

## **Fourth Sunday of Easter**

Sunday, April 26, 2026

### **Introduction to the day**

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.

### **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

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**

*Today’s reading is a description of life in the community following Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out on God’s people. The new community is sustained in worship and fellowship, shares what they have, and ensures that everyone has enough.*

### **PSALM: Psalm 23**

<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 Peter 2:19-25**

*Doing the right things does not guarantee that one will not experience difficulties, hardships, rejection, or even suffering. Here Christ is presented as the model for our path of endurance and loyalty to God, particularly amid adversity.*

### **GOSPEL: John 10:1-10**

*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.*

### **GOSPEL MESSAGE - Our Good Shepherd**

The images in today’s texts provide us with much food for thought and action. Psalm 23 tells of a shepherd who leads us to green pastures and refreshing waters, walks alongside us as we face challenging times, takes us to a table already set, and anoints us with oil to mark each of us as chosen. We are heard, seen, known, valued, and loved, and remain in the Shepherd’s presence for all time.

Jesus' words in the gospel reading add to the image of a loving and caring shepherd. The shepherd calls each sheep by name, while the sheep follow because they recognize that voice. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, knows us well and calls each of us by name. Jesus also serves as the gate for the sheep, guarding and protecting us in the sheepfold, while also providing access to pastureland. This protection and access give us the space to be who we are, with no need to play games or pretend to be someone we are not. And when it comes right down to it, the Good Shepherd comes to give us abundant life—new life in relationship with God, others, and all creation.

The reading from Acts 2 provides an image of abundant life among the early Christians, a life with an extravagance of worship, fellowship, prayer, generosity, service to others, and thankfulness.

How does the image of the Good Shepherd sit with you? How do you picture the relationship between you and Jesus—with shepherd and sheep imagery, or something else? Where and how do you recognize the Good Shepherd's voice? Do you know someone who has abundant life in Christ—a life of faith, joy, and love? What would such a life look like for you, and for your faith community?

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

Shepherding God, draw all people to yourself and lead them in paths of righteousness. Embolden your church to enter the valleys of the world and guide us beside the still waters of your grace. We pray for military and prison chaplains serving near and far. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creator God, by the resurrection of your Son, show us your steadfast love and instruct our hearts in your ways. Help us to revere and protect the wonders of your creation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Righteous Judge, strengthen and uphold those who work for justice and advocate for human rights. Bring an end to oppression and save us from the temptation of violence or vengeance. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Great Physician, walk with those who are grieving, and anoint those who are ill or injured especially Chris Burchat, Natasha Gagnon-Burchat, Shirley Glickman, Donna L. Hoffman, Glenda Panke, Marilyn Schneider, Heather Schruder, Doug Sell and those in long term care facilities and senior residences. Restore them to health of body, mind, and spirit. In this moment of silence, we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts, those who need your healing touch. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, continually seek us out as lambs of your flock, and form us into a community where all are honored and cared for. Spread a feast before us and fill our cups to overflowing. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Living God, we praise you for the saints who have died in faith and now dwell in your love. At our end, bring us, with them, to our heavenly home. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

**Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

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

**BLESSING**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

**Amen.**

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

From [sundaysandseasons.com](http://sundaysandseasons.com).

Copyright © 2026 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved.

## **Announcements:**

### **Sunday, April 26th – 4th Sunday of Easter**

**9:00 AM** - Bonnechere – SOW

**10:30 AM** – Grace – SOW

Sunday School

### **Monday, April 27th**

**9:00 AM to 3:00 PM** - Quilting at Grace

**4:00 PM** – Confirmation

**7:00 PM** – Grace Church Council

### **Tuesday, April 28th**

**10:00 AM** – Bible Study

### **Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>**

**9:00 AM** – CPR Course

**9:00 AM to 11:30 AM** – Toy Bus

**10:00 AM** – Grace Choir

### **Friday, May 1st**

Pastor's Day Off

### **Saturday, May 2nd**

**9:30 AM** – Ottawa Valley Ministry Leadership Team

Lay Leadership Course

**9:00 AM to 2:00 PM** – Spring Work Day at Camp Lutherlyn

### **Sunday May 3rd - Easter 5**

**Sunday May 3 at 10:30** will be a presentation of songs and scripture by the *Hands Up Puppeteers from WWCC*. This will be held upstairs for the whole congregation followed by a potluck luncheon (i.e. sandwiches, veggies, fruit, cookies, etc) in the church hall.

**Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> – 9AM to 2PM - Camp Lutherlyn Spring Work Day** – we will be waking up the camp and getting everything ready for our summer 2026 guests. Please bring your work gloves and your favorite tools for yard work! Lunch will be provided. If you can please ask everyone to email us at [info@lutherlyncamp.ca](mailto:info@lutherlyncamp.ca) to let us know if you can make it-we want to make sure we have enough lunch for everyone.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE FROM THE TREASURER AND RECORDING SECRETARY**

If you donate through electronic funds transfer and are changing bank accounts please advise Ron or Brian with your new banking information to ensure your donations are properly withdrawn from your new account. Many thanks! Ron and Brian