

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Easter Imperatives: Follow!
May 3, 2020



AS WE GATHER

The closing prayer of the funeral service begins with these words: “Lord God, our shepherd, You gather the lambs of Your flock into the arms of Your mercy and bring them home.” Describing Jesus as a Shepherd is a special image used in prayers, hymns, and Christian artwork. The believer receives a sense of assurance in knowing that the One being followed throughout life is Jesus, the Good Shepherd. The fact that our Lord chooses to repeat the words “I am the Good Shepherd” more than once indicates its importance to Him and to us. As we follow Jesus, we can be confident that He will lead us into that place where goodness and righteousness are eternal.

✠ PREPARATION ✠

HYMN

“The Lord’s My Shepherd, I’ll Not Want” *LSB* 710

- 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,
E’en for His own name’s sake.**
- 3 **Yea, though I walk in death’s dark vale,
Yet will I fear no ill;
For Thou art with me, and Thy rod
And staff me comfort still.**
- 4 **My table Thou hast furnishèd
In presence of my foes;
My head Thou dost with oil anoint,
And my cup overflows.**
- 5 **Goodness and mercy all my life
Shall surely follow me;
And in God’s house forevermore
My dwelling place shall be.**

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INVOCATION

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
People: Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES

Psalm 95:1, 7

Pastor: Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

People: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Pastor: For He is our God,

People: and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand!

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Micah 6:6–8

Pastor: Let us come before God in true repentance, seeking forgiveness and amendment of our lives as we follow the Lord.

People: With what shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before God on high?

Women: Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

Men: Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousands of rivers of oil?

People: Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

Pastor: He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

People: Almighty God, we confess that we are indeed sinful. We have done the evil You forbid and have not done the good You demand. We do repent and are truly sorry for these our sins. Have mercy on us because of Jesus, our Good Shepherd. Grant that, by the working of the Holy Spirit, we may follow where He leads until that time when we, by His grace, come to dwell in Your house forever.

Pastor: God has promised forgiveness to those who repent of their sins and turn to Him for grace. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen.

✠ WORD ✠

HYMN

“Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus” *LSB 685*

1 Let us ever walk with Jesus,
Follow His example pure,
Through a world that would deceive us
And to sin our spirits lure.
Onward in His footsteps treading,
Pilgrims here, our home above,
Full of faith and hope and love,
Let us do the Father’s bidding.
Faithful Lord, with me abide;
I shall follow where You guide.

2 Let us suffer here with Jesus
And with patience bear our cross.
Joy will follow all our sadness;
Where He is, there is no loss.
Though today we sow no laughter,
We shall reap celestial joy;
All discomforts that annoy

Shall give way to mirth hereafter.
Jesus, here I share Your woe;
Help me there Your joy to know.

3 Let us gladly die with Jesus.
Since by death He conquered death,
He will free us from destruction,
Give to us immortal breath.

Let us mortify all passion
That would lead us into sin;
And the grave that shuts us in
Shall but prove the gate to heaven.
Jesus, here with You I die,
There to live with You on high.

4 Let us also live with Jesus.
He has risen from the dead
That to life we may awaken.
Jesus, You are now our head.
We are Your own living members;
Where You live, there we shall be
In Your presence constantly,
Living there with You forever.
Jesus, let me faithful be,
Life eternal grant to me.

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SALUTATION

Vicar: The Lord be with you.
People: **And also with you.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Vicar: 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.

People: **Amen.**

FIRST LESSON

Acts 2:42–47

(The life of the first Christians)

And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

PSALM

Psalm 23; antiphon: v. 1

Vicar: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

People: **He makes me lie down in green pastures.**

Vicar: He leads me beside still waters.

People: **He restores my soul.**

Vicar: He leads me in paths of righteousness

People: **for his name's sake.**

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

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

Vicar: your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

People: **You prepare a table before me**

Vicar: in the presence of my enemies;
People: you anoint my head with oil;
Vicar: my cup overflows.
People: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
Vicar: all the days of my life,
People: and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

EPISTLE

1 Peter 2:19–25

(The example of Christ, who suffered for us)

For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Vicar: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

SONG

“Lord I Lift Your Name On High”

Lord I lift Your name on high
Lord I love to sing Your praises
I'm so glad You're in my life
I'm so glad You came to save us

You came from heaven to earth To show the way
From the earth to the cross My debt to pay
From the cross to the grave From the grave to the sky
Lord I lift Your name on high
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Vicar: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter.
People: Glory to You, O Lord.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 10:1–10

(Jesus is the gate of the sheep.)

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Vicar: This is the Gospel of the Lord.
People: Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is" LSB 709

- 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.
- 5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
Thine unction grace bestoweth;
And, oh, what transport of delight
From Thy pure chalice floweth!
- 6 And so through all the length of days
Thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever!

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SERMON

"Abundant Life"
John 10:1-10

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. 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.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

"Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart" LSB 806

Give thanks with a grateful heart,
Give thanks to the Holy One,
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ His Son.
Give thanks with a grateful heart,
Give thanks to the Holy One,
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ His Son.
And now let the weak say "I am strong,"

**Let the poor say "I am rich,"
Because of what the Lord has done for us.
And now let the weak say "I am strong,"
Let the poor say "I am rich,"
Because of what the Lord has done for us.
Give thanks, give thanks.**

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PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

Vicar: Lord, in Your mercy,
People: hear our prayer.

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

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.

BENEDICAMUS

Vicar: Let us bless the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God.

BENEDICTION

Vicar: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace. *Numbers 6:24–26*
People: Amen.

HYMN

"Have No Fear, Little Flock" *LSB 735*

- 1 Have no fear, little flock;
Have no fear, little flock,
For the Father has chosen
To give you the Kingdom;
Have no fear, little flock!**
- 2 Have good cheer, little flock;
Have good cheer, little flock,
For the Father will keep you
In His love forever;
Have good cheer, little flock!**
- 3 Praise the Lord high above;
Praise the Lord high above,
For He stoops down to heal you,
Uplift and restore you;
Praise the Lord high above!**
- 4 Thankful hearts raise to God;
Thankful hearts raise to God,
For He stays close beside you,
In all things works with you;
Thankful hearts raise to God!**

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