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**4th Sunday of Easter**

“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.”

*1 Peter 2:24-25*

**AS WE GATHER**

Jesus is both Shepherd and the door for us, the sheep. He is the Good Shepherd because He entered into the fullness of any of our difficulties Himself—suffering, dying, and rising for us and our salvation. So while we live in a difficult world, it is no match for Jesus. He’s both the door of access to the green pastures and still waters of eternal life and the Good Shepherd who loves us and leads us there.

**PSALM** 23

**+ Preparation +**

**INVOCATION and OPENING SENTENCES**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**People: He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

Pastor: The Lord is our Good Shepherd;

**People: He leads us and restores our souls.**

Pastor: He walks beside us through all darkness

**People: and never abandons us, even in death.**

Pastor: He goes before us and prepares a table for us,

**People: and we will dwell in His house forever.**

**CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION**

Pastor: Though our Lord goes before us, beside us, and behind us, we still find a way to run away from His good pasture. We devote ourselves to all sorts of destruction. Still, our Good Shepherd seeks us out and brings us back to safety. He invites us to confess our sins before His heavenly Father.

 *Silence for reflection.*

Pastor: Heavenly Father,

**People: we have strayed from You. We have wounded You with our sin. We have wounded others with our sin. We have wounded ourselves with our sin. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us back to Your good pasture, on account of Jesus, our Good Shepherd. Amen.**

Pastor: Though we have strayed, Jesus always keeps searching for us. Though we have been lost in our priorities, Jesus is always and ever devoted to us. We see this most clearly as almighty God, in His mercy, has given His Son to die and rise for you, and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen. We are forgiven. Our souls are restored in Christ.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**HYMN** *“Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia”* (*LSB* 463)

**COLLECT OF THE DAY** *(bulletin insert)*

**FIRST READING** Acts 2:42-47 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *(bulletin insert, below Collect of the Day)*

**EPISTLE** 1 Peter 2:19-25 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** John 10:1-10 *(bulletin insert)*

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**NICENE CREED** (*back, inside cover*)

**HYMN** *“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”* (*LSB* 709)

**SERMON *“Shepherd and Overseer”***

**RETURNING OF OUR FIRST FRUITS**

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*(after each petition):* Pastor: Good Shepherd, may we sing Thy praise

 **People: within Thy house forever.**

**LORD’S PRAYER, SUNG** (*LSB*,front inside cover)

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However,* ***if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing****. If you wish to come forward for a blessing, you are welcome to join us at the rail to receive such. Please cross your arms in front of you to indicate that desire.*

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**DISTRIBUTION**

 *“O Lord, We Praise Thee”* (*LSB* 617)

 *“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”* (*LSB* 643)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have led us to the green pastures and still waters of this Meal, and we pray that You would continue to lead us on the paths of righteousness, devoted wholly to You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“What a Friend We Have in Jesus”* (*LSB* 770)

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 **All are welcome …**

 **… Christ is honored.**