

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026 9:30am

Rooted in our Tradition, Open to Yours

Welcome and Prelude

### Thanksgiving for Baptism

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen, indeed. Alleluia!**

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

**Amen.**

Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that nourish us.

Blessed are you.

**You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys.

We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection.

We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow.

Blessed are you.

**You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace.

Blessed are you.

**You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever. **Amen.**



1 Good Chris - tian friends, re - joice and sing! Now is the tri - umph  
2 The Lord of life is ris'n this day; death's might-y stone is  
3 Praise we in songs of vic - to - ry that love, that life which  
4 Your name we bless, O ris - en Lord, and sing to - day with



of our king! To all the world glad news we bring:  
rolled a - way; let all the earth re - joice and say:  
can - not die, and sing with hearts up - lift - ed high:  
one ac - cord, the life laid down, the life re - stored:



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

Greeting

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

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor - ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

## Prayer of the Day

O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## The Reading: **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.

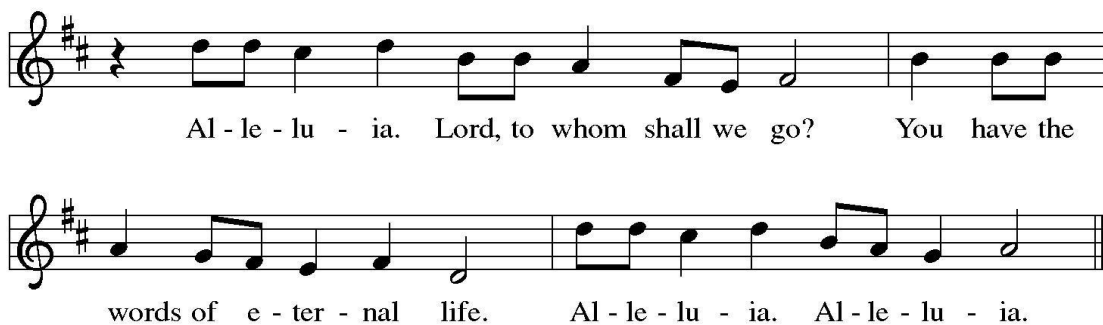
<sup>4</sup> Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

<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.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**



**Gospel: John 10:1-10 Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] <sup>1</sup>“Very truly, 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. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sermon

~ *Please remain seated until the Meal* ~



1 My Shep-herd, you sup-ply my need; most ho-ly is your name.  
 2 When I walk through the shades of death, your pres-ence is my stay;  
 3 The sure pro-vi-sions of my God at-tend me all my days;



In pas-tures fresh you make me feed, be-side the liv-ing stream.  
 one word of your sup-port-ing breath drives all my fears a-way.  
 oh, may your house be my a-bode and all my work be praise.



You bring my wan-d'ring spir-it back when I for-sake your ways,  
 Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my ta-ble spread;  
 Here would I find a set-tled rest, while oth-ers go and come;



and lead me, for your mer-cy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.  
 my cup with bless-ings o-ver-flows, your oil a-noints my head.  
 no more a strang-er or a guest, but like a child at home.

## 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 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 the People

Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation.

*A brief silence.*

Shepherding God, draw all people to yourself and lead them in paths of righteousness. Embolden your church to enter the valleys of the world and guide us beside the still waters of your grace. **We pray for military and prison chaplains serving near and far.** Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Creator God, by the resurrection of your Son, show us your steadfast love and instruct our hearts in your ways. **Help us to revere and protect the wonders of your creation.** Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Righteous Judge, strengthen and uphold those who work for justice and advocate for human rights. **Bring an end to oppression and save us from the temptation of violence or vengeance.** Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Great Physician, walk with those who are grieving, and anoint those who are ill or injured, especially Jill, Nancy, Ted & Jacqui, Dan & Mary, Beth, Janet, Todd, Doris, Bud, Donna, John Luoma and all those we hold in our hearts. Restore them to health of body, mind, and spirit. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Good Shepherd, continually seek us out as lambs of your flock, and form us into a community where all are honored and cared for. **Spread a feast before us and fill our cups to overflowing.** Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Living God, we praise you for the saints who have died in faith and now dwell in your love. **At our end, bring us, with them, to our heavenly home.** Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

**Amen.**

## The Sharing of the Peace

Special Music

**The Lord is My Shepherd**

St. Stephen Choir

## Meal

### 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.**

## Preface

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we would 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 brings 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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,  
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -  
 san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who  
 comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

### The Words of Institution

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.

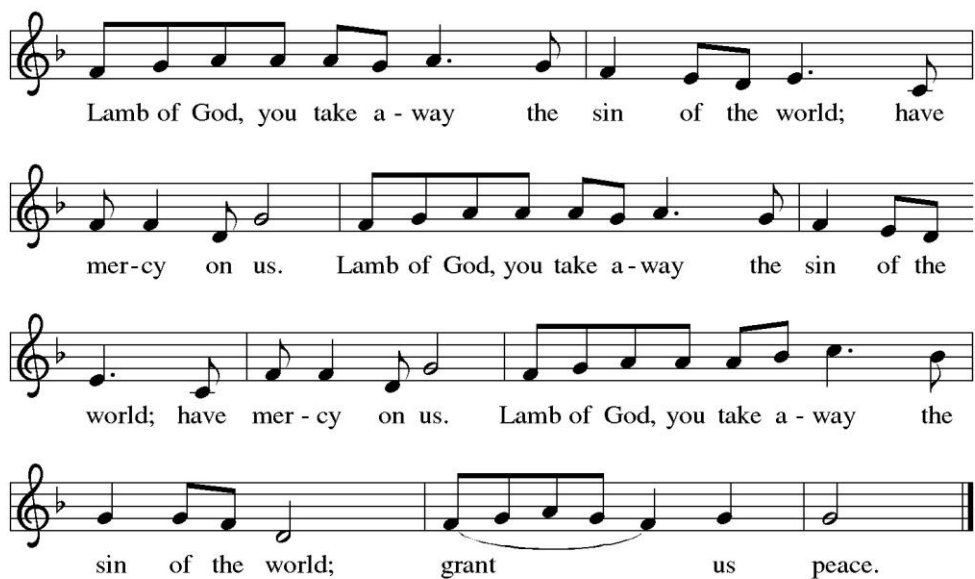
For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

## The Lord's Prayer

**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.**

## Communion

*All baptized Christians are welcome to participate in Holy Communion. We ask children who have not had First Communion instruction, or adults who do not wish to receive communion, to keep their hands folded and they will receive a blessing.*



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have  
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the  
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the  
sin of the world; grant us peace.

## Post-Communion Prayer

Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations.

In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**



1 What a fel - low-ship, what a joy di - vine, lean - ing on the ev - er -  
 2 Oh, how sweet to walk in this pil - grim way, lean - ing on the ev - er -  
 3 What have I to dread, what have I to fear, lean - ing on the ev - er -



last - ing arms; what a bless - ed - ness, what a peace is mine,  
 last - ing arms; oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,  
 last - ing arms? I have bless - ed peace with my Lord so near,



lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.  
 lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.  
 lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.

*Refrain*



Lean - ing, lean - ing, safe and se - cure from all a - larms;



lean - ing, lean - ing, lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing arms.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace. **Thanks be to God.**

Dismissal

Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**