



“I am the good shepherd.
I know My own and My own know Me.”

+ *John 10:14*

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 25, 2021

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is often called “Good Shepherd Sunday.”

Today, we reflect on how the Holy Spirit continues to direct the Church to “hear the voice of our Shepherd” (*Collect*) as we live in this “valley of the shadow of death” (*Introit*).

In Jesus, our Good Shepherd, we know what true love actually is, for He lays down His life for us (*Epistle*), His sheep (*Gospel*). Moreover, as our Good Shepherd leads us to our eternal home, we love one another as He first loved us (1 John 3:23; 4:19).

Through the love of the Church and the Word that she confesses, the Spirit calls others in this lost world to hear the Good Shepherd’s voice (John 10:16).

Yours in Christ Jesus,
+Pastor Griebenaw

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Pastor’s email:
pastor@gracelutheranelcentro.org



“The Good Shepherd” by Bernhard Plockhorst (1825-1907), Public Domain

✠ DIVINE SERVICE, SETTING THREE ✠

HYMN OF INVOCATION: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice and Sing

LSB 475



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice and sing! Now is the tri - umph
2 The Lord of life is ris'n this day; Bring flow'rs of song to
3 Praise we in songs of vic - to - ry That love, that life which
4 Your name we bless, O ris - en Lord, And sing to - day with



of our King! To all the world glad news we bring:
strew His way; Let all the world re - joice and say:
can - not die, And sing with hearts up - lift - ed high:
one ac - cord The life laid down, the life re - stored:



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

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Stand – The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

LSB 184

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19b; [18:20]

C Amen.

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

[Hebrews 10:22]

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth.

Psalms 124:8

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Psalms 32:5

Kneel (or remain standing) — Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P Almighty God, our maker and redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C O most merciful God, who has given Your only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Your Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of You and of Your will and true obedience to Your Word, to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and has given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.

Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

Mark 16:16; John 1:12

C Amen.

Stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT

Psalm 23; antiphon: John 10:14, 15b

The pastor and congregation chant responsively. The antiphon is chanted by the pastor before and after the psalm.



(Antiphon) I am the Good | Shepherd.*

I know My own and My own know Me, and I lay down My life | for the sheep.

- 1 The LORD is my | shepherd;*
I | shall not want.
 - 2 **He makes me lie down in green | pastures.***
He leads me beside still | waters.
 - 3 He re- | stores my soul.*
He leads me in paths of righteousness for His | name's sake.
 - 4 **Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are | with me;***
Your rod and Your staff, they | comfort me.
 - 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my | enemies;*
You anoint my head with oil; my cup | overflows.
 - 6 **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days | of my life,***
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for- | ever.
- Glory be to the Father and | to the Son***
and to the Holy | Spirit;
as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.

The antiphon is repeated.

KYRIE

Mark 10:47



Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -



on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

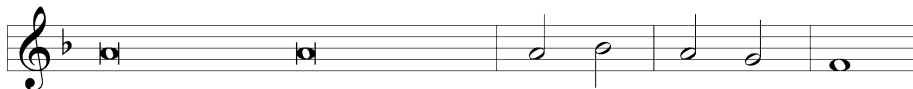
Luke 2:14; John 1:29



Glory be to God on high: and on earth peace, good - will toward



men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,



we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.



O Lord God, heav'n-ly King, God the Fa-ther Al - mighty.

O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up-on us.

Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re-ceive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up-

on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on-ly art the Lord.

Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,

art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

G And with thy spir - it.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where He leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

G A - men.

Sit

FIRST READING

Acts 4:1–12

P The First Reading is from the Acts of the Apostles, chapter four.

¹As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, ²greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand.

⁵On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷And when they had set them in the 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 being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by Him this man is standing before you well. ¹¹This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. ¹²And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

adapt. from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

The pastor and congregation chant responsively by half-verse.



Christ has risen | from the dead.*

[God the Father] has crowned Him with glory and | honor.

He has given Him dominion over the works | of His hands;*

He has put all things un- | der His feet.

EPISTLE

1 John 3:16–24

P The Epistle is from First John, chapter three.

¹⁶By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? ¹⁸Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

¹⁹By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before Him; ²⁰for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; ²²and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do what pleases Him. ²³And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as He has commanded us. ²⁴Whoever keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in them. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA & VERSE

Romans 6:9; John 10:14



C Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia. Al-le - lu - ia.

Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. Alleluia.

I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me. Alleluia. *The alleluias are repeated.*

HOLY GOSPEL

John 10:11-18 (NKJV)

P The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the tenth chapter.



C Glo - ry be to Thee, O Lord.

¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. ¹²But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. ¹³The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know My sheep, and am known by My own. ¹⁵As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

¹⁷“Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.



C Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

Stand

NICENE CREED

C I believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth
and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified,
who spoke by the prophets.
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,
and I look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life $\cdot\ddagger\cdot$ of the world to come. Amen.

Sit

HYMN OF THE DAY: The King of Love My Shepherd Is

LSB 709



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.
 5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight; Δ 6 And so through all the length of days
 Thine unction grace bestoweth; Thy goodness faileth never;
 And, oh, what transport of delight Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
 From Thy pure chalice floweth! Within Thy house forever!

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SERMON

Rev. Griebenaw

After the sermon, the pastor may say:

P The peace of God, which passes all understanding,
 keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:7

C Amen.

Stand

OFFERTORY

Psalm 51:10–12



C Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -



way from Thy pres - ence, and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it



from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va -



tion, and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Kneel (or remain standing)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(1 Timothy 2:1–4)

P In peace, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P That the Good Shepherd of Israel, who has sought His sheep and gathered us with them into one flock, would keep us always in His fold and guard us from every wolf and snare, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the Church and flock of God, that as new life was breathed into the world through the resurrection of Christ, so now by His Holy Spirit new life would be breathed into her also; and that, freed by His Gospel, we may always confess the name of Jesus Christ — the only name given among men by which we must be saved, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For an increase in the love of Christian brothers one to another, especially within our own homes, that we may daily show our confidence in God by deed and truth, laying down our lives as Christ first did for us, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For the gift of good government, that as the Paschal Lamb has wrought peace between man and God, so He would grant peace and good days also to our citizens and between the nations of the world; and that we and all our neighbors may lead quiet lives in godly contentment, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P In thanksgiving for our risen Christ, the firstfruits from the dead, who has secured forgiveness for our troubled consciences, that He would look up and behold all who suffer any affliction of mind, body, or soul; and that He would grant us aid not only in this moment, but even more so, His true, immortal health in the world to come, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P For a right and salutary reception of the blessed Sacrament this day, that our Good Shepherd would calm all fears in this valley of the shadow of death through the holy meal here prepared in the presence of our enemies; that He would give us repentance and an increase of faith; and that in every tribulation or besetting sin, He would lead us to find comfort and strength in the overflowing mercy given us in His true body and most precious blood, let us pray to the Lord:

C **Lord, have mercy.**

P Lord God, out of Your fatherly goodness You have remembered us poor, miserable sinners and given Your beloved Son to be our Shepherd — not only to nourish us by His Word, but also to defend us from sin, death, and the devil. Grant us Your Holy Spirit, that even as this Shepherd knows us and helps in every affliction, we also may know Him, trust Him, seek help and comfort in Him, heartily obey His voice, and obtain eternal salvation; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

The live-stream service concludes with the following:

LORD'S PRAYER

Matthew 6:9–13

P Taught by our Lord and trusting His promises, we are bold to pray:

C **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.

CONCLUDING COLLECT

P Let us pray.

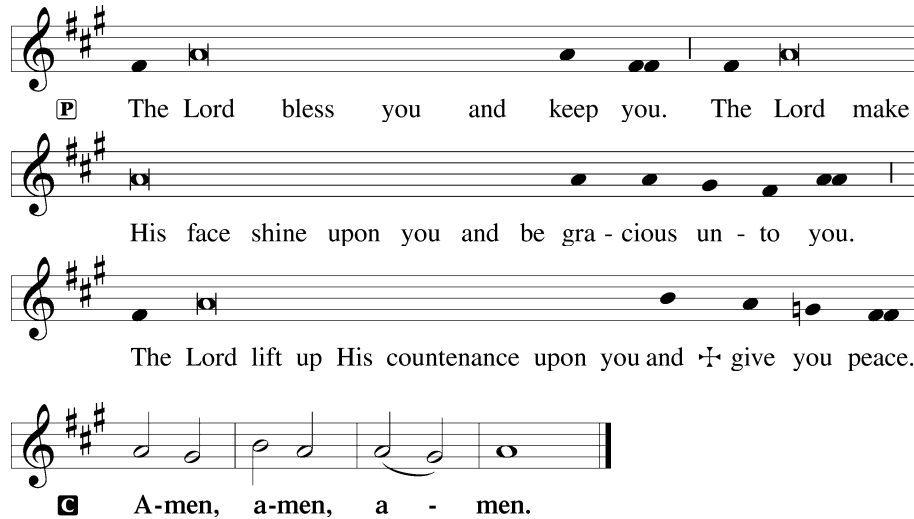
O God of all grace, You sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to bring life and immortality to light. We give You thanks that by His death He destroyed the power of death and by His resurrection He opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Strengthen us in the confidence that because He lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life nor things present nor things to come will be able to separate us from Your love, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Stand

BENEDICTION

Numbers 6:24–26



P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gra - cious un - to you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and † give you peace.

C A - men, a - men, a - men.

The Divine Service continues with the Lord's Supper for those at the church. Please sing/read aloud the closing hymn and come by later for Holy Communion between 10:30am and 11:30am, parking by the concrete ramp along Holt Avenue.

CLOSING HYMN: Children of the Heavenly Father

LSB 725



1 Chil - dren of the heav'n - ly Fa - ther Safe - ly
 2 God His own doth tend and nour - ish; In His
 3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er From the
 4 Though He giv - eth or He tak - eth, God His

in His bos - om gath - er; Nest - ling bird nor star in
 ho - ly courts they flour - ish. From all e - vil things He
 Lord His chil - dren sev - er; Un - to them His grace He
 chil - dren ne'er for - sak - eth; His the lov - ing pur - pose

heav - en Such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en.
 spares them; In His might - y arms He bears them.
 show - eth, And their sor - rows all He know - eth.
 sole - ly To pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

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† SOLI DEO GLORIA †
 (TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY)

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM YOUR PASTOR

Brothers and Sisters,

Alleluia! Christ is Risen! . . . He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

I don't think Holly has shared with most of you that she was involved in a rather serious car accident during her freshman year of high school, resulting in an unexpected helicopter ride on a "Flight for Life." Long story short, she was ejected from the back seat of the car (which, by the way, was NOT equipped with seatbelts—Holly is always safety conscious so this one isn't her fault). She landed on a pile of concrete rubble down in a ditch by the road and was pretty mangled—she even had to have her left hip screwed back together (and then had to have the screws removed once things were finally holding together).

She spent several months in a wheelchair (and still cheered on the cheerleading squad . . . which apparently can be done from a wheelchair!). Eventually, she ditched the wheels and moved to crutches. Finally, the day came when she could walk on her own! Holly wasn't reckless (it just isn't her nature) but you know what?! Amidst all of her numerous injuries, the doctors had missed a break in her ankle. Holly ended up having to go back on crutches.

I'm sharing with you this story (with Holly's permission) because I think it is a fitting reminder that no matter how "ready" and anxious we are to get "back to normal" there may yet be unforeseen complications.

It has been about three weeks since Imperial County moved from the Purple to Orange Tier of California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy (that is the name of the reopening plan . . . I looked it up). Quite a few more things are "opening up" and our daily lives are moving closer to "normal."

That being said, the Orange Tier isn't the "most open" (there is still the Yellow Tier . . . and I can't help but wonder why the chart I looked at didn't have a "tier" for Back-to-Normal but I trust we'll get there eventually).

This week, we resume communion at the altar rail. Not everyone is totally comfortable with this (and that is okay—I understand the hesitancy and invite any who are uncomfortable to stand at the rail instead of kneeling so that you needn't touch anything except the body and blood of Jesus).

I understand the desire to get "back to normal" and we ARE moving in that direction . . . slowly . . . but now is still a time for prudence and patience. This is part of Saint Paul's admonition to "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ" (Gal 6:2).



On a lighter note, this week is Leo's Fifth Birthday! As you can see in the picture, he is VERY EXCITED!

I'm going to be on vacation with the birthday boy and Holly and Sam this week so **we will NOT be having our weekly "Zoom" Bible Study on Tuesday.** However, **we WILL have our Wednesday Prayer Service at 7:00pm;** the only catch is that it is going to be pre-recorded and will be "premiering" (you know, like Hollywood movies) on Facebook at 7:00pm on Wednesday. Our Bible Study and in-person Wednesday service will resume next week.

Lastly, please continue to mail your tithes and offerings to the church's post office box:
Grace Evangelical-Lutheran Church, PO Box 1530, El Centro, CA 92244-1530.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
+Pastor Griebenaw

P.S. One last reminder that we are NOT having Tuesday Bible Study this week and the Wednesday Prayer Service will NOT be in-person—the video will be released on Facebook on Wednesday at 7:00pm.