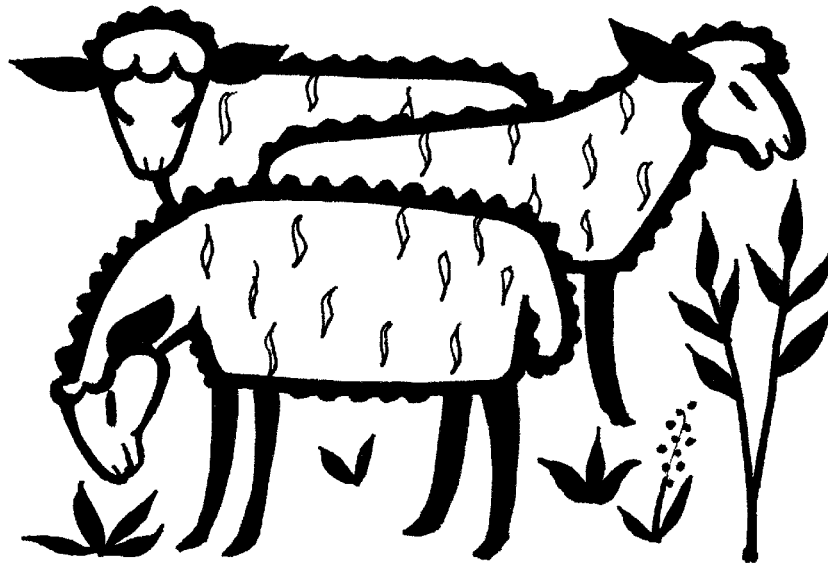


4th Sunday of Easter
Adaptive Worship Service

May 3, 2020



1812 North Highland Avenue
Clearwater, Florida 33755
Ministers: The People of Grace Lutheran Church

727-446-5026
office@GraceCLW.com
Pastor: Rev. Jefferson Cox

Welcome! Today is sometimes called “Good Shepherd Sunday.” Jesus is called the “gate” of the sheep in today’s gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world’s violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God’s tender care to all creation.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. This bulletin is designed to be used at home by anyone who is baptized serving as the Worship Leader. If you use this bulletin for worship, either by itself or alongside our service on YouTube, please fill out the Attendance Record Form on our website: GraceCLW.com

ADAPTIVE SERVICE OF THE WORD

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

Congregation: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Worship Leader: O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

FIRST READING

Psalm 23

Introduction to the Lesson: *One of the most famous passages of Scripture, it has brought comfort to millions of people for thousands of years.*

¹The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

²The 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.

⁴Though 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.

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

After the reading...

Reader: The word of the Lord.

Congregation: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL LESSON

John 10:1-10

Introduction to the Gospel: *Jesus uses an image familiar to the people of his day to make a point about spiritual leadership. Those who listen to Jesus are led to abundant life.*

Worship Leader: The Holy Gospel according to John in the 10th chapter.

Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said, “I am telling you the truth: the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2 The man who goes in through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him; the sheep hear his voice as he calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. 4 When he has brought them out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. 5 They will not follow someone else; instead, they will run away from such a person, because they do not know his voice.”

6 Jesus told them this parable, but they did not understand what he meant.

7 So Jesus said again, “I am telling you the truth: I am the gate for the sheep. 8 All others who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only in order to steal, kill, and destroy. I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness..

After the reading...

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.

GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons

I Am the Gate

As he prepared to return home near the end of three years in a state prison, the man wrote to the church where, before his arrest, he had worshiped, attended Bible study, and played guitar in the music program. While an inmate, he went to chapel and showed up at Bible study on a regular basis. He was ready and hopeful to return to his faith community. Days before his release, he received a letter from the church: “We cannot allow you to fellowship with us until our mission committee meets to decide whether to admit you.”

“I am the gate,” says Jesus, the shepherd and the bringer of life. Jesus is the one who opens the way. For all who suffer rejection—barred from entrance and denied community because of who they are, how they behave, where they come from, what they’ve done, how they look, or what they believe—it is shocking to hear Jesus say, “I am the gate, and I came to bring abundant life to all my sheep.” We may think, Really? Me? Can it be so?

To the religious leaders who saw themselves as gatekeepers—the deniers and allowers, the definers and approvers, the deciders and assigners—Jesus voiced his graced rebuke: “No! I am the gate, and the gate is open. All with ears listening and hearts aching for mercy, come this way. Enough of those who kill your hope, destroy your spirit, steal your worth! Thieves and bandits they are, in righteous disguise.”

And to the church, Jesus voices this nonnegotiable word: “I am the gate. The gate is open, bringing goodness and mercy to all. There are no exceptions and no exclusions. So, my sheep, pour my wine, break my bread, splash my water, serve my meal, spend my life, be my body, welcome all as my own. The gate is open.”

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

All People That on Earth Do Dwell

1 All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, sing to the
 2 Know that the Lord is God in - deed; with - out our

Lord with cheer - ful voice; him serve with mirth, his
 aid he did us make. We are his folk, he

praise forth tell; come ye be - fore him and re - jice.
 doth us feed, and for his sheep he doth us take.

Text: William Kethe, d. c. 1594

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Worship Leader: Uplifted by the promised hope of healing and resurrection, we join the people of God in all times and places in praying for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

Prayer Leader: Shepherding God, we thank you for the educational ministries of your church. Enrich the work of teachers, professors, mentors, advisors, and faculty at colleges, seminaries, and learning sites. Lord, in your mercy,
Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Comforting God, you carry us tenderly. We pray for those who walk through dark valleys overshadowed by anxiety and overwhelmed with suffering *especially* Marc Calhoun, Linda Almond, Barbara Haseley, Duke Tieman, Betty Biddle, Cathi Adams, Michael Morales, Wade Buehler, Gloria Holtzclaw, Betty Daege, Dianne William, Rosemarie & George Smith, Gary Neal, Karen Bates, Rev. Lydia Villanueva and family, Don Eunis, Lorraine Reinhard, Bonnie Redler, Kathy Leotta, Brytt Mathis, Joseph Valentin, Rita Burneik, Bobby Schlegel, Hilda Taylor, George Clark, Jill Grote, Pastor Bruce Edwards, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia and family, Kelly Sullivan, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Eliezar Granados, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, the family and friends of Phyllis Clark, and those suffering from natural disasters, violence, and terror (especially the those impacted by the COVID -19 outbreak, those in harm's way while serving in the military, as first responders, or in the medical field, those unjustly or unnecessarily separated from their parents or children, and *those we name now with our lips or in our hearts*). Lord, in your mercy,
Congregation: hear our prayer.

Prayer Leader: Nurturing God, you desire justice for the hungry. Bless advocacy work, food pantries, and feeding ministries in our congregations (especially our Community Breakfast; may it begin serving again as soon as safely possible. May none of our neighbors lack for basic needs. Lord, in your mercy,
Congregation: hear our prayer.

Worship Leader: With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.
Congregation: Amen.

OFFERING

Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at GraceCLW.com (look for the "Donate" button), or (for now) by mailing a check to Grace Lutheran Church, 1812 N. Highland Ave. Clearwater FL 33755. Thank you for your continued financial support during these uncertain times. You can fill out your attendance form on our website as well.

OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: Blessed are you, O God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts: our selves, our time, and our possessions. Use us, and what we have gathered, in feeding the world with your love, through the one who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
Congregation: Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Worship Leader: Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray in the language closest to our hearts.

Congregation: 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.

THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. O God of justice and love, we give thanks to you that you illumine our way through life with the words of your Son. Give us the light we need, awaken us to the needs of others, and at the end bring all the world to your feast; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

Congregation: Amen.

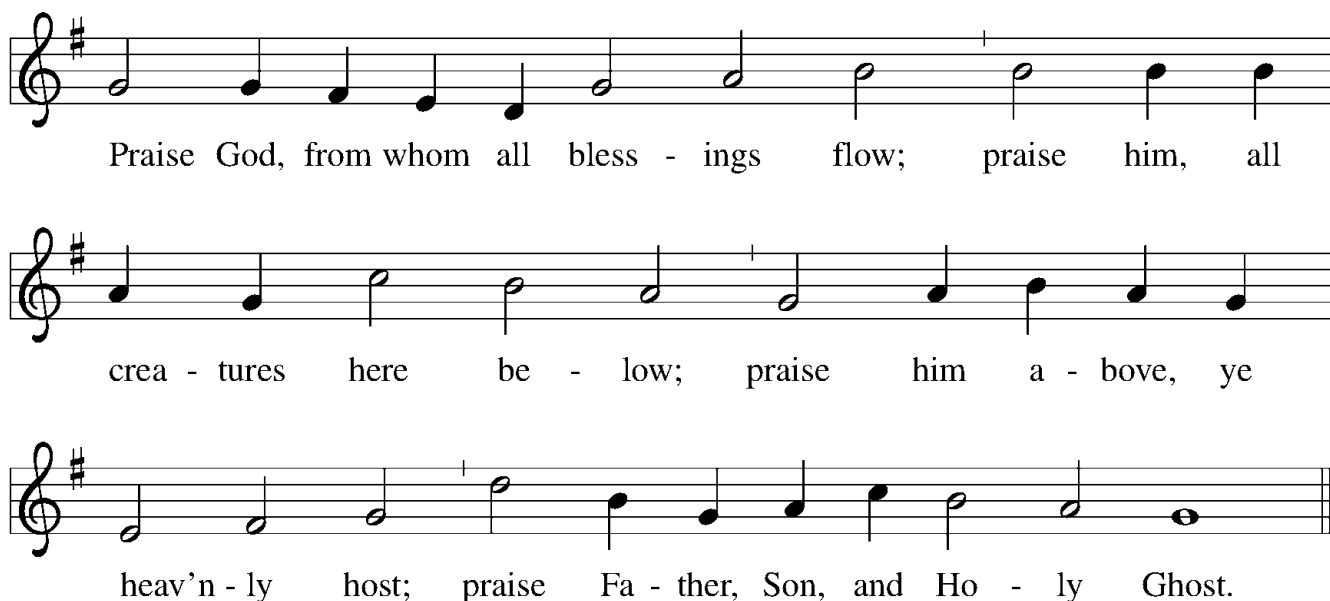
BLESSING

Worship Leader: May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Congregation: Amen.

SENDING SONG

Doxology



Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow; praise him, all
crea - tures here be - low; praise him a - bove, ye
heav'n - ly host; praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637–1711

Music: OLD HUNDREDTH, Louis Bourgeois, 1510–1561

DISMISSAL

Pastor: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now our service of worship has ended, and our service to the world begins! Christ is risen, just as he said. Go in peace. Share the good news. Alleluia!

Congregation: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

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