



**Grace Lutheran Church  
of South Burnaby, BC**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church In Canada**

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**Fourth Sunday of Easter  
May 11, 2025  
Now the Feast and Celebration  
Hymnal Supplement (1991)**

The gift of new life, of eternal life, is the gift of the risen Christ. It is the promise of Jesus. It was true for Dorcas in Joppa. It was true for those “who have come out of the great ordeal” in the Revelation vision. It is true for us and for all the baptized: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*We at Grace Lutheran Church strive to reflect and proclaim the love of God shown to us by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit by providing an inclusive and supportive environment through loving care and community service.*

A warm welcome to all who are worshipping with us in person or online! We appreciate your contribution to the community today: with your voice, your presence, and just the blessing that you are. May you be nurtured by God's Word, empowered by the love of Christ, and stirred by the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in this service this day, for the sake of God's mission in the world.

Grace Lutheran Church worships, prays, and serves on the traditional and unceded lands and territories of the hən̓q̓əmin̓əm̓ (Musqueam) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) speaking peoples.

## GATHERING

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather to worship the Lord our shepherd, who leads us to green pastures and still waters, in whom we shall not be in want. For the Lord restores our souls and guides us on paths of righteousness and faith, quelling our fears and comforting us in our afflictions. And so we praise our God in thanksgiving for the abundant goodness and mercy that blesses us and anoints us into God's favour, God's welcome, and God's house. **Amen. Thanks be to God.**

**GATHERING HYMN:** Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus (#802)

#### GREETING

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

The shepherding grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the recognizable love of God, and the guiding communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

**NOW THE FEAST** (HS p. 4)

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, all honour and glory belong to you. You have gathered us from different nations, cultures, and tongues, and declared us as your own. Be apparent to us this day, that our worship and our service be pleasing to you, through Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd. **Amen.**

## WORD

#### FIRST READING: Acts 9:36-43

A reading from Acts.

*Dorcas was a faithful and devoted woman of charity in the community of Joppa. Her kindness and her work with clothing were well-known, especially to the widows in town. When she fell ill and died, Peter raised her back to life through the power of prayer.*

<sup>36</sup> Now in Joppa there was a disciple whose name was Tabitha, which in Greek is Dorcas. She was devoted to good works and acts of charity. <sup>37</sup> At that time she became ill and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in a room upstairs. <sup>38</sup> Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, who heard that Peter was there, sent two men to him with the request, "Please come to us without delay." <sup>39</sup> So Peter got up and went with them, and when he arrived, they took him to the room upstairs. All the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing tunics and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was with them. <sup>40</sup> Peter put all of them outside, and then he knelt down and prayed. He turned to the body and said, "Tabitha, get up." Then she opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. <sup>41</sup> He gave her his hand and helped her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he showed her to be alive. <sup>42</sup> This became known throughout Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. <sup>43</sup> Meanwhile, he stayed in Joppa for some time with a certain Simon, a tanner.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

## PSALM: Psalm 23

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.

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

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

<sup>4</sup> **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.**

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

<sup>6</sup> **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: Revelation 7:9-17

A reading from Revelation.

*Christ is the shepherd who leads his faithful to springs of the water of life. Christ is also the lamb who vanquishes sin and suffering.*

<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> They cried out in a loud voice, saying,

“Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!”

<sup>11</sup> And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, <sup>12</sup> singing,

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom  
and thanksgiving and honor  
and power and might  
be to our God forever and ever! Amen.”

<sup>13</sup> Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?” <sup>14</sup> I said to him, “Sir, you are the one who knows.” Then he said to me, “These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

<sup>15</sup> For this reason they are before the throne of God  
and worship him day and night within his temple,  
and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them.

<sup>16</sup> They will hunger no more and thirst no more;  
the sun will not strike them,  
nor any scorching heat,

<sup>17</sup> for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,  
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,  
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION (HS p. 8)**

## **GOSPEL: John 10:22-30**

The holy gospel according to John.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Jesus responds to questions about his identity with the remarkable claim that he and the Father are one. Those who understand this are his sheep; they hear his voice, follow, and will never be snatched from his hand.*

<sup>22</sup> At that time the Festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, <sup>23</sup> and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. <sup>24</sup> So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly." <sup>25</sup> Jesus answered, "I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me, <sup>26</sup> but you do not believe because you do not belong to my sheep. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. <sup>28</sup> I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, in regard to what he has given me, is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of the Father's hand. <sup>30</sup> The Father and I are one."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

## **SERMON**

God our shepherd, as you welcome us to the abundant feast of blessing at the table of your Word, open our hearts that we might see, hear, and feed on your goodness, by the power of the Spirit, through Jesus our Lord. Amen.

So more pope news this week. This past Thursday morning, white smoke billowed out of the chimney of the Sistine Chapel, indicating to the world that a new pope was elected. I was a bit late to the news, I found out about 2 or 3 hours after the fact, and perhaps like many of you, the first thing I did was go online to see what people were saying about it all.

And I'll admit, it wasn't as juicy as I thought it would be. I guess I was expecting some head-shaking comments from people who might disapprove with the selection, or some bone-headed comments from others who just don't like the process at all, or perhaps some completely off-the-wall comments from people who actually think that they should have been pope instead.

But it didn't happen, not that I saw at the time at least. I checked all my sources that usually deliver these kinds of goods, but they all came up empty. All comments publicly made about the new Pope seemed to be positive, hopeful, and respectful toward the papacy, the selection process, and Pope Leo XIV himself.

However, what I did find is that I wasn't the only one who was looking for some juicy gossip and more reasons to shake my head at those who I am already shaking my head at. Because while actual news sources that I trust seemed to be pretty quiet on anything bad said or done around this election of pope, that didn't stop people from saying that stuff happened that I'm not sure if it actually happened. Some people were pointing out issues that I'm not sure are even issues. It felt like some were just stirring up the pot to maybe get a rise out of people, in basic classic troll fashion.

While I don't agree with disagreeing for the sake of disagreeing, I can kind of understand where these trolls are coming from. I heard it said about any disagreement or division among people that you could say anything negative about either side, and no matter how outlandish, those on the polar opposite end would believe it. And that makes sense, I suppose, as we often like to justify ourselves and our opinions, even if from false information.

We've seen examples of this where people are accused of committing heinous and unbelievable acts, and those who don't like them totally believe it even when it hadn't been proven or worse yet, blatantly disproven. We've seen examples of people up in arms about something that someone they don't like did, but then totally bush it off when someone they do like does the same exact thing. We've seen examples of people just choosing to hate regardless of what is being said or not said about those others.

That is how divided people are these days. That is how much disdain and disrespect people have for those they just don't want to agree with. That is how much so many people aren't able to hear or see past their own assumptions, opinions, and solidly formed conclusions of each other.

And I find that really sad. I think it's so awful that we've come to this. And what makes it even worse is that it isn't anything new.

Take today's gospel text for example. This is an account of something that happened close to 2000 years ago, and we still see people with this same exact attitude. People held onto their assumptions about others, they stood firm on their beliefs about who God is and what God is about, they wouldn't budge on what they believed the Messiah to be and just how it wasn't Jesus.

I mean they asked him straight up, "If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

But even if Jesus did say so, I am not sure if they would even trust him. Even if Jesus was definitive with his identity, I have a feeling the presupposed opinions and assumptions would determine their conclusions. Even if Jesus were to tell them clearly and plainly, I just don't think they'd believe.

Because as Jesus says, he did tell them, perhaps not in so many words, but it was through his actions that should have made it clear who he is from, who he is for, and who he saves.

And this is what Jesus was talking about earlier in this chapter when he said that the sheep would "know his voice". See today is the 4th Sunday of Easter, but it is informally known as Good Shepherd Sunday, and every year on Good Shepherd Sunday we get a portion of John 10, where Jesus explains to his disciples how he is the Good Shepherd, how we can know and discern his voice over the cacophony of various other voices that inundate us, and recognise his hand at work in our lives and in the world.

And so that is what this day is about, that after just having celebrated the resurrection, after confessing that Jesus is alive and active in our communities, after accepting how our salvation has been set and secured through the life and death of Jesus, we might be wondering "now

what". And so we are taught that Jesus is our Good Shepherd, who leads, guides, and walks with us in his ways.

His ways of grace, mercy, and peace.

And that is what so many of us struggle with. That while the principles of grace, mercy, and peace are great on paper, but when the rubber hits the road it's every person for themselves. Since the day we were born we instinctively wanted to hit those who hit us, hurt those who hurt us, and hate those who hate us. In our heads we tell ourselves that they deserve it, they brought it upon themselves, that this is the way of justice. It's eye for an eye and cheek for a cheek. We want to retaliate, we want revenge, we want retribution on all who have wronged us however slightly.

But Jesus the Good Shepherd shows us this counter-cultural way of living, in which we can learn to live in community, serve in love, and walk in peace. He shows us the way in which we can welcome the stranger, forgive our enemies, and love those who hate us. He shows us what salvation truly looks like, how it's not in power and might, but in humility and mercy.

And that could be tough for a lot of us to hear. We often lean on our assumptions and preconceived assumptions and perhaps instinct and can't always reconcile that with the teachings of Jesus.

But the thing is that Jesus' voice, his quiet, still, and peaceful voice, can be easily drowned out by the other voices of the world that tell us what we need to be to earn respect, what we need to do to gain power, and who we need to hurt in order to survive. Jesus' presence in our lives can be easily missed because we might be focussing too hard on the ways contrary to God's. Jesus' love for us might get lost in our love for the world.

But just because the voice isn't heard doesn't mean that Jesus doesn't speak. Just because Jesus' presence isn't always felt doesn't mean that he isn't with us. Just because we don't always get how Jesus could love or save us, that doesn't mean that he doesn't.

Because in fact he does. His love for us and all people is so strong that no one could snatch us out of his hand. He continues to leave the door open for us to follow him into community and peace. His voice will always be speaking to us and is recognisable through actions of grace, mercy, and love.

But this doesn't make it easy, as again the voices of the world can be so loud. But once we know what Jesus' voice sounds like, what his hand at work feels like, and what his face looks like, we can easier recognise him speaking to us, working in us, and being with us as we go through life's ups and downs.

His voice might be heard in the songs we sing. His hand might be bringing us the laughter and fellowship that we witness and experience. His presence might lead us away from the comfortable ways of the world and toward the often uncomfortable but righteous ways of our faith.

Wherever we might hear that voice, feel that leading, and see that presence, may we find the faith to believe it, the strength to follow it, and the humility to know that it is the love God full of grace, mercy, and peace.

So on this Good Shepherd Sunday, may we always be aware of Jesus the Shepherd speaking to us, calling us, and leading us on paths of righteousness and peace, waiting for us to follow. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** Will You Come and Follow Me (#798)

**CREED** (HS p. 11)

With all those following the voice of the Shepherd, let us confess the Christian faith with the Apostle's 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 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**

Led by the voice of grace and peace, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need. Each petition will end with, "by your guiding mercy, O Lord," and you are all invited to respond with **hear our prayer**. By your guiding mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

God of love, you promise to lead, guide, and provide, and you grant us your goodness and mercy forever. May the blessings you abundantly give to our churches, communities, and families be recognized and cherished in our hearts, that we might follow the example set by Jesus. By your guiding mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer**.

God of grace, you shepherd us with love and peace, and in you we shall not be in want. You show us your ways of right relationship and community and you guide us in our calling to be your people in the world. We remember in prayer for our neighbouring faith communities; those who use this building for worship, work, and play; our partners Anglican Church of Canada and Moravian Church in Canada; and our bishops, rostered ministers, congregations, and ministries of the ELCIC. In particular, we pray for Grace Lutheran Church in Victoria and the

pastors and leaders that serve them; and for Mount Olive Lutheran in Surrey and their pastor Lori-Anne Boutin Crawford. We also offer a special prayer for the discernment of our National Church as we elect a new National Bishop in just a few short months. By your guiding mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of creation, you lead us to green pastures and still waters, where we can see your face and appreciate the beauty and wonder of all that you have made. Strengthen us in our faith and stewardship. Protect those who live in areas of harsh weather and natural disasters. Grant to the lands, the seas, the airs, and everything in them your healing peace that surpasses understanding, and make us whole. By your guiding mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of justice, you restore our diverse souls and guide us along right pathways of your truth and wisdom. Empower us in our respect for the cultures and customs of the world, that we all be enriched by the many facets of life and community. We pray in particular for the continued support of those that we've sponsored to come into this country: Abraham Barhane; Solyana Amanuel; and Filimon Abraha; as well as for those who have not yet arrived: Maekele Kiflu, Selam Haile, and their children; and Mery Gabramikael. By your guiding mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of wholeness, your presence with us dispels all fear even as we walk in the shadows of darkness and death. Be apparent to all those among us who are ill, who mourn, or who feel lonely, and anoint them with your peace. We pray especially for Bryan and Chona; Ron, Tess, and Mineko; Beulah; Joe; Bev and family; John and Betty; Sukhwant; Pastor Kristen; Laura; Kandie; Thomas; Will; Chris; Larry; Walter; Piet; Hwee Yang; Ephraim; Kelly; and all those we name aloud or quietly in our hearts at this time... May our cups of blessing run over with your love and grace. By your guiding mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

God of eternal unity, you invite and welcome us to dwell with you and all the saints in your house forever, where pain and tears are no more. May we find our strength in your everlasting community and kingdom and see the light of your love in our faith. By your guiding mercy, O Lord, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in the leading and guiding of the voice of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

## **MEAL**

### **DIALOGUE**

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.**



## **PREFACE**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy,  
to at all times and places give thanks and praise to you,  
Almighty God, through your son Jesus Christ,  
who is our Good Shepherd that leads us into peace and joy,  
where we can join with all the choirs of angels,  
the hosts of heaven, and the church on earth  
in praising your name with this unending hymn:

## **HOLY, HOLY, HOLY (HS p. 15)**

### **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

O God you are our Shepherd, in you we shall have no wants. For you lead us beside green pastures and still waters and you restore our souls, guiding us along right pathways with your Son, Jesus, who came to us as one of us to comfort us even as we walk in the shadows of death and sin and to show us the ways of your grace and righteousness.

For on the night that he was betrayed, your Son Jesus sat with his friends for a meal, where he took the bread, gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with them saying, "Take and eat, this is my body broken for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

Then after they ate, he took the cup, gave thanks, and shared that 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."

It is in this bread and cup that we are anointed with God's goodness and mercy, even as we declare the mystery of our faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

Bless this meal, O God, and allow us to dwell in your eternal presence with us, where we can see your hand at work, hear your voice calling us, and feel your gracious and saving love. For all honour and glory belong to you, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER (HS p. 18)**

Led into community and peace by the Good Shepherd, let us pray as he taught us.

**Our Father in heaven,**  
    **hallowed be your name,**  
    **your kingdom come,**  
    **your will be done,**  
        **on earth as in heaven.**

**Give us today our daily bread.**

**Forgive us our sins**  
    **as we forgive those**  
        **who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial**  
    **and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Taste and see God's tangible presence and love.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### **COMMUNION**

**COMMUNION HYMNS:** Lamb of God (HS p. 18)

Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us (#789)

The Lord's My Shepherd (#778)

#### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Holy God, we give you thanks for again feeding us with this heavenly food and anointing us with the oil of blessing and joy. May your love overflow in our hearts that it might be poured out onto others that we encounter and serve, through your Son, Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd. **Amen.**

#### **SENDING**

#### **BLESSING**

May God the Shepherd bless you and lead you,  
God the Saviour shine on you and guide you,  
God the Spirit of all righteousness look upon you with favour and call you into peace, now and forever.  
**Amen.**

**SENDING SONG:** Give Me Jesus (#770)

#### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, follow the voice of righteousness.

**Thanks be to God.**