

Fourth Sunday of Easter (Good Shepherd Sunday)

May 3, 2020

THEME FOR THE DAY Most modern Christians have little appreciation for the image of shepherd and his sheep. In Judea, a day's pasture was thinly scattered over an unfenced tract of country, covered with dangerous paths, wild beasts, and rolled off into the desert. The shepherd and his character were indispensable. The Good Shepherd carried every sheep in his heart. The Lord uses that picture, "The Good Shepherd willing to give his life for the sheep", to picture for us our Savior, Jesus. On Good Shepherd Sunday we see how sharp the contrast is between true shepherds and false shepherds. All is determined by their relationship to Christ, the only gate for the sheep.

Our Worship Service

HYMNS YOU MAY WISH TO SING 432 "I Am Jesus' Little Lamb"

339 "Today Your Mercy Calls Us" 329 "Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing"

PRAYER OF THE DAY O Lord Jesus Christ, you are the Good Shepherd who laid down your life for the sheep. Lead us now to the still waters of your life-giving Word that we may abide in your Father's house forevermore; for you live and reign with him and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

FIRST LESSON: ACTS 6:1-9; 7:2A, 51-60 Note the sharp contrast between true shepherds and false shepherds. The apostles' care for Christ and his Church leads them to raise up more leaders to serve. See how these new leaders enter by the gate (Christ)! Stephen holds to Christ no matter what the consequences! But how true were Jesus' words about false shepherds: they come only to kill and destroy. With their words and rocks they testified to whom they belonged. Stephen was a martyr until the end, a faithful witness of the Savior. How fitting that on this day when we hear of the Church's first martyr, we remember Stephen, a true shepherd who now dwells in the house of the Lord forever (Psalm 23).

PSALM OF THE DAY:

Psalm 23 CW Page 72 (Or read in your Bible)

SECOND LESSON: 1 PETER 2:19-25 Undoubtedly, the Church was rocked by the martyrdom of Stephen—Peter included. Yet Peter reminds us that not even suffering and tragedy can remove us from the care of our Good Shepherd. To be the gate for straying sheep meant that Jesus had to suffer for us. So Jesus did—willingly, silently—bearing the sins of straying sheep. Now Peter calls us to follow our Shepherd and Overseer, even if it means that we suffer for doing good.

VERSE OF THE DAY Alleluia. Alleluia. Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia. I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me. Alleluia. (John 10:14)

THE GOSPEL: JOHN 10:1-10 The setting of this lesson is crucial. After Jesus healed the man born blind, the Pharisees again rejected Jesus as the Christ and threw the man out of the synagogue. *This lesson is his answer to them.* Jesus' "I am" statements highlight the exclusivity of the Christian message. Christ is Savior, and there is no other! Jesus is the only gate for the sheep, and there is no other! When a man approaches the sheep, how does he seek to enter the pen? Does he use the gate, i.e., does he confess Christ as Savior? True shepherds use the gate, preach Christ, and love the sheep. False shepherds refuse the gate, reject Christ, and destroy the flock.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed, CW Page 19

SERMON (If you have an internet connection, connect to a WELS service at the Websites list BELOW.)

(If you are unable to access the internet, we can send copies of sermons.)

The Lord's Prayer

CW Page 20

Benediction

The Lord Bless You and Keep You.

The Lord Make His Face Shine on You and be Gracious to You.

The Lord Look on You with Favor and Give You Peace.

Welcome to Our Worship Because of the Corona Virus restrictions there will be no regular gatherings for worship services until the ban is lifted. **However, pastor will be at the church from 10:00 AM until Noon on Sundays.** Bulletins, printed sermons, and **Holy Communion will be available at that time.** May the message of our Risen Lord's never failing love bring you the peace and joy that is to be found in Him alone.

Worship Opportunities/Sermon & Services - The following WELS area churches will have sermons and brief services available online for Sunday worship. **If you have internet connections you can access their web sites** - services will be prerecorded so that you can access them at our normal worship times.

Risen Savior, McFarland
Resurrection, Verona/Monroe
St Matthews, Janesville

www.risensaviorlutheran.org
www.rlcverona.org
www.stmatthewsjanesville.org

Large Print Bulletin/Sermons Large print copies of the bulletin are available. Please, let us know if you would like the large print version.

Offerings The church council is recommending that for the time being offerings be mailed to the PARSONAGE address, where they will be picked up regularly. Please, use checks instead of cash whenever possible and include your offering envelope or NUMBER. The address is: St Peter – Financial Secretary 1708 West 6th Ave., Brodhead, WI 53520.

<i>Offerings through April:</i>	<u>April, 2020</u>	<u>April Year-to Date</u>
OFFERINGS	\$7,695.00	\$32,251.24

Prayer Requests Please, remember the following in your prayers:

Those In Care Facilities Larry Stefanik (Now at Woods Crossing.), Olga Wolfe, Ruth Brobst, Roger Theisfedt & Dale Roennenburg – **NO VISITATION PERMITTED.**

Recently Returned Home from Rehab. - Karen Cornell

In Addition These Shut-ins - self-quarantine: Rosemary Graham; and Lorraine Neuberger.

Those With Compromised Health - Tad Drain - increased complications with pain; Dana Harper will return to Mayo Clinic soon for a regular infusion after cancer treatments; Don Bucholtz is continuing treatments for cancer; and Alicia Bettenhausen after success heart procedure. **Phone calls also would be nice!**

Please bring any personal or family prayer requests to the attention of Pastor Hellwig, particularly if a family member, friend, or member of the congregation is entering the hospital.

Sunday School and Catechism Instruction – At the present time, both are being offered remotely.

Holy Communion - Pastor Hellwig will continue to be available to offer private spiritual counsel and private communion upon request - either at church or at members' homes. Please call in advance.

Hardship - If you are experiencing any unusual hardship related to Covid 19 (or other situation) please don't hesitate to let Pastor Hellwig or any church council member know (We can't help if we don't know.)

Pastor Vacancy - We have requested a new seminary graduate be assigned to St. Peter. **Assignment day is scheduled for May 21st.** We will find out at that time if a graduate has been assigned to St. Peter. Please keep this call in your prayers!

Bible Reading/Study Series – This study series began on 4/13/20 with the first lesson sheet (Chapters 1-9). A fourth sheet (Chapters 22-29) was made available by 5/4/20.

Serving You

Pastor Glen Hellwig

Vacancy Pastor

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First Lesson – ACTS 6:1-9; 7:2A, 51-60

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. 2So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." 5This proposal pleased the whole group. **They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit;** also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. 7So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. 8Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. 9Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)--Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia. These men began to argue with Stephen, 2To this he replied: "Brothers and fathers, listen to me!... 51" You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! 52Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him--53you who have received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it." 54When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56"Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." 57At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Second Lesson – I Peter 1:17-21

17Since you call on a Father who judges each man's work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. 18For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, 19but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. 20He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. 21Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

Gospel Lesson - JOHN 10:1-10 "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. 2The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. 3The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a strangers voice." 6Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. 7Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. 8All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. 10The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.