

Welcome

P: Welcome to our video Worship service. I'm so thankful you are able to join our online community. We are gathered via video on this fourth Sunday of Easter, May 5th, 2020. We worship in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.

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.

P: He is risen!

C: He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

Prayer of the Day

Let's 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. We pray this 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

⁴²[The 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, ⁴⁷praising 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: Psalm 23

¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures and leads me beside still waters.**

³ You restore my soul, O LORD, and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴ **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.**

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶ **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

¹⁹It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰If 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. ²¹For 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."

²³When 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. ²⁴He 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. ²⁵For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint John, the 10th Chapter.

Gospel: John 10:1-10

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

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

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

It's Hard to Believe

And now for our sermon message for today...

P: We respond to God's Word by confessing our faith using the words of the Nicene Creed. (If you don't know the words, just pray them along with me...):

C: **We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven; by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

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.

A brief silence.

Shepherding God, we thank you for the educational ministries of your church. Enrich the work of teachers, professors, mentors, advisors, and faculty at colleges, seminaries, and vocational learning sites. During this time of distance learning where schooling is being conducted at home, empower and strengthen parents to help their children when they are at a distance from their teachers. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Creating God, we praise you for those who maintain and operate farm equipment, for those who plant the crops that sustain us. We lift up our local farmers and pray for your strong arms to keep them safe. We pray for our food supply chain, that it will once again be filled with good things for all people to eat and the places that process our food might be safe for all food service workers. Strengthen the hands of all people who help feed the world. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Guiding God, no one should be in want. Bid the nations to return to your paths of righteousness and inspire our leaders to walk in your ways, so that all may have the opportunity to live abundantly. Help us to learn to measure what abundance means by the values of your Kingdom and not by those of this world. Help us to be more generous, more loving, and kinder to all those with whom we share this world. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Comforting God, you carry us tenderly. We pray for those who walk through dark valleys, overshadowed by anxiety and overwhelmed with suffering. We lift before you this day all those we name aloud and those we hold dear in the silence of our hearts. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Nurturing God, you desire justice for the hungry. Bless advocacy work, food pantries, and feeding ministries. We especially raise up for your blessing the Choice Food Pantry, the Castine Food Pantry, and the Grace Resurrection Community Center. Draw in volunteer in our congregations (*local ministries may be named*). May none of our neighbors lack for basic needs. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

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. Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

With bold confidence in your love, almighty God, we place all for whom we pray into your eternal care; through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: During our time of social distancing, we share the peace with one another in a slightly different way. As I share the peace of Christ with you, I ask you to

pick at least one person each day this week to personally share the peace of the Lord. Please remember to keep your socially acceptable distance, but you can still call them or send a card, or an email. I recommend a personal call because your voice might be the high point of their day! One person each day isn't a lot to ask, but it will keep us united while were apart. So, I'll start us off...

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P: The living Lord Jesus Christ is our tie that binds us together, let us pray as He taught his disciples.....

C: 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.

May the One who brought forth Jesus from the dead raise you to new life, fill you with hope, and turn your mourning into dancing. Almighty God, Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

P: In everything you do, go in Christ's Love.

C: Seeking, welcoming, and serving all. Amen!