

**God's Service Sunday, April 21, 2024**  
Fourth Sunday of Easter: Good Shepherd Sunday  
ELW Holy Communion Setting Ten



## **WELCOME**

Tomorrow is Earth Day and so in today's service we give thanks to God for all of creation in its glorious abundance through which we are sustained and have life. The image of the good shepherd in today's readings 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. Let us take a moment, as we listen to the prelude, to prepare our hearts and minds to receive the abundant wealth God bestows on us through God's Service this very morning.

**PRELUDE** *Son of Righteousness* by Pepping

## **GATHERING**

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

## **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

Look! Here is water!  
What is to prevent us from giving thanks for baptism?

*Water may be poured into the font, a bowl, or a pool.*

Here is water.  
Rushing water. Surging water.  
Pounding, crashing surf of water.  
Foaming waters to wash us clean,  
to scrub away the guilt, the burden that clings,  
to wipe away the grime of archived fear.  
Blessed be water.

**We give you thanks, Creator God,  
for sea and ocean, tides and waves.**

Here is water.  
Tumbling water. Streaming water.  
Free-flowing-shower-of-grace water.  
Bubbling fount to soothe our hearts,  
balm for the scars of angry division,  
salve for the wounds of ignorant pride.

Blessed be water.

**We give you thanks, creative Word,  
for rain and snow, storm and mist.**

Here is water.

Clear water. Cool water.

Quench-the-thirst-of-our-soul water.

Still waters to restore our spirits, source of hope,  
refreshment for the journey toward the fold,  
sparkling with the promise of new life.

Blessed be water.

**We give you thanks, creating Spirit,  
for stream and pool, spring and lake.**

*Children and others may be invited to play, splash, wade in or otherwise interact with the water.*

*The leader or assisting minister might use an evergreen bough to sprinkle water over the assembly as these words are shared.*

Here is water,

through which God created and continues to create.

In the beginning, weaving with the Breath of life  
every living being;

throughout history, a gateway for divine deliverance;  
in every moment, re-membling the mystery of life,  
bonding all of creation as one.

We give you thanks, blessed Creator, for the gift of life,  
for this water without which life would cease,

for the gift of baptism,

through which these waters birth us again

into your promise of newness, wholeness, and oneness.

Blessed be Creator God,

creative ? Word,

creating Spirit.

Blessed be each soul here and not here,

one people,

one with all that is.

Blessed be this water that births us,

renews us,

and welcomes us home.

**Amen.**

## **GATHERING SONG *Crashing Waters at Creation* (ELW 455)**

- 1 Crashing waters at creation,  
ordered by the Spirit's breath,  
first to witness day's beginning  
from the brightness of night's death:
  
- 2 Parting water stood and trembled  
as the captives passed on through,  
washing off the chains of bondage—  
channel to a life made new.
  
- 3 Cleansing water once at Jordan  
closed around the one foretold,  
opened to reveal the glory  
ever new and ever old.
  
- 4 Living water, never ending,  
quench the thirst and flood the soul.  
Wellspring, source of life eternal,  
drench our dryness, make us whole.

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## **GREETING**

The beauty of the Creator inspire us,  
the grace of the Good Shepherd be with us,  
and the unity of the Breath of Life enfold us all.  
**May it be so!**

## **CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW p. 204)**

**Come, let us join our cheerful songs with angels round the throne;  
ten thousand thousand are their tongues, but all their joys are one.  
“Worthy the Lamb that died,” they cry, “to be exalted thus!”  
“Worthy the Lamb,” our lips reply, “for he was slain for us!”  
Jesus is worthy to receive honor and pow’r divine;  
and blessings, more than we can give, be, Lord, forever thine.  
Let all creation join in one to bless the sacred name  
of God who sits upon the throne, and to adore the Lamb.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY (ELW p. 205)**

Let us pray.

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.**

### **WORD**

*God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.*

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

### **FIRST READING: Acts 4:5-12**

*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.*

A reading from Acts.

<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."

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM RESPONSE: PSALM 23 *Shepherd Me, O God* (ELW 780)**

*Refrain*

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,  
beyond my fears, from death into life.

- 1 God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want,  
I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love,  
I walk by the quiet waters of peace. *Refrain*
- 2 Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul,  
you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth,

my spirit shall sing the music of your name. *Refrain*

3 Though I should wander the valley of death,  
I fear no evil, for you are at my side,  
your rod and your staff, my comfort and my hope. *Refrain*

4 You have set me a banquet of love  
in the face of hatred,  
crowning me with love beyond my pow'r to hold. *Refrain*

5 Surely your kindness and mercy follow me  
all the days of my life;  
I will dwell in the house of my God forevermore. *Refrain*

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

*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.*

A reading from 1 John.

<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.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (ELW p. 205)**

**Alleluia! Lord and Savior: open now your saving word.**

**Let it burn like fire within us; speak until our hearts are stirred.**

**Alleluia! Lord, we sing for the good news that you bring.**

## **GOSPEL: John 10:11-18**

*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.*

The holy gospel according to John.

### **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[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.”

The gospel of the Lord.

### **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON (ELW p. 206)**

### **HYMN OF THE DAY *Have No Fear, Little Flock* (ELW 764)**

- 1 Have no fear, little flock;  
have no fear, little flock,  
for the Father has chosen  
to give you the kingdom;  
have no fear, little flock!
- 2 Have good cheer, little flock;  
have good cheer, little flock,  
for the Father will keep you  
in his love forever;  
have good cheer, little flock!
- 3 Praise the Lord high above;  
praise the Lord high above,  
for he stoops down to heal you,  
uplift and restore you;  
praise the Lord high above!
- 4 Thankful hearts raise to God;  
thankful hearts raise to God,  
for he stays close beside you,

in all things works with you;  
thankful hearts raise to God!

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## **COMMISSIONING AND SENDING OF OUR SYNOD ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS**

Gracious and loving God, you keep your church united in the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray for our Rocky Mountain Synod as we prepare to meet in Assembly this coming week, titled “On Our Way Together.” We ask you to bless our sisters and brothers who will gather in Loveland, CO. May your Holy Spirit fill them and guide them in the election of a new Bishop. Together we will gather for worship and fellowship and to celebrate one another in the Spirit that keeps us one in you!

*Prayer and blessing is spoken over those who will be attending the Assembly.*

O God, you caused the Children of Israel to pass through the Red Sea. By the leading of a star you led the Wise Men to yourself. Bless our sisters and brothers as they now prepare to depart to gather with more of your saints for our Synod Assembly. Give them safe travel and increase in them the gifts of your Holy Spirit, that on our behalf they may equip this church for deeper ministry and discipleship, following our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

In the way of peace and prosperity the almighty and merciful Lord direct you, that you may return home in peace, in safety and in joy. Go in peace! Go with God!

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

Shepherding God, gather your church whenever we wander from you and one another.

Empower our church in ministries around the world to worship and serve alongside global companions as equal partners and coworkers in the gospel. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, preserve the health of biomes and ecosystems. Inspire scientists, researchers, conservation organizations, and all people entrusted with the task of caring for creation, that we may be better stewards of the world around us. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, lead nations and communities to share resources, cooperate in solving conflicts, and listen to the wisdom of Indigenous peoples. Help all those with power to share it and to use such power for good. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Loving God, protect the very young and the very old, those living without housing, victims of domestic abuse, and all who live with chronic illness or compromised immune systems. We

especially pray for Grace, Shirley, Jim, Melissa, Heather, Lars, Anna, Gene, Susan, Cheryl and these others we name now in our heart and with our voices....(*pause for names to be spoken*).

Guide communities to actively care for people who are vulnerable. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, help this and all communities of faith to listen for your voice. Call us away from things that distract us from following you. Invite us to more deeply love and serve people who are lonely, isolated, and on the margins. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Living God, we give thanks for our ancestors in faith (*including Anselm of Canterbury and all who labored to help generations understand the good news of the gospel*). Strengthen us to share the good news in our own day. God of grace,

**hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord.

**Amen.**

### **PEACE (ELW p. 206)**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

### **MEAL**

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.*

### **SHARING GOD'S GRACIOUS ABUNDANCE**

It is the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, one of mutual knowledge and love, that calls us to respond to the world in a like manner. 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 abundance with any sibling in need. If you have offering to share this morning, please raise your hand and an usher will be by to collect it. You may also give online at any time at [landerlutherans.org](http://landerlutherans.org) and even set up automatic giving to support our participation in God's continuing mission in this world. Let us generously share the abundance of our God.

### **OFFERING MUSIC *Joy* by Diemer**

### **SETTING OF THE TABLE *Let All Things Now Living* (ELW 881)**

1 Let all things now living  
a song of thanksgiving  
to God the creator triumphantly raise,  
who fashioned and made us,  
protected and stayed us,



who still guides us on to the end of our days.  
God's banners are o'er us,  
God's light goes before us,  
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night,  
till shadows have vanished  
and darkness is banished,  
as forward we travel from light into light.

- 2 God rules all the forces:  
the stars in their courses  
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;  
the hills and the mountains,  
the rivers and fountains,  
the deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.  
We too should be voicing  
our love and rejoicing;  
with glad adoration a song let us raise  
till all things now living  
unite in thanksgiving:  
"To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!"

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## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Whatever we ask, in accordance with your will,  
we receive and our cup overflows.  
Confident in divine abundance  
and humbly eager to turn from covetous greed,  
we return what we have received for the Shepherd's work,  
that green pastures and safe folds  
will welcome any who live in fear;  
that peaceful waters will sustain hurting hearts;  
that a voice of welcome will be heard at each gate;  
that a feast will be prepared for all who hunger and thirst;  
and all may safely graze.  
In the name of the One who is our comfort.  
**Amen.**

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

### **DIALOGUE (ELW p. 206)**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

**PREFACE (ELW p. 207)**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
that we should at all times and in all places  
give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God,  
for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ,  
the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin;  
who in dying has destroyed death,  
and in rising has brought us to eternal life.

And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection,  
with earth and sea and all their creatures,  
and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

**HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (ELW p. 207)**

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,**

**God of power and might,**

**heav'n and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest,**

**hosanna in the highest.**

**THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

O God triune, how majestic  
is your name in all the earth.

Over the eons your merciful might  
evolved our home, a fragile tree of life.

Here by your wisdom  
are both life and death,  
growth and decay,  
the nest and the hunt,  
sunshine and storm,  
darkness and light.

Sustained by these wonders,  
we creatures of dust join in the ancient song:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

O God triune, you took on our flesh in Jesus our healer.  
In Christ you bring life from death;  
we remember his cross,  
we laud his resurrection.  
Broken like bread, he enlivens our body.  
Outpoured like wine, he fills the earth with goodness.  
Receiving this mystery,  
we mortals sing our song:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

We praise you for the heart of Jesus,  
so filled with your love for this earth.

In the night in which he was betrayed,  
our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;  
broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:  
Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,  
and gave it for all to drink, saying:  
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,  
shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.  
Do this for the remembrance of me.

Gathered around this table,  
we your children unite in this song:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

O God triune, you create the worlds,  
you uphold the living,  
you embrace the dead.  
Send forth your Spirit  
and renew the face of the earth.  
Strengthen us for our journey with this meal,

the body and blood of Christ.  
Give us a future that trusts in you  
and cares for your earth.  
Empowered by your promises,  
we rise from our deaths  
to praise you again:  
The earth is full of your glory.  
**The earth is full of your glory.**

Amen, and amen.  
**Amen, and amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 208)**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Receive who you are, become what you receive. The risen Christ is made known to us  
in the breaking of the bread.

Come and eat at God's table, for all are welcome here.

### **COMMUNION (ELW p. 208)**

The body of Christ, given for you.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you.  
Amen.

**COMMUNION SONG (ELW p. 208)**

**O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
you suffered death our lives to save: have mercy now, we pray.  
O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
you set us free from guilt and grave: have mercy now, we pray.  
O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world away;  
eternal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.**

**DISTRIBUTION MUSIC *The King of Love My Shepherd Is* arr. by Barr  
PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Shepherding God,  
you have prepared a table before us  
and nourished us with your love.  
Send us forth from this banquet  
to proclaim your goodness  
and share the abundant mercy of Jesus,  
our redeemer and friend.

**Amen.**

**SENDING**

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.*

**SENDING OF COMMUNION (ELW p. 209)**

Gracious God, loving all your family with a mother's tender care: As you sent the angel to feed Elijah with heavenly bread, assist those who set forth to share your word and sacrament with those who are *sick, homebound, and imprisoned*. In your love and care, nourish and strengthen those who will receive this sacrament, and give us all the comfort of your abiding presence through the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS (ELW p. 209)**

**BLESSING**

Little children, sheep of the Good Shepherd:  
As we journey toward the fold,  
we travel through the valley of shadow,  
growing in grace, becoming a blessing.  
Baptismal wells restore our souls,  
a rich feast is spread by divine abundance,  
and divisions end as our cup overflows.

**Amen.**

## **SENDING SONG *God Be with You Till We Meet Again* (ELW 536)**

1 God be with you till we meet again;  
by good counsels guide, uphold you,  
with a shepherd's care enfold you;  
God be with you till we meet again.

### *Refrain*

Till we meet, (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet again,)  
till we meet at Jesus' feet; (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet,)  
till we meet, (till we meet again.)  
God be with you till we meet again.

2 God be with you till we meet again;  
holy wings securely hide you,  
daily manna still provide you;  
God be with you till we meet again. *Refrain*

3 God be with you till we meet again;  
when life's perils thick confound you,  
put unfailing arms around you;  
God be with you till we meet again. *Refrain*

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## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Journey gently on this planet's green pasture.  
**Thanks be to God.**

### **Upcoming Commemorations**

**Anselm, Bishop of Canterbury, died 1109**

**Sunday, April 21, 2024**

This eleventh-century monk was one of the greatest theologians of the Middle Ages. He is remembered for emphasizing the maternal aspects of God, and for the theory that the Son of God became human in order to make the necessary payment for our sin.

**Day of the Creation (Día de la Creación) (LLC)**

**Monday, April 22, 2024**

This observance invites us to notice and give God thanks for the wonders of the created universe. As stewards of that creation, we are also challenged to be careful in our use of it.

**Toyohiko Kagawa, renewer of society, died 1960**

**Tuesday, April 23, 2024**

Born in Kobe, Japan, Kagawa was orphaned as a young child. Later, when he became Christian, he was disowned by the rest of his family. Wishing to bring Christian principles into society, he worked among poor people, established schools and hospitals, and worked for peace.

**Mark, Evangelist**

**Thursday, April 25, 2024**

He was not numbered among the twelve apostles, yet Mark was probably a member of the early church community. The gospel that bears his name is the shortest and most direct, and many scholars think it was the first to be written.

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