

Ascension Lutheran Church

Fourth Sunday of Easter **April 25, 2021**

Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

The image of the good shepherd shows us how the risen Christ brings us to life. It is the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, one of mutual knowledge and love, that gives the shepherd authority. The shepherd's willingness to lay down his life for the sheep shows his love. First John illustrates what it means to lay down our lives for one another by the example of sharing our wealth with any sibling in need.

PRELUDE

Please stand.

***THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,
for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.

We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.

Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.

Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts. Shower us with life.
To you be given all praise, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God, now and forever.
Amen.

Please be seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

HYMN #385 “Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing!”

- | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 Good Christian friends, rejoice and sing!
Now is the triumph of our king!
To all the world glad news we bring:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! | 3 Praise we in songs of victory
that love, that life, which cannot die,
and sing with hearts uplifted high:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! |
| 2 The Lord of life is ris'n this day;
death's mighty stone is rolled away;
let all the world rejoice and say:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! | 4 Your name we bless, O risen Lord,
and sing today with one accord,
the life laid down, the life restored:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! |

Text: Cyril A. Alington, 1872-1955, alt.

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Please stand.

***GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

***KYRIE**

In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

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

Lord, have mercy.

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. **Lord, have mercy.**

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

Help, save, comfort and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen.**

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

READING: Acts 4:5-12

A reading from Acts.

⁵The next day [the] rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷When they had made the prisoners stand in their 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 questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let 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. ¹¹This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’

¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 23 (read responsively by whole verse)

¹The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

²**The 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.

⁴**Though 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.

⁶**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

Please stand for the reading of the gospel.

***GOSPEL: John 10:11-18**

The holy gospel according to John, the tenth chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The 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. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care 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. ¹⁶I 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. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No 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.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

The Rev. Christina Auch

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

HYMN OF THE DAY #764

“Have No Fear, Little Flock”

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!

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!

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!

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!

Text: Luke 12:32, st. 1; Marjorie Jilson, b. 1931, sts. 2-4
Text © 1973 Concordia Publishing House

Please stand.

***NICENE CREED**

God has gathered his people into one Church through Christ. Together with sisters and brothers throughout the world, we confess our faith.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with

the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Loving Shepherd, you know your own and your own know you. Your voice calls us to your loving embrace. Strengthen your church throughout the world that we bear witness to your expansive love. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Gracious Shepherd, you are generous with the gifts of goodness and mercy. Restore your creation to wholeness so that cities and towns, countryside and wilderness, may abound with life. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Hope-giving Shepherd, the nations and peoples are your heritage. Place into the hearts of all leaders and rulers the passion to serve. Crucify any desire to overpower others and give leaders joy in lifting up the lowly. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Abiding Shepherd, your love flows as we reach out to those around us. Move us with your Spirit, so that we lay down our lives for those in need. Help us love one another in truth and action. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Saving Shepherd, you restore us to wholeness. Help our community in our life together and give us vigor as a people of faith. In the midst of challenges and opportunities, fill us anew with you. We pray especially for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts.....

Kathy Backof (Donna Lilly's friend), **Martha** Beam (Eleanor Hendrick's friend), **Dan** Birch (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Adam** Bridges & **Brittany** Smith (Libby Stone's cousin and his fiancé), **Cody** Bryant (Bob Bryant's grandson), **Kathy** Callahan (Ludie Wilkie's friend), **Mike** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Chris** Carman (Judy Bridges' friend), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges' Aunt), **The Davenport Family** (Dave and Priscilla Williams' friends), **Charles and Mary** Degree (Karen Long's friends), **Saher** Degree (Gail Sherman's friend), **Charles** Duval (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Barbara Duval** (Ludy Wilkie's friends), **Tim** Farmer (Pastor Christina and Jamie's friend), **Avan** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Ann** Fitzsimmons (Steve and Jenny White's friend), **Carol Ann** Forgas (Bill Bridges' friend), **Chris** Galloway (Vicky Galloway's husband), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman's friend), **Carl** Greenwald (DeBell's friends), **Richard** Hollifield (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Joe** Hutchinson (William Coyne's friend), **Debbie** Irvin (Bill Bridges' friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Kay** Johnson (Eleanor Hendrick's cousin), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mark** Kailing (Bob and Vickie Jones' nephew), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen's son), **Rachel** Kidwell (Dave William's niece), **Bryan** Legrand (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Sonya and Gerald** Lovelace (Bill Bridges friend), **Brenda** Lowery (Gail Sherman's friend), **Pam** Lucas (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop's mother), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks' sister), **Sheri Dawn** Mack (Relative of Karen Hubbard), **Maribeth** Norris Mies (Carol Berger's cousin), **Mary Bell** Moore (Lacy's neighbor), **Jane** Morrow (Daryl and Rose Cook's friend), **Pat** Mullen (Johanna Gillespie's friend), **Wanda** Mullinax (Edith Kelly's niece), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen's daughter-in-law), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Linda** Patzer (Carol Berger's sister), **Gerard** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's brother), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's mother), **Liz and Ron** Dal Poggetto (Judy Bridges' friends), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Shannon** Sellers (Libby Stone's cousin), **Jean and Jim** Tesseneer (Bill Bridges friend),

Jerry Tessener (Daryl and Rose Cook’s friend), **Georgeanne** Thomas (Judy Bridges friend), **David** Waldrop (Sandra Waldrop’s husband), **Edith** Walker (Allen and Lisa Philbeck’s friend’s mother), **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard’s friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan’s brother), **Christopher** Willever (David Williams’ grandson), **Mary Ann** Woolley (Sandra Waldrop’s aunt)

Members: **Dean** Davis, **Lin** Washburn, **Dot** Paul, **Bob** Bryant, **William** Coyne, **Jim** Wilson, **Bobbie** Johnson, **Gerald** Washburn, **Ray** Valentine, **Lucinda** Wallen, **Lisa** Upton, and **Sandy** Harman.

In Undergraduate College: **Emma** Auch, **Brooke** Buchanan, **Samantha** Hoffman, **Jacob** Stone, **Catherine** Lilly

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

Eternal Shepherd, you hold us securely in your loving hands. In the assurance of resurrection hope, we remember our loved ones who have died in you. Bring us, with them, to dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Please be seated.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST (We are not “passing” the peace in any physical way. Online you are invited to share a greeting of peace in the comments.)

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

OFFERING

*Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.*

*Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate.² Click the registration link and enter your payment information.³ Receive a verification text as well as an email receipt.*

For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.

Or mail your regular tithe or offering to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

OFFERTORY HYMN #184 “Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful”

Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord,
and fill to the brim our cup of blessing.
Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown,
that we may be fed with the bread of life.
Gather the hopes and dreams of all;
unite them with the prayers we offer.
Grace our table with your presence,
and give us a foretaste of the feast to come.

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Please stand.

***OFFERING PRAYER**

Let us pray.

God of love, you call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.

Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.

Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;

for the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

***THE GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,
that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,
almighty and merciful God,
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin.;
who in dying has destroyed death,
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the
resurrection with earth and sea and all their creatures,
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,
we praise your name and join their unending praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.**

***WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

In the night in which he was betrayed,
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
and gave it for all to drink, saying:
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

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.

***INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The risen Christ invites us to this table. Come, eat and be satisfied.

Please be seated.

DISTRIBUTION

This is the body and blood of Christ, given and shed for you. **Amen.**

Please remain seated.

If you are not communing, please receive this blessing for you:

“Jesus loves you and keeps you all the days of your life.”

POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray.

Wellspring of joy,

through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.

Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses,

that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom to know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.

The God of life, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

Please remain seated.

We are not singing in worship; please take this time to reflect on the music and lyrics.

HYMN #789 **“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.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us; we are yours.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us; we are yours.

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.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
early let us turn to you.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
early let us turn to you.

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.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear us children when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear us children when we pray.

4 Early let us seek your favor,
early let us do your will;
blessed Lord and only Savior,
with your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us, love us still.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have loved us, love us still.

Text: attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1779-1847

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

You are the body of Christ raised up for the world.

Go in peace. Share the Good News.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia!

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Communion When you are worshiping at home, you are encouraged to set up a temporary altar called a tabernacle at home. Find a small table or bench, place on it a nice plate and a cup or goblet. Find a slice or loaf of bread and use either wine or grape juice in the cup. When the time comes for communion, lift the bread and wine with the pastor, giving thanks to God for the gift of communion that offers us forgiveness, community, and new life in Christ.

Indoor Worship: We are worshiping in the sanctuary with COVID-safe precautions. Medical masks and social distancing are required. Seating is limited, communion will be received with prepackaged elements and there will not be any congregational singing. The service is limited to 50 people so please sign up in advance by using the link in the e-news or calling or emailing the office or Pastor Christina.

Fellowship Hall Use: The fellowship hall is available for groups of less than 50 with social distancing and masks required and no food or drink allowed. The kitchen remains closed. Contact Debby in the church office for more information.

Prayer Concerns: Please call or email the office or text Pastor Christina at 704-472-7783 to update prayer requests. You may leave a voicemail but please provide the spelling of any names, and your relationship to the person being prayed for.

Please continue your tithes and offerings. Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt.

Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.

A LOOK AHEAD

May 2 – 9 a.m. Bible Study (Zoom); 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion (in person, and streaming on Facebook and Zoom)

May 4 – 7 p.m. Congregation Council

May 9 – 9 a.m. Bible Study (Zoom); 10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion (in person, and streaming on Facebook and Zoom)

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Ascension Lutheran Church

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