



April 25, 2021

**Fourth Sunday of
Easter
Good Shepherd
Sunday**

At Home Worship
St. Paul's Lutheran
Church
Closter, New Jersey

Our service today is taken from *Hymnal Supplement '98*.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PREPARATION

INVOCATION

Pastor In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation Amen.

CONFESSION

Pastor If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins,

Congregation O Lord, who could stand?

Pastor But with You there is forgiveness;

Congregation therefore You are feared.

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

Pastor O almighty God, merciful Father,

Congregation I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess to You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your punishment now and forever. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.

ABSOLUTION

Pastor Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God to all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation Amen.

ENTRANCE HYMN

Scatter the Darkness, Break the Gloom

- 1. Scatter the darkness, break the gloom;
Sun, reveal an empty tomb.
Shining with joy for all our sorrows,
Hope and all peace for all tomorrows,
Life uneclipsed by doubt and dread:
Christ has risen from the dead!**
- 2. Bearing the standard from on high
As the Lamb of God to die;
He, who for us, so cruelly treated,
Lives again our foes defeated!
Where is your sting, O death and grave?
Christ has shown His strength to save!**
- 3. Banners of triumph, be unfurled!
Trumpets, sound throughout the world!
Crying and sighs, give way to singing;
Life from death, our Lord is bringing
Let there begin the jubilee
Christ has gained the victory!**

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy on us; Christ have mercy on us;

Lord, have mercy on us.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

Glory to God, we give You thanks and praise;

Of heavenly joy and earthly peace we sing.

We worship You, to You our hearts we raise,

Lord God, almighty Father, heavenly King.

Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's only Son,

You bore for us the load of this world's sin.

O Lamb of God, Your glorious victory won,

Receive our prayer, grant us Your peace within.

Alone, O Christ, You only are the Lord,

At God's right hand in majesty most high:

Who, with the Spirit worshiped and adored,

With all the heav'nly host we glorify.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

Pastor The Lord be with you.

Congregation And with your spirit.

Pastor 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.

Congregation Amen.

READINGS

First Reading: Acts 4:1-12

¹ And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them,² greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead.³ And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening.⁴ But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

⁵ On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem,⁶ with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.⁷ And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders,⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,¹⁰ let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead---by him this man is standing before you well.¹¹ This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.¹² And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

After the reading:

Lector This is the Word of the Lord

Congregation Thanks be to God.

Epistle Reading: 1 John 3:16-24

¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him?¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

¹⁹ By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him;²⁰ for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.²¹ Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;²² and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.²³ And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us.²⁴ Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

After the reading:

Lector This is the Word of the Lord

Congregation **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

These things are written that you may believe

That Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

Pastor The Holy Gospel according to St. John, chapter ten, beginning at verse eleven.

Congregation Glory to You, O Lord.

¹¹ [Jesus said:] I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³ He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷ For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father."

After the reading:

Pastor This is the Gospel of the Lord
Congregation Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy Christian Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*

- 1. The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His
And He is mine forever.**
- 2. Where streams of living water flow,
My ransomed soul He leadeth
And, where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.**
- 3. Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home rejoicing brought me**
- 4. In death's dark vale I fear no ill,
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me
Thy rod and staff my comfort still;
Thy cross before to guide me.**

**Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
Thine unction grace bestoweth;
And, oh what transport of delight
From Thy pure chalice floweth!**

**And so, through all the length of days,
Thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever.**

Sermon

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Pastor Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

after each portion of the prayer:

Pastor Lord, in Your mercy,
Congregation hear our prayer.

Pastor Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Congregation Amen.

LITANY (Sung)

Pastor In peace let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

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

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor 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.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

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

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For Pastor Holsten, our Pastor in Christ, for all the servants of the church and for all the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For our public servants, for the government and those who protect us, that they may be upheld and strengthened in every good deed, let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For those who work to bring peace, justice, health, and protection in this and every place let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For those who bring offerings, those who do good works in this congregation, those who toil, those who sing, and all the people here present who await from the Lord great and abundant mercy let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For favorable weather, for an abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need let us pray to the Lord.

Congregation Lord, have mercy.

Pastor For the faithful who have gone before us and are with Christ Let us give thanks to the Lord.

Congregation Thanks be to God.

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

(Silence for meditation)

Pastor Rejoicing in the fellowship of all the saints, let us commend ourselves, one another, and our whole life to Christ, our Lord.

Congregation To You, O Lord.

Pastor O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments; and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through the merits of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, God forever.

Congregation Amen.

Pastor Lord, remember us in Your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

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.**

CLOSING HYMN

How Great Thou Art

1. O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the works thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
Thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed;

Refrain Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee,
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
2. When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur
And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; *(Refrain)*
3. But when I think that God, his Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in,
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing
He bled and died to take away my sin; *(Refrain)*
4. When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!
Then I shall bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim, "My God, how great Thou art!" *(Refrain)*

IN OUR PRAYERS THIS WEEK

We remember our nation and many nations, as terrorism remains a threat, and service in Afghanistan continues to be a danger. We pray for the safety of both soldiers and civilians in Afghanistan, and around the world. We pray for peace in the Mideast. We pray for God's help and protection for persecuted Christians throughout the world. We pray for victims of natural disasters throughout the world. We pray for victims of violence (and their loved ones) around the world. We pray for our nation and world as we continue in care in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We pray for our church leaders and their loved ones, and our sister churches and their outreach: Rev. Matthew Harrison, our Synod President; Rev. Dr. Tony Steinbronn, our District President; and the African Immigrant congregations and missions. We pray for Rev. Dan Fenco and the Camino De Fe mission, Rev. Matt and Nyssa Lytikainen and Mile Square Church in Hoboken, Rev. Matthew Hass (pastor of Village Lutheran Church in Lanoka Harbor, NJ), and Naomi Vogt (serving as a teacher in Shanghai). We pray for Rev. Bob and Kristi Roegner, missionaries in Israel. We pray for the Comfort Dog Ministry at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Old Bridge. We pray for Lutheran Hour Ministries. We pray for St. Paul's families. We pray for St. Paul's youth and their parents. We pray for St. Paul's Sunday School. We pray for St. Paul's Bible Studies. We pray for those suffering from addiction.

We pray for those serving in the military: Capt. John Beddoe, Capt. Mark Buckman, Maj. Jake Butz, Cmdr. Jeff Dermody, Brian Grotz, Rolly Jarmin, Capt. Timothy Kuppler, Cmdr. Jeffrey Morin, T. Sgt. Ruth Presto, Laura Scott, Capt. Rance Thompson, 2nd Lt. John Trainor, Lt. David West and Shane Wojnar, serving with the Armed Forces (and all who serve in the Armed Forces).

We pray for our college and graduate students: Arianna Cavalli, Valerie Costeniuc, Sam del Corral, Lauren Graesser, Megan Hamlett, Alison Keil, David Keil, Kylie Keil, Casey and Courtney Luikert, Giulia Nicolai, Matthew Rojas, Brianna Ross, Emily Sposa, and James Steindl.

We pray for help, healing and God's loving care in the lives of our loved ones: Beau Bowman, Ron Cavalli, Dan Cinquegrana, John Difabio, Bette Eifert, Jenna Forbes, Pat Gianotti, Marilyn Grieco, BJ Heinz, Christopher Huss, June Kuhn, Lois Lake, Doris Lange, Fran Lelkendey, Gary Lopes, Ruth McReynolds, Ed Miller, Linda Sue Olsen, Bev Otten, Danielle Potocek, José Rojas, Gloria Rubner, Richard Ruhl and the residents and staff of Evergreen Court, Irma Schmuck, Delaney Westenhiser, and Anna Zulli.

ST. PAUL'S MISSION OF THE MONTH is Lutheran Hour Ministries.

THIS WEEK AT ST. PAUL'S

Sunday, April 25

10:00 AM – Worship Service

10:15 AM – Online Worship Service

Wednesday, April 28

4:15 PM – Confirmation Class