

backwards. He for whom the whole of creation exists freely and willingly sacrifices himself for the sheep who add nothing to his own infinite worth. The Father even agrees with that sacrifice. He loves the sheep, it would seem, even more than he loves the Shepherd! For it is his will that the Shepherd become the Good Shepherd in just this way. So much they love the flock! You would have to be a stone not to be moved by such love for you! Listen to his voice! It gives the life that he laid down and has now taken up again.)

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴ “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to 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 authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.”

Hymn of the Day: 375 The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Sermon: What makes the Shepherd “Good?”

Offering: (*Please remember to sign the Friendship Register.*)

3rd Hymn: 431 I Walk in Danger All the Way

Closing Hymn: 432 I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb

Ushers: This Week – Dan Stern & Brady Broedlow
Next Week – Jim Lichtenberg & Jeremy Wagie

Greeters: This Week – Paul & Vicki Milbrath
Next Week – Larry & Patti Zastrow

St. Peter's Ev. Lutheran Church

4th Sunday of Easter - April 21st & 22nd, 2018



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We Welcome You!

The readings with this Sunday begin a gradual transition from the Half Year of Our Lord to the Half Year of the Church, from the way that God won our salvation to the way we live our salvation. From now until Pentecost they focus on the nature of our relationship with the Risen Christ through his Word: the relationships of Shepherd and sheep, of Vine and branches, of Friend with friends, of Patron and protected. The Risen Christ is our Good Shepherd.

Opening Hymn: 436 Jesus, Shepherd of the Sheep

Order of Worship: Projected on the Screen

Prayer of the Day:

O Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Good Shepherd who laid down your life for the sheep. Lead us now to the still waters of your life-giving Word that we may abide in your Father's house forevermore; for you live and reign with him and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

God's Word for Today:

First Lesson: Acts 4:23-33 (*The Good Shepherd never leaves or forsakes us even when persecution, trials, and pain make it appear that he has left us. Kings and nations may rage against him. They only seem to win, just as they only seemed to win when Jesus died. The reality is that he lives and reigns, whether or not we see it or feel it in the way that people did in this reading. We pray Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done! And then we submit to his Spirit in the Word. The only alternative is to rage with the heathen and then to perish with them as well. For the Good Shepherd keeps his flock through life, to the gates of death, and then beyond. But all against him and his kingdom will be destroyed.*)

²³ On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. ²⁴ When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. "Sovereign Lord," they said, "you made the heaven and the earth and the sea, and everything in them. ²⁵ You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of your servant, our father David: 'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? ²⁶ The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord and against his Anointed One.' ²⁷ Indeed Herod and Pontius Pilate met together with the Gentiles and the people of Israel in this city to conspire against

your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed. ²⁸ They did what your power and will had decided beforehand should happen. ²⁹ Now, Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. ³⁰ Stretch out your hand to heal and perform miraculous signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus." ³¹ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. ³² All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. ³³ With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

Psalm 23: Pg. 72 (*Sung together*)

Second Lesson: 1 John 3:1-2 (*The Bible is rich in the variety of ways that it finds to express the intimacy of the relationship that exists between the believer and God. Each word depicting the relationship intensifies the other words. So in this reading the relationship of Shepherd and sheep is taken from the realm of man and animal and raised to the level of family, of Father protecting children. Children are often unaware of that protection. It is nonetheless real. In God's case that is true on a much higher plane and with end results that we will only appreciate in heaven.*)

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. ² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Verse of the Day

Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia. I am the good shepherd: I know my sheep and my sheep know me. Alleluia.

Gospel: John 10:11-18 (*The whole work of Jesus from Christmas to Easter had this in mind, that he should be and remain our Good Shepherd and we should be and remain his sheep. All in all, it's a bad bargain for the shepherd! The hired hand acts rationally. He is worth more intrinsically and certainly to himself than a hundred sheep and shouldn't die for any of them. In the case of Jesus that is true a thousand fold. But look what happens! Everything is upside down and*