

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Fourth Sunday of Easter
April 22, 2018



Rev. Arden Dorn, Transitional Minister
Rita Jordan, Organist
Dale Tessman, Lay Reader

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Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

The image of the Good Shepherd shows us how the risen Christ brings us to life. It is the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, one of mutual knowledge and love, that gives the shepherd authority. The shepherd's willingness to lay down his life for the sheep shows his love. First John illustrates what it means to lay down our lives for one another by the example of sharing our wealth with any sister or brother in need.

Caring for creation is an essential component of religious faith and witness. Faithful "earthkeeping" can deepen our relationship both with God and with one another, as we work for the healing of the world.

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The assembly stands.

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

In the name of the Father,
and of the + Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Holy God, you cause rain to fall on the just and unjust. Sometimes we are part of the just, and sometimes we are part of the unjust. You have given us incredible gifts of soil, water, and air that sustain our entire lives. When we are ungrateful, forgive us. When we forget to take care of those resources, forgive us. When we hoard these resources and keep them from others who need them, forgive us. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon us to refresh us and renew us so that we can use the gifts you have given us to care for each other and our earth. Amen.

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of + Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN (ELW p. 423)

Shall We Gather at the River

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

LITANY FOR EARTH DAY

Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice!

Let the sea roar, and let the field exclaim!

The trees of the forest will sing for joy!

God cares for all of God's creation.

When God began to create the heavens and the earth the earth was without shape, and it was dark over the deep sea while God's Spirit swept over the face of the waters.

God created everything and called it "good."

God created humanity in God's own image to take charge and take care of the earth, the plants, and the animals.

From the smallest seed to the largest tree, from the smallest atom to the largest continent God, calls upon us to care for our good world.

It is our responsibility and great joy to care for our world.

Today, on Earth Day, we pledge our continued efforts to care for our world, to protect endangered animals, to secure safe drinking water for areas without it, to reduce our energy use, and to advocate for the protection of these resources and others. With God's help we will care for God's creation. Amen.

CANTICLE OF PRAISE (ELW page 176 in Setting 7, at the front of the hymnal)

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. **O heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty. Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness. For the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

Oremos. **Oh Padre celestial, que ha llenado el mundo de belleza. Abre los ojos para contemplar tu mano graciosa en todas tus obras; que, regocijándose en toda tu creación, podemos aprender servirte con alegría. Por el bien de él a través del cual todas las cosas fueron hechas, tu hijo, Jesucristo nuestro Señor, amén.**

The assembly is seated.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING: Acts 4:5-12

Peter and John had been arrested the previous day because they were proclaiming the news of the resurrection to the people. In today's reading, Peter is filled with the Holy Spirit so that he is able to proclaim salvation in Jesus' name to the religious authorities.

⁵The next day [the] rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" ⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead. ¹¹This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.'

¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSIVE READING: Psalm 65

Our God, we look forward to praising you in Zion. We will keep our promises to you.

²All people will come to you, because you hear and answer prayer.

³**When our sins became too much for us, you forgave our lawless acts.**

⁴Blessed are those you choose and bring near to worship you.

You bring us into the courtyards of your holy temple.

There in your house we are filled with all kinds of good things.

⁵**God our Savior, you answer us with right and wonderful deeds.**

People all over the world and beyond the farthest oceans put their hope in you.

⁶You formed the mountains by your power. You showed how strong you are.

⁷You calmed the oceans and their roaring waves. You calmed the angry words and actions of the nations.

⁸**Everyone on earth is amazed at the wonderful things you have done.**

What you do makes people from one end of the earth to the other sing for joy.

⁹You take care of the land and water it. You make it able to grow many crops.

You fill your streams with water. You do that to provide the people with grain. That's what you

have decided to do for the land. ¹⁰You water its rows. You smooth out its bumps. You soften it with showers. And you bless its crops.

¹¹**You bring the year to a close with huge crops. You provide more than enough food.**

¹²The grass grows thick even in the desert. The hills are dressed with gladness.

¹³**The meadows are covered with flocks and herds. The valleys are dressed with grain. They sing and shout for joy.**

SECOND READING: 1 John 3:16-24

Jesus' death on our behalf is the clearest demonstration of divine love. This is the very love we share with others, not just through our words but especially through our deeds. In sharing such love we fulfill God's commandments.

¹⁶We know love by this, that [Jesus Christ] laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him.

²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: ELW 172

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO: John 10:11-18

Glory to You, O Lord!

In language that recalls the twenty-third psalm, Jesus describes himself as the shepherd who cares for his sheep. He is willing to die for them, and he is able to overcome death for them.

[Jesus said:] ¹¹"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ!

The assembly is seated.

SERMON

Rev. Arden Dorn

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY

(ELW p. 824)

This is My Father's World

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rejoicing in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we pray for the witness of the church, the wholeness of creation, and all who are in need.

Bless all who shepherd your sheep and guide them in their serving. We pray for church custodians, office managers, Sunday school teachers, confirmation leaders, baptismal sponsors, deacons, pastors, youth workers, and bishops. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Restore natural environments damaged by our hands. We pray for river valleys and grassy plains, coral reefs and arctic ice, mountains, deserts, and marshlands. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Protect and guide first responders. Bring mercy and justice with their presence. We pray for military personnel, firefighters, paramedics, and police officers, and for disaster relief and crisis intervention teams. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heal and renew all who ache for a better tomorrow. We pray for the unemployed and underemployed, the forgotten, the nameless, and the outcasts; for our enemies; and for our loved ones. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give to all who are restless, reckless, or uncertain the peace you promise that is deeper and richer than anything we can imagine. We pray for all who live with chronic pain, who live with anxiety, and who are ill or hospitalized especially for Elvira, Alex, James, Lorain, Pauline, Roxanne, Shane, Linda, Norma, Ann, Laquita, Brenda, Helen, Linda, Jack, Michael, Raymond, Steve, Evalina, Francis, Barbara, Ella, Khloe, Jim, Charles, Marlane, Yvonne, Anyemarie, Mary Ruth, Kyle, Cody, and Norma. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Nourish us with the testimony of all the disciples who have gone before us. We give thanks for the faithful departed and their witness in every age. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We entrust all our prayers to you, gracious God. Receive them by the power of the Holy Spirit and the love of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.

The assembly stands.

OFFERING PRAYER

Generous God, you have blessed us with the resources to share the good news of your love for all creation. We dedicate these gifts and pray that they may bring healing, wholeness, and hope to the world, that future generations may also know your graciousness and love.

Amen.

Großzügige Gott, du hast uns gesegnet mit den Mitteln, die die Gute Nachricht von der Liebe für die ganze Schöpfung zu teilen. Wir widmen diese Geschenke und betet, dass sie Heilung, Ganzheit bringen können, und der Welt Hoffnung, dass zukünftige Generationen mögen auch wissen, ihre Freundlichkeit und Liebe.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for the glorious resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ, the true Paschal Lamb who gave himself to take away our sin; who in dying has destroyed death, and in rising has brought us to eternal life. And so, with Mary Magdalene and Peter and all the witnesses of the resurrection, with earth and sea and all their creatures, and with angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

San - to, san - to, san - to, es el Se - ñor,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,

Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to, es el Se - ñor.
 God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.

San - to, san - to, san - to, san - to, es el Se - ñor,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord . . . God,

Dios del u - ni - ver - so; san - to, es el Se - ñor.
 God of might and pow - er; ho - ly is the Lord.

Ho - san - na en el cie - lo, ho - san - na en la
 Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na here on

tie - rra. Ben - di - to el que vie - ne en el
 earth. Blest is he who comes in the

nom - bre del Se - ñor. Ho - san - na en el
 name . . . of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the

cie - lo, ho - san - na en la tie - rra. Ben -
 high - est, ho - san - na here on earth.

di - to el que vie - ne en el nom - bre del Se - ñor.
 Blest is he who comes in the name . . . of the Lord.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink,

saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord; to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever.

LORD'S PRAYER

Loving God, we remember that Jesus taught us to pray saying, "Our Father..."

You created us, you made this world, and you called your creation very good. Yet often we forget that you are our loving Parent who continues to bless your world.

Jesus told us that you are "...in heaven..."

Yet we fail to live in awe of you. We take you for granted, and we don't see the awesome beauty of the world you have made.

We pray, "Hallowed be your name..."

We confess that our reverence for you does not always lead us to care reverently for your earth, sky and sea.

We pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven..."

We confess that we often put our own interests first-exploiting your creation, and living for our own convenience and self-interest.

We pray, "Give us today our daily bread..."

We confess that we consume more than our share of the world's resources, while billions go hungry every day and your whole creation suffers.

We pray, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us..."

We confess that we see these words only in spiritual terms, while the Bible is filled with teachings about economic justice and creation care.

We pray, "Save us from the time of trial..."

Help us to resist the temptations of spending more, using more, acquiring more, and wasting more.

We pray, "Deliver us from evil..."

Free us from greed and self-centeredness that separate us from you and others.

We pray, "For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever..."

Help us to know that in caring for your wonderful world, we are working for your kingdom, being good stewards of your creative power, and giving you glory.

We pray, "Amen..."

We end our prayers with "Amen," a word that means "let it be so." We know we can be faithful disciples by your grace. Amen!

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Now let us feast this Easter day on Christ, the bread of heaven. Hallelujah!

The assembly is seated.

DISTRIBUTION – All are WELCOME at the table of the Lord.

This meal gives you strength for your journey of faith & life. Go forward as the body of Christ in your family, community and the world. Children or anyone choosing not to commune, but wishing to be blessed, may indicate this by folding their arms across their chest. Anyone who is unable to come forward may indicate to an usher that you wish to receive communion where you are seated.

COMMUNION HYMN

(ELW p. 465)

As the Grains of Wheat

Following Communion, the assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of heaven to nourish your people. Send us forth as witnesses to Jesus' resurrection that we may show your glory to all the world; through the same Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

BLESSING

May God who has brought us from death to life fill you with great joy. Almighty God, Father, ✙ Son, and Holy Spirit, bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN (ELW p. 835)

All Creatures, Worship God Most High!

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!

You are the body of Christ raised up for the world. Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

Welcome!

We have all come to St. Paul's by different paths, and from various walks of life. Through worship, study, prayer and fellowship we each seek to deepen our faith, comfort and encourage one another and dedicate our lives more fully to sharing Christ in our homes, our community and the world. All are welcome at St. Paul's. We are eager to know you, and we invite you to get to know us.

If you are unable to hear, require a bulletin, or need any other assistance, please signal an usher.

For Prayerful Consideration

Ill or Injured: Elvira Boehm, Alex Caballero, James Castillo, Lorain Chandler, Pauline Davidson, Roxanne Dorn, Shane Edens, Linda Franke, Norma Foreman, Ann Gary, Laquita Gibbens, Brenda Gregory, Helen Grimm, Linda Henning, Jack Hockey, Michael Janysek, Raymond Jenkins, Steve Kelly, Evalina, Francis Kempe, Barbara Kopplin, Ella Manka, Khloe Martinez, Charles Pierce, Marlane Smith, Yvonne Watkins, Anyemarie, Mary Ruth Witte, Kyle Worthy, Cody Zaiantz, and Norma Zamzow.

For those in the military: Nick Adams, Allen Bowles, Justin Chandler, Justin Elkins, Rodney Foreman, Jamaica Goodhue, Jacob Jones, Felipe Leal, Jr., Garrett Peterson, Michael Rosales, James Skinner, Chris Sustaita, Kassie Thompson, John Vasquez, and Delmiro Villanueva.

Birthdays: Paul Pfeifer (April 25), Grace Thompson (April 27)

Tools for turning “Caring for Creation” social statement into action

Twenty-five years ago, the ELCA adopted the “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice” social statement (ELCA.org/SocialStatements).

How has your congregation been discussing, affirming and putting into practice this timeless statement? Can you pledge to protect and steward the life-giving resources God has entrusted to us? Our observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation continues to acknowledge that we are a church always in renewal, always learning and growing – including how the church cares for creation, the world we live in and humanity.

How are the biblical, theological and ethical foundations of caring for God's gift of creation and our vocation to love our neighbor reflected and acted on in your

congregation and community? Lutherans Restoring Creation has developed and gathered resources for putting these convictions and teachings into action. A good place to begin is downloading – for free – “Our Congregation's Covenant to Care for Creation” and “Becoming a Creation-Care Congregation: A Self-Organizing Kit.”

These and other resources focus on different aspects of congregational life, including worship, education, facilities and property, public witness and personal discipleship. Customize your creation-care action plan according to the needs, pre-



paredness and passions of your congregation council and members. Turn visions into plans with timelines; celebrate God's abundance reflected in creation through joyous worship; and offer hope and healing through meaningful, Scripture-driven conversations respectful of participants and diverse perspectives.

Lutherans Restoring Creation is a grass-roots movement promoting care for creation in the ELCA. Learn more, explore resources and events, and join the network at LutheransRestoringCreation.org.

Synod Assembly 2018 Bulletin of Reports & Materials

The Bulletin of Reports is available online. There will be an updated Bulletin of Reports posted April 25th. You will be notified if there are additional updates to the Bulletin of Reports after April 25th.

For those who would like to print items from the Bulletin of Reports prior to assembly, there is a section called "Action Items" which includes items of which the assembly will vote. This is a much smaller packet than the full Bulletin of Reports. Please wait to print either Action Items or the Bulletin of Reports until May 1st as there may be additional updates. During and after the assembly, any remaining materials and reports will be added.

We encourage you to bring an electronic device and utilize the Guidebook App to access all the materials of the assembly. There will be free wifi available in the convention center. Stay tuned for details on downloading the Guidebook.

Bishop's Sunday Sermon is available for congregations to utilize on Sunday while the rostered leader and voting members are at assembly.

www.swtsynod.org/businessinformation

Prayer Shawls



People from across the synod have been making prayer shawls for voting members to wear during the Bishop's Election process. Preparation began early in 2017 and there was a significant number gathered at the WELCA Spring Gathering of Alamo and Cibolo Creek Conferences this spring. Michelle Smith from Galilean in Corpus Christi has made over 50 shawls herself. We are still short a few shawls



for the assembly. If you can help, please contact Pr. Sue Irvin for details. sue.irvin68@gmail.com 361-243-0981.

Assembly Choir

Sunday morning worship will have an assembly choir and a hand bell choir. If you would like to join the choir, contact Cynthia at 512-644-6475.

Non-Registered Individuals: "Observers"

All are welcome to participate in worship. Non-registered individuals may attend plenary sessions after signing-in as Observers. Seating is limited! Only registered individuals will be guaranteed a seat. We do plan to live stream the synod assembly, so stay tuned for details.

Congregational Plant

Every congregation is asked to bring a 4" potted plant in an aluminum sleeve, and each plant should contain a prayer challenge that your congregation is facing. At the conclusion of the assembly, each congregation will take another congregation's plant with them and pray for them.



For additional information, visit www.swtsynod.org/assembly2018