

## Stewardship 2026 Join the Journey

*“Trust in God from the bottom of your heart;  
don’t try to figure out everything on your own.  
Listen for God’s voice in everything you do,  
everywhere you go.” Proverbs 3:4-6*



### WELCOME TO WORSHIP

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026

8:00 AM Traditional Worship

**Pastor:** Paula Geister-Jones **Lay Ministry Administrator:** Jenny Hoffman

**Organist/Pianist:** Linda Kunz **Liturgist:** Jenny Hoffman

**Lector:** Sue Weum **Acolyte:** Slayton Hoverson

**Ushers:** Sue Walls, Sandra Maerz, Sue Weum & Sharon Manson

**Technical Support:** Thomas Lehr, Roger Slack

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

### CALL TO WORSHIP “Evening and Morning” Ebeling/Schwarz

#### THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM:

**P:** Alleluia! Christ is risen.

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

**P:** Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne  
and to the Lamb!

**C:** Amen.

**P:** Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

**P:** Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come.  
You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation:  
morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that  
nourish us. Blessed are you.

**C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

**P:** Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys.  
We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you  
for joining us in joy and sorrow. Blessed are you.

**C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

**P:** Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down  
barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you.

**C: You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

**P:** Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a  
new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise,  
now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

*Stand*

**HYMN: “Have no Fear, Little Flock” #764 ELW Vss. 1-3**

## **GREETING**

**P:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of  
the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

## **LITANY**

**P:** The word is near you,

**C: on your lips and in your heart.**

**P:** If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord,

**C: and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will  
be saved.**

**P:** Faith comes from what is heard,

**C: and what is heard comes through the word of Christ.**

## **SALUTATION**

**P:** The Lord be with you.

**C:** And also with you.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Let us pray.

**C:** 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.

*Sit*

### **FIRST READING: Acts 2:42-47**

<sup>41-42</sup> That day about three thousand took him at his word, were baptized and were signed up. They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers. <sup>43-45</sup> Everyone around was in awe—all those wonders and signs done through the apostles! And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person's need was met. <sup>46-47</sup> They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved.

**P:** The word of the Lord.

**C:** Thanks be to God.

*Stand*

### **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

*The Gospel is announced...*

**P:** The Holy Gospel according to John the 10th Chapter.

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

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

<sup>1-5</sup> “Let me set this before you as plainly as I can. If a person climbs over or through the fence of a sheep pen instead of going through the gate, you know he's up to no good—a sheep rustler! The shepherd walks right up to the gate. The gatekeeper opens the gate to him and the sheep recognize his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he gets them all out,

he leads them and they follow because they are familiar with his voice. They won't follow a stranger's voice but will scatter because they aren't used to the sound of it." 6-10 Jesus told this simple story, but they had no idea what he was talking about. So he tried again. "I'll be explicit, then. I am the Gate for the sheep. All those others are up to no good—sheep rustlers, every one of them. But the sheep didn't listen to them. I am the Gate. Anyone who goes through me will be cared for—will freely go in and out, and find pasture. A thief is only there to steal and kill and destroy. I came so they can have real and eternal life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of.

**P:** The gospel of the Lord.

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

*Sit*

**SERMON: Hymn Sing**

*Stand*

**APOSTLE'S CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

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

*A brief silence*

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** Great Physician, walk with those who are grieving, and anoint those who are ill or injured. Restore them to health of body, mind, and spirit. Merciful God,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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,

**C: receive our prayer.**

**P:** 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.

**C: Amen.**

**THE SHARING OF THE PEACE**

**P:** The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C:** And also with you.

*Sit*

**OFFERTORY “Brother James’ Air” Bain/Shaw**

### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

**P:** Merciful God,

**C:** accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

### **THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**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.**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Stand*

### **BLESSING**

**P:** God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ✠ bless you now and forever.

**C:** Amen.

### **DISMISSAL**

**P:** Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

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

**SENDING HYMN:** “What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine” #774 ELW

**POSTLUDE** “How Great Thou Art” Hine/Hansen