFTER COMMUNION *Jesus, Name Above All Names* (repeat twice)

Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord,

Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.

The assembly stands.

Prayer after Communion

A: Gracious God,
in you we live and move and have our being.
With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together.
Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name.
Amen.

Blessing

P: The God of all,
who raised † Jesus from the dead,
bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation. **Amen.**

Sending Song: *I Just Wanna Be a Sheep*

Announcements

We welcome our visitors and ask that you sign a Visitor Attendance and Holy Communion Card that is located in the pew rack. We ask that cards be returned via the offering plate during the receiving of the offering. We practice “open Communion” here at St. John meaning that all who believe in the “real presence” of Christ are welcomed to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We offer two choices for Holy Communion, wine or grape juice. Those worshipers desiring grape juice are asked at the communion rail to place their right hand over their heart after receiving “The Body of Christ.”

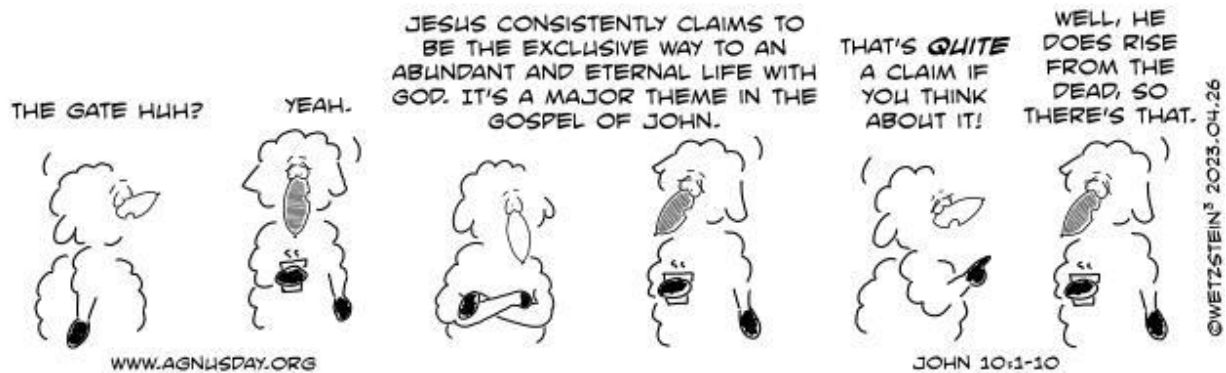
Remember in prayer: Rowan Aldridge, Jim Allen, Carolyn Arthur, Christine and Dave Barner, Agnes Cryder, Don & Helen Delaney, Joanne Fisher, Barb Hoffman, Mick Miller, Cora Pelletier, Shane Snyder, and all of our shut-ins.

We also remember in prayer Family Promise; Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton – ELCA; Bishop Craig A. Miller - USS; for our Companion Synods in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; and we pray for peace in Ukraine and an end to war; those effected by the tornadoes and flooding and snow.

We pray for the safety of our military troops around the world including Mark Baier, Isaac Boring, Jade Cordrey, Ben Cramer, Trevor and Nehemiah Eberhart, Patrick Hamlin, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Steven Moore, Maddison Myers, Tyler O’Neal, Adam Shaffer, Richie Speicher, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Kevin Titus, and Jenna White. We also lift up in prayer their families who strive to keep a normalcy in the family and continue on often with added stress.

Special thanks to this week’s helpers: Lector – Pam Wehler ; Assisting, Karen Aucker, Cozette Stoltzfus; Head Usher –Shane Snyder; Teller –Dawn McCloskey; Bulletin Sponsor—Pastor and Mrs. Aucker..

Next weeks’ helpers: Lector – Kathy Brundick; Assisting Ministers— Deb Heydrich, Ron Brundick; Head Usher –Cozette Stoltzfus; Teller – Shelby Rice; Bulletin Sponsor –John and Kathie Horne; Flowers—Ashley Shields



Please keep in your prayers, Carol Johnson, Vicar at Redeemer and St. Michael Lutheran. Her approval meeting before the Upper Susquehanna Synod Candidacy Committee is this Thursday, May 4. Please pray that Carol is approved for Ordination to Word and Sacrament Ministry.

Please also pray for Devin Lombardo, a nursing student at Lackawanna Community College, and a nursing assistant in the ED at Geisinger. He completed two years of education to become a Registered Nurse. This coming week he has a number of examinations to pass to graduate. Please keep him and his classmates in your prayers.