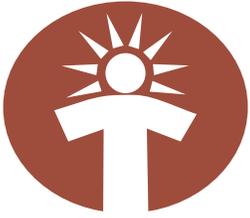


Welcome!

First Congregational Church of Webster Groves
United Church of Christ



Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

May 3, 2020

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
FEAST OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD**



*We respond to God's call by welcoming everyone
regardless of ability, age, ethnicity, race, gender identity,
sexual orientation or socio-economic background.*

*To proclaim in word and deed the love of Christ,
we affirm that all may share in the full life, ministry, fellowship,
responsibilities and blessing of our congregation.*

*No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.*

Those who are receiving this printed worship service in time to do so, we encourage you to participate with your siblings in Christ at 10:00am, Sunday, May 3. You can connect either

A. with a Zoom app on your home computer or smartphone, using the Meeting ID 975 1194 9295 and Password 009716 and following the prompts, OR

B. (audio only) by dialing 312-626-6799 from your home phone and entering the Meeting ID and Password.

This service will include a remembrance of Christ's bread and cup; if you would like to participate, please prepare a setting of bread with wine, grape juice, or water to be consumed at the designated moment.

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. David Denoon, *Pastor*

TOLLING OF THE BELL

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

PRELUDE

Pastorale in F-Major (BWV 590)

J. S. Bach

OPENING WORDS (Unison)

Psalm 23

Rev. Denoon

King James Version

The LORD is my shepherd. I shall not want: he maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters; he restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake: yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil. For thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me; thou preparest a table in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. Amen.

RAISING THE COVENANT

As the body of Christ, let us say together our covenant...

We who are called of God into this Christian community covenant together: to seek to know the will of God, to experience the joy and struggle of discipleship, to proclaim in word and deed the love of Christ, and to work for peace and justice among all people. We trust God's promise of grace and forgiveness and the presence of the Holy Spirit in our trials and rejoicing.

GATHERING HYMN

God Is My Shepherd

Scottish Psalter
adapt. Lavon Baylor

God is my shepherd, I'll not want,
I feed in pastures green.
God grants me rest and bids me drink
from waters calm and clean.
Through daily tasks, I'm blessed and led
by One I have not seen.

When I must pass through shadowed vale,
where loss and death await,
I will not fear for God is there,
my shepherd strong and great,
Whose rod and staff will comfort me
and all my fears abate.

Goodness and mercy all my days
will surely follow me;
and where God reigns in heaven and earth,
my dwelling place will be.
My shepherd blesses, cares, and leads
through all eternity.

PRAYER OF APPROACH (Unison) Tracey Harris, *Director of Christian Education & Student Minister*
A prayer of Clement of Alexandria

**Shepherd of tender youth,
guiding in love and truth through devious ways,
Christ, triumphant ruling,
we come your name to sing,
and here our children bring,
to sing your praise.
Christ, ever be our guide,
our shepherd and our pride,
our staff and song;
Jesus, O Christ of God,
by your enduring word
lead us where you have trod,
make our faith strong. Amen.**

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY

Merrimon Boyd, *Student Minister*

THE WORD SHARED

Tracey Harris

From the Gospels

John 10:1-10

New Revised Standard Version, ad.

¹“Amen, 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 the shepherd, and the sheep hear the shepherd’s voice. Calling each sheep by name, the shepherd leads them out.

⁴“Once they have all answered the shepherd by coming out of the sheepfold, the shepherd goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know the shepherd’s voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run away because they do not know the voice of strangers.”

⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with the Pharisees, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. ⁷So Jesus [tried another metaphor], “Amen, 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.”

Response.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the people.

People: Thanks be to God.

PRAYER HYMN

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

D. A. Thrupp

Savior, like a shepherd lead us,
much we need your tender care;
in your pleasant pastures feed us,
for our use your folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us, yours we are.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
you have bought us, yours we are.

We are yours, in love befriend us,
be the guardian of our way;
keep your flock, from sin defend us,
seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus,
hear your children when we pray.

MESSAGE OF THE DAY

“The Shadow of Death”

Rev. Denoon

INTERLUDE

The 23rd Psalm (Dedicated to My Mother)
Video by David Denoon

Bobby McFerrin

The Lord is my shepherd, I have all I need:
She makes me to lie down in green meadows,
Beside the still waters she will lead.
She restores my soul, she rights my wrongs:
She leads me in a path of good things
And fills my heart with song.
Even though I walk through a dark and dreary land
There is nothing that can shake me,
She has said she won't forsake me,
I'm in her hand.
She sets a table before me in the presence of my foes:
She anoints my head with oil,
And my heart overflows.
Surely, surely goodness and kindness will follow me all the days of my life,
And I will live in her house
For ever, for ever and ever.
Glory be to our Mother, and Daughter, and to the Holy of Holies:

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
World without end. Amen.

RITUAL AT CHRIST'S TABLE

*For this portion of the service, you are encouraged to have at hand a roll or slice of bread to use in this devotion and share with anyone else present, as well as a small serving of wine, grape juice, or water for each person. These will be consumed at the indication of the Pastor. **If you are celebrating at home without the aid of an electronic device or telephone, you are encouraged to approach this portion of your reading with reverence and to appreciate that your fellow church members are doing so as well, participating with bread and cup as you feel comfortable doing.***

Invitation

We Lift Our Joys and Concerns to God

Please remember the following as you pray, today:

Joyce Berger, a senior member living at home with support of family and friends

Marshall Brooks, in a senior residence in Arkansas

The Rev. Dr. Paul Davis, in rehab after a bout with poor health

Margaret Gustafson, with a chronic health condition

Carol McCoy, in need of prayerful support

Bob Moody, undergoing chemotherapy treatment a positive prognosis

The Rev. Jack Newsome, isolated in assisted living

Ken Perry, undergoing radiation treatment with a positive prognosis

Becky Scott, with health challenges

Jim and Gail and Colleen and Ryne, friends of our Congregation

who with their extended family and friends are reeling from a recent tragedy

health care workers, first responders, and delivery and grocery workers

people living with COVID-19

people who are isolated and alone

people with stressed home situations which are intensified by quarantine

Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy, for calling forth the creation and raising us from dust by the breath of your being.

We bless you for the beauty and bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none.

We remember the covenant you made with your people Israel, and we give you thanks for all our ancestors in faith. We rejoice that you call us to reconciliation with you and all people everywhere and that you remain faithful to your covenant even when we are faithless.

We rejoice that you call the entire human family to our table of sacrifice and victory.

We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news. Born of Mary, our sister in faith, you made Christ to be our Passover Lamb, raised him from the dead, and have raised us up to

be faithful sheep in the flock of our Good Shepherd.

We bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the Church you have gathered. With your sons and daughters of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy:

Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!

Words of Institution

We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, and on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the Feast of Freedom.

Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

Prayer of Consecration

Eternal God, you spread a table before us. Here are gifts of the earth and of human labor. We present to you our very lives, committed to your service in behalf of all the world.

So, send your Holy Spirit on these gifts and on us. Strengthen your universal Church that we all may be champions of peace and justice in all the world. Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

Be present with us as we share this meal, and throughout all our lives, that we may know you as the Holy One, who with Christ and the Holy Spirit, lives for ever. Amen.

Fraction (Breaking the Bread and Blessing the Cup)

The bread which we break is the communion of the bread of heaven.

The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the cup of salvation.

Agnus Dei (Unison)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Prayer of Our Savior (Unison)

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Partaking of Bread and Cup

At this time, please receive bread and cup, bearing in mind the spiritual presence of the bread of heaven and the cup of salvation. These the Christ shares with us and all humanity, as our Gate, Gatekeeper, and Good Shepherd.

Prayer of Thanksgiving (Unison)

Almighty God, we give you thanks for the gift of our Savior's presence in the simplicity and splendor of this holy meal. Unite us with all who share the

Shepherd's feast, that we may faithfully proclaim the good news of your love and that your universal church may be a rainbow of hope in an uncertain world; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Hebrews 13:20-21

NRSV

Now may the God of peace,
who brought back from the dead
our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep,
by the blood of the eternal covenant
make you complete in everything good
so that you may do God's will,
working among us that which is pleasing in God's sight,
through Jesus Christ,
to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

POSTLUDE

"Pifa" (from *Messiah*)

G. F. Handel

DISMISSAL

Rev. Denoon



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Seek Christ in each. Serve God in all.

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