

*4th Sunday of Easter*  
*Good Shepherd Sunday*  
*April 25, 2021*



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Welcome! 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.

This is a special bulletin for Grace Lutheran Church. We have closed the Sanctuary to the general public amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. 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](http://GraceCLW.com)

# SERVICE OF THE WORD

## THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Worship Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Congregation: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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

*Water is poured into the font as the worship leader gives thanks.*

Worship Leader: 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.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## GATHERING HYMN

### *Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us*

vs. 1 & 2



- 1 Sav - ior like a shep - herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.
- 2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard - ian of our way;
- 3 You have prom - ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;
- 4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, for our use your fold pre-pare.  
keep your flock, from sin de-fend us, seek us when we go a-stray.  
you have mer-cy to re-lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.  
bless-ed Lord and on-ly Sav-ior, with your love our spir-its fill.



Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, hear us chil-dren when we pray.  
Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, ear-ly let us turn to you.  
Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, hear us chil-dren when we pray.  
Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, ear-ly let us turn to you.  
Bless-ed Je-sus, bless-ed Je-sus, you have loved us, love us still.

Text: attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1779–1847  
Music: BRADBURY, William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868

## 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: Let us pray together the Prayer of the Day.

**Congregation: 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.**

## FIRST READING

**Acts 4:5-12**

Introduction to the Lesson: *Peter and John had been arrested the previous day because they were proclaiming the news of the resurrection to the people. In today's reading,*

*Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit so that he can proclaim salvation in Jesus' name to the religious authorities.*

Reader: <sup>5</sup>The next day [the] rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup>with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. <sup>7</sup>When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" <sup>8</sup>Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, <sup>9</sup>if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, <sup>10</sup>let 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. <sup>11</sup>This Jesus is  
'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders;  
it has become the cornerstone.'

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

*After the reading...*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM: Psalm 23**

*The psalm for the day is read responsively.*

Reader: <sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.

**<sup>2</sup>The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.**

<sup>3</sup>You restore my soul, O LORD,  
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

**<sup>4</sup>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.**

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

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

### **SECOND READING                    1 John 3:16-24**

Introduction to the Lesson: *Jesus' death on our behalf is the clearest demonstration of divine love. This is the very love we share with others, not just through our words but especially through our deeds. In sharing such love we fulfill God's commandments.*

Reader: <sup>16</sup>We know love by this, that [Jesus Christ] laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. <sup>17</sup>How does God’s love abide in anyone who has the world’s goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

<sup>18</sup>Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. <sup>19</sup>And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him <sup>20</sup>whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. <sup>21</sup>Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; <sup>22</sup>and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

<sup>23</sup>And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. <sup>24</sup>All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

*After the reading...*

Reader: The word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

## GOSPEL LESSON

### John 10:11-18

Introduction to the Gospel: *In language that recalls the twenty-third psalm, Jesus describes himself as the shepherd who cares for his sheep. He is willing to die for them, and he is able to overcome death for them.*

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

**Congregation: Glory to you, O Lord.**

Worship Leader: [Jesus said:] <sup>11</sup>“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The 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. <sup>13</sup>The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I 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. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No 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.”

*After the reading...*

Worship Leader: The gospel of the Lord.

**Congregation: Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **GOSPEL MESSAGE—From Sundays and Seasons**

### **Abundant Care**

One of the things that drew people to Jesus was that he was a master communicator. Drawing from examples of daily life, like shepherding, fishing, and growing grapes, he helped people see the connections between their story and God’s story. He drew from very ordinary and familiar elements like bread, water, and light to describe how God is at work in our lives and the world.

If Jesus were using imagery from our world today, it’s interesting to ponder what illustrations he might use to remind us of God’s presence and grace. However, even though much has changed from the ancient world, the “I am” sayings of Jesus, like those found in today’s gospel, are still amazingly relevant and tell us a great deal about how God moves among us.

When Jesus says, “I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11), and describes how this shepherd cares for his sheep, he is naming God’s abundant care for each and every one of us. Perhaps you don’t always feel the immediacy of God’s care. There are moments in each of our lives when our outlook is bleak, when God’s provision doesn’t seem obvious, and when we wonder where God is in the midst of a trying situation.

But as the good shepherd, Jesus does not wait for us to be able to name our needs and pain before he comes to heal it. Jesus knows each one of his sheep in all their particular uniqueness: “I know my own” (John 10:14). God the good shepherd anticipates our needs and gives generously so we may have life in Jesus’ name. This is a promise we can depend on yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

## **SERMON**

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**

### *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*

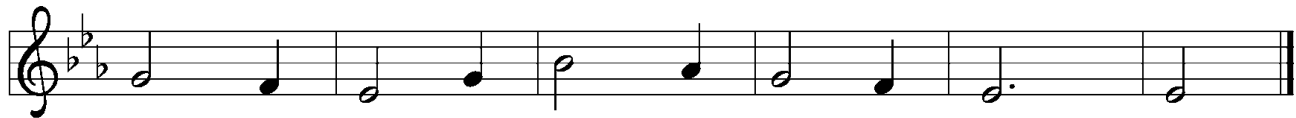
*vs. 1 & 2*



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness  
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed  
3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in  
4 In death’s dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant  
love he sought me, and on his shoul - der  
Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my



I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.  
pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.  
com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821–1877  
Music: ST. COLUMBA, Irish tune

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## CREED

Worship Leader: Let us confess our common faith with the ancient words of the Nicene Creed.

**Congregation: 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**

Worship Leader: 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.

*A brief silence.*

Prayer Leader: 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. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: 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. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: 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. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: 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 (*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, Larry Timmons, Carl Stone, Neftali Garcia & family, Susan Gunn, Roy Pruitt, Iris Valentin, Deacon Connie Puls, Joan Keeton, Steve Davis, Rose Marie Piff, Gary Mostrum, Vicki Kennedy, Gail Elder, Valerie Smutko, Jason Meadows, Lisa & Ty Hauschild, Bishop Pedro Suarez, Pastor Courtney Erzkus and family, Ralph Burson, Ellen Duncan, Luanne Sekel, Lorraine Chavez, Pat Fredell, Skylar Favos, Audrey Fisher, the family and friends of Kelly Sullivan, and all those suffering from natural disasters [including all those affected by COVID-19 and severe winter weather], from



violence, & terror, and the family & friends of the 490,000+ people in the US & the 2,400,000+ people worldwide who have died from COVID-19). Help us love one another in truth and action. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

Prayer Leader: 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 (*specific concerns may be named*), fill us anew with you Holy Spirit. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Prayer Leader: 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 (*especially the evangelist Mark and those in our Memorial Garden*). Bring us, with them, to dwell in your house forever. Lord, in your mercy,

**Congregation: hear our prayer.**

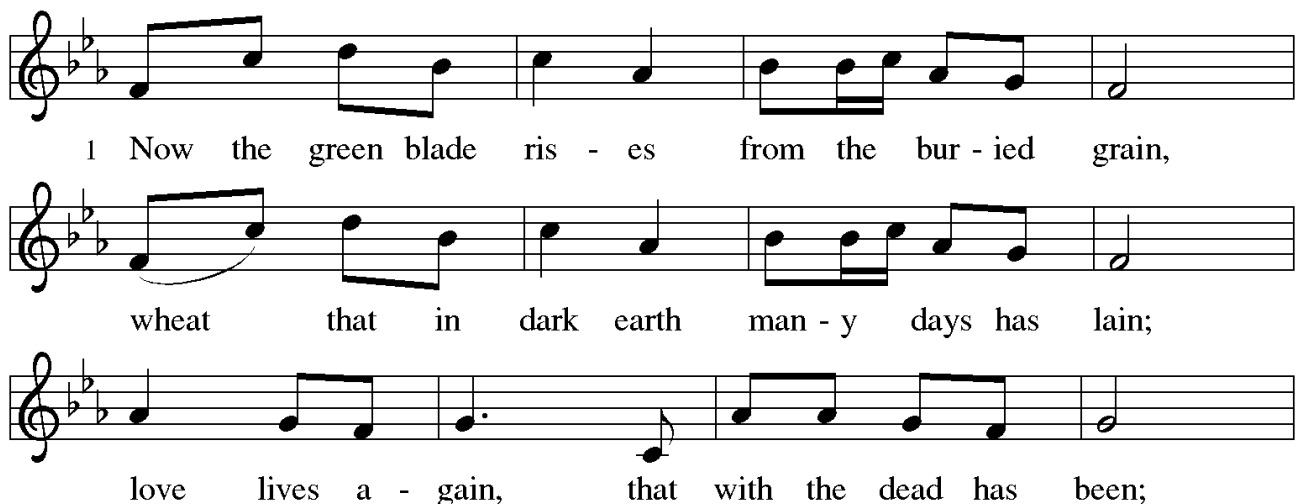
Worship Leader: Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## OFFERING

*Offerings to the mission and ministry of Grace can be made online at [GraceCLW.com](http://GraceCLW.com) (look for the "Donate" button), or 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 also fill out your attendance form on our website.***

## OFFERTORY *Now the Green Blade Rises vs. 1*



1 Now the green blade ris - es from the bur - ied grain,  
wheat that in dark earth man - y days has lain;  
love lives a - gain, that with the dead has been;



love is come a - gain like wheat a - ris - ing green.

Text: John MacLeod Campbell Crum, 1872–1958

Music: NOËL NOUVELET, French carol

Text from *Oxford Book of Carols*, © Oxford University Press 1928. All rights reserved.

## OFFERING PRAYER

Prayer Leader: 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.

**Congregation: Amen.**

## THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD

Worship Leader: Let us pray. Praise and thanks to you, holy God, for by your Word you made all things: you spoke light into darkness, called forth beauty from chaos, and brought life into being. For your Word of life, O God,

**Congregation: we give you thanks and praise.**

Worship Leader: By your Word you called your people Israel to tell of your wonderful gifts: freedom from captivity, water on the desert journey, a pathway home from exile, wisdom for life with you. For your Word of life, O God,

**Congregation: we give you thanks and praise.**

Worship Leader: Through Jesus, your Word made flesh, you speak to us and call us to witness: forgiveness through the cross, life to those entombed by death, the way of your self-giving love. For your Word of life, O God,

**Congregation: we give you thanks and praise.**

Worship Leader: Send your Spirit of truth, O God; rekindle your gifts within us: renew our faith, increase our hope, and deepen our love, for the sake of a world in need. Faithful to your Word, O God, draw near to all who call on you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever.

**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.

## BLESSING

Worship Leader: 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.

Congregation: Amen.

## SENDING HYMN

### *He Leadeth Me vs. 1 & 2*



- 1 He lead - eth me: oh, bless - ed thought! Oh, words with heav' n - ly com - fort fraught!
- 2 Some - times mid scenes of deep - est gloom, some - times where E - den's bow - ers bloom,
- 3 Lord, I would clasp thy hand in mine, nor ev - er mur - mur nor re - pine;
- 4 And when my task on earth is done, when by thy grace the vic - t'ry's won,



What - e'er I do, wher - e'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that lead - eth me.  
by wa - ters calm, o'er trou - bled sea, still 'tis God's hand that lead - eth me.  
con - tent, what - ev - er lot I see, since 'tis my God that lead - eth me.  
e'en death's cold wave I will not flee, since God through Jor - dan lead - eth me.



He lead - eth me, he lead - eth me, by his own hand he lead - eth me.



His faith - ful fol - l'wer I would be, for by his hand he lead - eth me.

Text: Joseph H. Gilmore, 1834–1918

Music: HE LEADETH ME, William B. Bradbury, 1815–1868

## **DISMISSAL**

Worship Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**Congregation: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

Worship Leader: Together we have heard God's Word and joined in prayer, we have given and have been forgiven. Now as this service of worship is ending, this week's service to the world is beginning! Go in peace. Share the Good News. Alleluia!

**Congregation: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

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