



St. John Lutheran Church

Freedom Twp. • Napoleon, Ohio

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 25, 2021

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By This We Know Love

As We Gather

We hear so many mixed messages of what love is. Popular songs from the past decades or even more contemporary ones tell of what love can and should be; poems, memes, and other influences also are commonly read and seen; even our own emotions and feelings strive to tell us what love is and should feel like. Despite all these mixed messages, our Lord tells us how we are to know real and perfect love. In our Epistle we hear, "By this we know love, that Jesus laid down His life for us" (1 John 3:16). Today, we focus on the fact that as our Good Shepherd, Jesus has laid down His life for His sheep. By that sacrifice on the cross and Easter victory, we can rejoice in a perfect love that lasts and an unconditional love that forgives as our Good Shepherd continues to guide, lead, and direct us through all our days.

Organ Prelude & Welcome

Ringing of the Tower Bell

740 I Am Jesus' Little Lamb

sts. 1-2

- 1 I am Jesus' little lamb,
Ever glad at heart I am;
For my Shepherd gently guides me,
Knows my need and well provides me,
Loves me ev'ry day the same,
Even calls me by my name.

- 2 Day by day, at home, away,
Jesus is my staff and stay.
When I hunger, Jesus feeds me,
Into pleasant pastures leads me;
When I thirst, He bids me go
Where the quiet waters flow.

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Opening Sentences

1 John 3:16a, 24; John 10:11, adapted

- P** Alleluia! Christ is risen!
- C** He is risen indeed! Alleluia!
- P** By this we know love,
- C** that He laid down His life for us.
- P** “I am the good shepherd,” says the Lord.
- C** The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.
- P** Whoever keeps His commandments abides in God, and God in him.
- C** And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

Confession and Absolution

Psalm 23; John 10:11

- P** The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.
- C** Lord Jesus, our Good Shepherd, we confess to You that we have been ungrateful for all You give us to sustain our bodies and lives. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.
- P** He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.
- C** Like sheep, we are distracted and tend to wander and scatter. We forget who we are as baptized children of God and fail to respond to Your shepherding in our lives. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.
- P** 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.
- C** We confess that in difficult times of life, we sometimes struggle to be confident in Your presence and protection, seeking to find our own comfort. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.
- P** 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.
- C** As we journey through this sinful world, we overlook the goodness and mercy that flow into our lives from You. Forgive us, Good Shepherd.

P Jesus, our Good Shepherd, hears our cries and says to us, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” Receive the forgiveness won for You through Christ’s laying down His life and rising from death in victory. As a called and ordained 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.

C Amen. Thanks be to God.

740 I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb

st. 3

3 Who so happy as I am,
Even now the Shepherd’s lamb?
And when my short life is ended,
By His angel host attended,
He shall fold me to His breast,
There within His arms to rest.

Introit

Psalm 23; antiphon: John 10:14, 15b

P I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,
and I lay down my life for the sheep.

C 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.

P I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,
and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Salutation & Prayer of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P *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.

C Amen.

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

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

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6



Christ has risen | from the dead.*

[God the Father] has crowned him with glory and | honor.
He has given him dominion over the works | of his hands;*
he has put all things un- | der his feet.

Epistle

1 John 3:16-24

¹⁶By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷But 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? ¹⁸Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

¹⁹By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; ²⁰for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; ²²and whatever we ask we receive

from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. ²³And 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. ²⁴Whoever keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

951 Alleluia – I

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
ia. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
Cantor (Psalms) Al - le - lu - ia.

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Verse

Romans 6:9; John 10:14

P Alleluia. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. Alleluia.

C *Repeat alleluias...*

Holy Gospel

John 10:11-18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹¹[Jesus said:] “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²He 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. ¹³He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶And 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. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸No 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.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Children's Sermon

709 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.

- 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 "This Is How We Know; This Is What We Do"

1 John 3:16-24

588 Jesus Loves Me

sts. 1, ref. 2

- 1 Jesus loves me! This I know,
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong;
They are weak, but He is strong. Refrain

ref Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.

- 2 Jesus loves me! He who died
Heaven's gates to open wide.
He has washed away my sin,
Lets His little child come in. Refrain

Apostles' Creed

C 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.

Organ Offertory & Steward *MINUTE*

- Offering Prayer

Prayer of the Church

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

Lord's Prayer

C 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

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Thanksgiving

P Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, our Good Shepherd, that in these moments in You have led us to the green pastures and the quiet waters of Your Word and have refreshed our souls. Strengthen us for our continuing walk through the this valley of the shadow of death, until at last we come to live with You in Your house forever; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Benediction

P 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.

C Amen.

711 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.

✠ Soli Deo Gloria ✠

To God Alone Be Glory

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