

Fourth Sunday of Easter, year A

May 3, 2020 + Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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Focus on the Season: Fourth Sunday of Easter, year A

Jesus calls himself the “gate” of the sheep in today’s gospel and also the gatekeeper, and the shepherd. As the gate, our risen Lord is our protector in a frightening and often dangerous world. But even in the familiar words of Psalm 23, our Good Shepherd guides us not out of this world into a protected sheepfold, but out and in and through it. And always with guiding staff, overflowing cup, and gracious presence and care.

Keep this document open on the screen, to aid in your worship today. The links are embedded in this pdf, so you don’t have to return to the email. However, you can also print these pages and use the links in the email.

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Centering and Gathering

Light your candle.

PRELUDE: **“Sheep May Safely Graze,” from Cantata 208** J. S. Bach (1685-1750)
Played by Cantor Cherwien at the funeral of Muriel Jaster, February 1, 2020. Click bold title to listen.

HYMN: **ELW 362, “At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing”** *click the bold title to listen*
Sung at Mount Olive on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, year B, April 22, 2018.

EASTER GREETING

Greet one another with the good news!

- Christ is risen! Alleluia!
- Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!**

Word – note: one video now includes Prayer of the Day, First and Second Readings, and psalm

PRAYER OF THE DAY *click the bold title for video*

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. Amen

FIRST READING: Acts 2:42-47; reader – assisting minister Janet Meeks *in Prayer of the Day video*

⁴²The baptized devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the

temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

PSALM: "The Lord is my shepherd," sung by Cantorei; Wes Huisinga, oboe John Rutter

A setting of today's appointed psalm, Psalm 23, recorded April 22, 2018 *in Prayer of the Day video*

The Lord is my shepherd, therefore can I lack nothing.

He shall feed me in a green pasture and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.

He shall convert my soul, and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil;

For thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

Thou shalt prepare a table for me against them that trouble me;

Thou hast anointed my head with oil and my cup shall be full.

But thy lovingkindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:

And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

SECOND READING: I Peter 2:19-25; reader – assisting minister Janet Meeks *in Prayer of the Day video*

¹⁹ It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. ²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." ²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: **ELW 388, "Be Not Afraid"** *click on the bold title to listen*

Sung at Mount Olive on the Third Sunday of Easter, year A, May 4, 2014.

HOLY GOSPEL: **John 10:1-10**

click John to watch

Jesus said, ¹ "I tell you the truth, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

SERMON

Listen

Vicar Bristol Reading

Click on the title, "Listen," to watch

HYMN: **ELW 520, "Dearest Jesus, at Your Word"**

click on the bold title to listen

Sung at Mount Olive on the Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Lectionary 29 C, October 20, 2019.

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS

Our Assisting Minister for today, Janet Meeks, has prepared intercessory prayers for us to pray this morning. As our prayers rise up from all over the metro area and beyond, once more we are joined together in Christ.

Pray these aloud, perhaps with one as leader if there are more than one gathered, and add any you feel drawn to add.

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.

Silence.

Shepherding God, we thank you for the educational ministries of your church such as Luther Seminary and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago where our Vicar attends. Thank you for all the creative efforts of the teachers and volunteers of Mount Olive's Godly play. Enrich and rejuvenate our Minnesota teachers who create lessons and provide extra technical support during the shelter at home. Provide patience to the parents and guardians who are participating in distance learning with their children. *God, in your mercy . . .*

Creating God, we praise you for those all those who contribute to the growing, making and distributing our food safely during shelter at home. Thwart off wasted agriculture and guide us to devise and initiate plans for better distribution and use. Cover those in food distribution with appreciation, whether they deliver, serve, or stock the shelves. Follow the farmer as seeds are planted this spring for fall harvest. *God, in your mercy . . .*

Guiding God, we pray you continue to inspire our leaders to walk in your ways. Thank you for Governor Walz and his administration for his leadership during these uncertain times. Thank you for those in the CDC and Public Health such as but not limited to Dr. Debra Brix and Dr Anthony Fauci as they guide our government toward making good decisions with scientific principles. *God, in your mercy . . .*

Comforting God, you carry us tenderly. We pray for those who walk through dark valleys overshadowed by anxiety and overwhelmed with suffering or fear. Let those who feel alone know you are with them. Calm their spirit with acts of goodness. Be with all who are suffering from illness of any kind, especially Joe, and those we name before you . . . *God, in your mercy . . .*

Nurturing God, bless the agencies Mount Olive works with those who help those in need, such as and not limited to Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, Second Harvest, and the Diaper Depot. Lift our neighbors who normally attends Mount Olive's community meal. Please let them know they are in our prayers. May none of our neighbors lack for basic needs. *God, in your mercy . . .*

Caring God, look over our mission partners in Central and South America as they struggle for support as our ELCA global mission people returned home: Common Hope as it supports children, their education and their families and for EPES (Action of Health in the Americas) as it builds community health in Chile. *God, in your mercy . . .*

We pray for our neighborhood partners at Minnesota Council of Churches as they seek to create and foster relationships between faith communities for the common good of our community. *God, in your mercy . . .*

Rejoicing God, help us celebrate these baptismal anniversaries this week with thanksgiving: Lea, Eva, Krystyana, Irene, Tate, Lynn, Claire, and Erica. *God, in your mercy . . .*

Everlasting God, your beloved have heard your voice; you have called them by name and guided them to your side in death. We thank you for their lives of faithful witness, especially those whom we name before you now . . . *God, in your mercy . . .*

Add any petitions you feel drawn to pray. Then:

Whatever else you see that we and the world need, grant us O God, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

OFFERING

There are ways to continue to give of your gifts to our shared work at Mount Olive during this time apart. The Olive Branch has suggested ways both electronic and by mail. See:

<https://www.mountolivechurch.org/resources/olive-branch-newsletter/>

PEACE

Please greet others with Christ's peace. If you haven't called someone to join this prayer together, perhaps you might take the time now to call another and wish them peace.

HYMN: **ELW 502, "The King of Love My Shepherd Is"**

click on the bold title to listen

Sung at Mount Olive on the Fourth Sunday of Easter, year C, May 12, 2019.

CONCLUDING PRAYER AND BLESSING

Pray the Lord's Prayer together.

Someone may offer a blessing on behalf of all:

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, guard and keep our hearts and minds in + Christ Jesus. Amen.

☐ Christ is risen! Alleluia!

☑ **Christ is risen, indeed! Alleluia!**

☐ Go in peace to love and serve as Christ.

☑ **Thanks be to God! Alleluia!**

POSTLUDE: **"I Nothing Lack," Improvisational Fugue (à la Gigue) on ST. COLUMBA**

Click the bold title to watch. Recorded live by Cantor David Cherwien on Wednesday, April 29, 2020.