

WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE

THE BIBLE – We believe that EVERY word in the Bible is inspired by God, and therefore the whole Bible is the true, unalterable Word of God, clearly teaching the way of salvation. (2Ti. 3:15-17).

GOD – We believe that God is ONE (Dt. 6:4) and that He has revealed Himself in three distinct Persons (Mt. 3:13-17), the Father, our Creator and Preserver; the Son, Jesus, Who is both God and Man, and our only Saviour; the Holy Spirit, Who creates faith in our hearts and enables us to live a God-pleasing life.

MAN – We believe that God created man with body and soul, in His image, but man of his own free will lost this image through sin. (Gn. 1:27; 2:7; 3.)

SIN – “Sin is the transgression of the Law.” (1Jn 3:4). There are two kinds of sin: original (inherited) sin (Ps. 51:5) and actual sin (sin in thought, word and deed) (Mt. 15:19). Man is subject to death and eternal damnation by reason of the guilt that attaches to sin.

REDEMPTION – We believe that God out of pure love and mercy redeemed mankind from sin through the all-sufficient sacrifice of His only Son, Jesus, and His resurrection shows that God was satisfied with the work of Christ. (Jn 3:16; 1Jn 2:2; Ro. 4:25).

FAITH – We believe that the sinner must personally receive the merits of Jesus for salvation and trust that, “Jesus died for me.” (Jn 17:3; Ja 1:21; Ps. 31:14).

THE CHURCH – We believe that the church, established by Christ is the whole number of believers in Christ, for only believers are members of the church. Jesus Christ is its one and only foundation (Ep. 2:19-22). The church is found wherever the Gospel of Jesus Christ is preached and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution.

SACRAMENTS – We believe that Christ instituted two sacraments, and when Baptism is administered to infants and adults, according to the command of Christ, God offers His grace and forgiveness of sins (Acts 22:16). In the Lord’s Supper, believing communicants, with the bread and wine, also really receive Christ’s body and blood for the forgiveness of sins (1Co. 11:24-25).

SECOND COMING OF CHRIST – We believe that Christ will return visibly to earth (Acts 1:11) on the Last Day (Mk. 13:32) to judge the world (Acts 10:42). The believers will go to heaven, to be with God forever (1Th. 4:13-18). The unbelievers will go to hell, eternally separated from God (Mt. 25:32, 46).

RESURRECTION – We believe that on the Last Day believers in Christ will rise from the dead, their souls reunited with their earthly bodies and glorified by Christ (Jn 14:19; 17:24).

The Fourth Sunday of Easter

May 8, 2022

INTROIT

Psalm 78:70-72; 79:13; Antiphon: John 10:14, 15b

I am the good shepherd.

I know my own and my own know me,
and I lay down my life for the sheep.

He chose David his servant and took him from the sheepfolds;

from following the nursing ewes
he brought him to shepherd Jacob his people, Israel his inheritance.

With upright heart he shepherded them

and guided them with his skillful hand.

But we your people, the sheep of your pasture, will give thanks to you forever;

from generation to generation we will recount your praise.

**Glorify be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;**

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

I am the good shepherd.

I know my own and my own know me,
and I lay down my life for the sheep.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

P *Almighty God, merciful Father,
since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep
grant us Your Holy Spirit
that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd
we may know Him who calls us each by name
and follow where He leads;
through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord,
who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.*

C *♪[Amen]♪*

GRADUAL

adapted from Matthew 28:7; Hebrews 2:7; Psalm 8:6

Christ has risen from the dead,

[God the Father] has crowned him with glory and honor,

He has given him dominion over the works of his hands;

he has put all things under his feet.

RESPONSE FOR PRAYERS

After each petition:

P *Lord, in Your mercy,*

C *hear our prayer.*

Acts 20:17-35 (ESV)

¹⁷ Now from Miletus [Paul] sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. ¹⁸ And when they came to him, he said to them:

“You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials that happened to me through the plots of the Jews; ²⁰ how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, ²¹ testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. ²² And now, behold, I am going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and afflictions await me. ²⁴ But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ And now, behold, I know that none of you among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom will see my face again. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you, ²⁷ for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. ²⁸ Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. ²⁹ I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the

flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish everyone with tears. ³² And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³ I coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴ You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. ³⁵ In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

Revelation 7:9-17 (ESV)

⁹ After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” ¹¹ And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

¹³ Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where have

they come?"¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know." And he said to me, "These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

¹⁵ "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. ¹⁶ They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷ For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

John 10:22-30 (ESV)

²² At that time the Feast of

Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter,²³ and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. ²⁴ So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me, ²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. ²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Acts 20:17–35

Revelation 7:9–17

John 10:22–30

The Good Shepherd Cares for His Sheep

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came from the Father and became flesh among us in order to rescue us, His sheep. He laid down His life for us and took it up again in order to give us eternal life. By the preaching of His Gospel, He calls His sheep to Himself and keeps them with Him forever. As they hear His voice and follow Him, "*they will never perish*" (John 10:28), for "*no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand*" (John 10:29). In the same way, faithful pastors (literally, "shepherds") "*care for the church of God, which He obtained with His own blood*" (Acts 20:28), "*testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Acts 20:21). Therefore, with all the company of heaven, the Good Shepherd gathers his flock in worship, as they cry: "*Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!*" (Rev. 7:10).

Next Week's Readings from God's Word:

May 15: The Fifth Sunday of Easter (Series C):

Acts 11:1-18, Revelation 21:1-7, John 16:12-22 *or* John 13:31-35