

## FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

By This We Know Love

April 25, 2021

### AS WE GATHER



We hear so many mixed messages of what love is. Popular songs from the past decades or even more contemporary ones tell of what love can and should be; poems, memes, and other influences also are commonly read and seen; even our own emotions and feelings strive to tell us what love is and should feel like. Despite all these mixed messages, our Lord tells us how we are to know real and perfect love. In our Epistle we hear, “By this we know love, that Jesus laid down His life for us” (1 John 3:16). Today, we focus on the fact that as our Good Shepherd, Jesus has laid down His life for His sheep. By that sacrifice on the cross and Easter victory, we can rejoice in a perfect love that lasts and an unconditional love that forgives as our Good Shepherd continues to guide, lead, and direct us through all our days.

### ✠ PREPARATION ✠

**HYMN**                    “Jesus Sinners Doth Receive”                    LSB 609

### INVOCATION

**Pastor:**        In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:**        **Amen.**

**OPENING SENTENCES**        *1 John 3:16a, 24; John 10:11, adapted*

**Pastor:**        Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**People:**        **He is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

**Pastor:**        By this we know love,

**People:**        **that He laid down His life for us.**

**Pastor:**        “I am the good shepherd,” says the Lord.

**People:**        **The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.**

**Pastor:**        Whoever keeps His commandments abides in God, and God in him.

**People:**        **And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.**

## CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

Pastor: Surely he has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.

**People: But he was pierced for our transgressions;  
he was crushed for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,  
and with his wounds we are healed.**

Pastor: All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned—every one—to his own way;  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.

**People: He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent,  
so he opened not his mouth.**

**People: Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us  
to everlasting life. Amen.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His  
sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ,  
and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the  
Father and of the † Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE** “Have No Fear, Little Flock” LSB 735

✘ **WORD** ✘

## SALUTATION

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Pastor: Let us pray.

Risen Lord, You are the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the  
sheep. They are Yours, and nothing will snatch them from Your hand. In  
the love You've shown and the perfect love we know through Your Spirit,

empower Your flock to reach others, that all may be guided by Your shepherding grace; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People:** **Amen.**

**FIRST READING**     *Acts 4:1–12*     (Peter and John witness before the council.)

Lector:     This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:**     **Thanks be to God.**

**EPISTLE**     *1 John 3:16–24*     (Love one another.)

Lector:     This is the Word of the Lord.

**People:**     **Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE**     *Romans 6:9; John 10:14*

Pastor:     Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over Him. Alleluia.

**People:**     **I am the good shepherd. I know My own and My own know Me. Alleluia.**

**HOLY GOSPEL**     *John 10:11–18*     (Jesus the Good Shepherd)

Pastor:     The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter.

**People:**     **Glory to You, O Lord.**

(The Gospel is read.)

Pastor:     This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:**     **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY**     “The King of Love My Shepherd Is”     *LSB 709*

**SERMON**

**CREED**     *Apostles’ Creed*

**People:**     **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
                  maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.  
The third day He rose again from the dead.  
He ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.  
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy Christian Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life T everlasting. Amen.

## PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

**LORD'S PRAYER**     *Matthew 6:9–13*

**People:**     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.

**OFFERTORY**     “I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb”     LSB 740

**BENEDICTION**     *Numbers 6:24–26*

**Pastor:**     The Lord bless you and keep you.  
                  The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
                  The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

**People:**     Amen.

**HYMN**             “Thy Strong Word”     LSB 578