



THE GOOD SHEPHERD
LAYS DOWN HIS LIFE
FOR THE SHEEP.

JOHN 10:11

ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Stratford, Ontario

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EASTER 4

April 25, 2021

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the Holy Trinity, + one God,
Who calls us beloved children,
Who gathers us into one flock,
Who guides us into all truth.

Amen.

Let us confess our sins, trusting that God will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Faithful and just God,
We confess that we are captive to doubt and fear.
We have not loved our sisters and brothers as you have loved us.
Forgive us, God of mercy.
Let your Holy Spirit work in us to change our lives and make us new,
That we may know the abundant life given in Jesus Christ, our risen Lord.

Amen.

In this is love, not that we loved God,
But that God loved us and sent the Son to atone for our sins.
In the name of + Jesus Christ,
I announce to you that all your sins are forgiven.
Let the perfect love of God cast out fear, fill you with joy,
And inspire you to live for others.

Amen.

GREETING

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.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

FIRST READING: *Acts 4:5-12*

A reading from the Book of Acts.

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 can 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."

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

PSALM: *Psalms 23*

¹The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not be in want.

²**The LORD makes me lie down | in green pastures
and leads me be- | side still waters.**

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

⁴**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.**

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

⁶**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: *1 John 3:16-24*

A reading from the First Letter of John.

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.

The word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL: *John 10:11-18*

The holy gospel according to John.

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.

SERMON:

https://1drv.ms/v/s!Alrwdlq5YZa1iRP_DeGTNcxwwopX

(Click on the link above to view Pastor Jeff's sermon (or you can find it on the website under the separate heading "Sermons")

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love.

Loving Shepherd, you know your own and your own know you. Your voice calls us to your loving embrace. Strengthen your church throughout the world that we bear witness to your expansive love. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gracious Shepherd, you are generous with the gifts of goodness and mercy. Restore your creation to wholeness so that cities and towns, countryside and wilderness, may abound with life. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Hope-giving Shepherd, the nations and peoples are your heritage. Place into the hearts of all leaders and rulers the passion to serve. Crucify any desire to overpower others and give leaders joy in lifting up the lowly. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Abiding Shepherd, your love flows as we reach out to those around us. Move us with your Spirit, so that we lay down our lives for those in need (especially Elsie, Mary, Ardath, Doreen, Margaret, Paul, Lynnette, Glenn, Maria, Beryl, Robb, John, Jack, Ralph, Dale, Katana, Ralph, Rose Marie, Nya, Muriel, Ron, Karen, Brian, and Kolby). Help us love one another in truth and action. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Saving Shepherd, you restore us to wholeness. Help our community in our life together and give us vigor as a people of faith. In the midst of challenges and opportunities, fill us anew with you Holy Spirit. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Eternal Shepherd, you hold us securely in your loving hands. In the assurance of resurrection hope, we remember our loved ones who have died in you (*especially the evangelist Mark*). Bring us, with them, to dwell in your house forever. Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

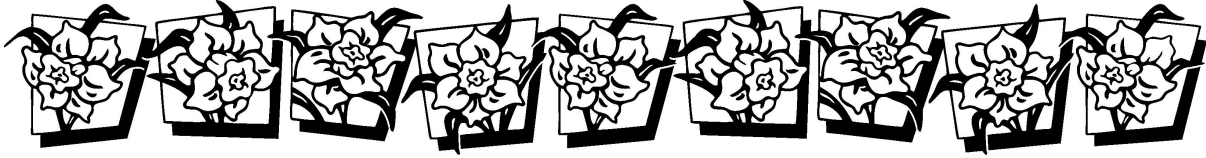
**For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

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 favour and + give you peace.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honour all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.
Thanks be to God.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP CANCELLATION NOTICE

ON APRIL 7, 2021
THE PREMIER OF ONTARIO, DOUG FORD, ANNOUNCED A
PROVINCE-WIDE DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY AND
STAY-AT-HOME ORDER BEGINNING AT 12:01 A.M. ON
THURSDAY, APRIL 8, 2021.

RESTRICTIONS WILL BE IN EFFECT FOR 28 DAYS.

IT IS BISHOP MICHAEL'S STRONG COUNSEL THAT EASTERN
SYNOD CONGREGATIONS IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO
CEASE ALL IN-PERSON GATHERINGS UNTIL EMERGENCY
AND STAY-AT-HOME ORDERS HAVE BEEN LIFTED.

AS A RESULT,

WE REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT
ALL "IN-PERSON" GATHERINGS,
INCLUDING WORSHIP, ARE
CANCELLED UNTIL THE EMERGENCY AND STAY-AT-HOME

ORDERS HAVE BEEN LIFTED.
PLEASE REFER TO OUR WEBSITE AT
www.zionstratford.com

FOR UPDATES !!

COVID-19 VACCINATIONS - UPDATE

This is the latest information found on the Perth District Health Unit's website:

Friday, April 23, 2021: Appointments for vaccinations at future clinics are available to book online for those currently eligible.

Safe and reliable vaccines can help protect you and your family from COVID-19. These vaccines will be an important tool to help stop the spread of the virus and will eventually allow individuals, families and workers to safely resume normal life. Even if you have been vaccinated, it's important to continue following public health measures and to take everyday actions to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

Current Eligibility List

Eligible as of April 23:

- As of April 23, 2021, the province has announced that all pregnant individuals are eligible to register for vaccination appointments under the "Highest-Risk" health conditions in the Phase 2 prioritization guidance. A letter from a health care provider is not required for vaccination.

Eligible to book an appointment as of early next week (week of April 26):

The following newly-eligible groups will have access to our booking system early next week, when we re-open our booking system with additional clinics. Please check back next week for additional clinic dates.

- Individuals age 60 or older (born 1961 or earlier)
- Adults 16 and older with the following High-Risk health conditions:
 - ▶ Obesity (BMI >40)
 - ◆ For more information on BMI visit Health Canada's webpage
 - ◆ Please note: specifying your exact BMI is not necessary (when registering, or when at the clinic) and there is no need to get a physician's note.
 - ▶ Other treatments causing immunosuppression (e.g. chemotherapy, immunity-weakening medications)
 - ◆ Individuals should speak to their treating provider to determine the most appropriate timing for administration of the first dose of vaccine.
 - ▶ Intellectual or developmental disabilities (e.g. Down Syndrome)
 - ◆ This includes individuals who require regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or activities of daily living. At this time, individuals with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) are not eligible.
 - ▶ One (1) primary essential caregiver for Highest-Risk and certain High-Risk health conditions
 - ◆ Primary essential caregivers are included for individuals in the High-Risk Health Conditions group who require regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or activities of daily living.

You can also call to hear our regularly updated vaccination status message. Call HPPH at 1-888-221-2133 and press 1 (one) for COVID Vaccine. Please listen to the whole message to receive all of the information.”

As we enter another week under the lock down and “stay-at-home” order, I have come across the following prayer which I would like to share with you.

*Father,
I want to live in the shadow of Your wing.
When life is hard, and I don't know what to do,
help me remember that You are with me and
that I am never alone.
I cannot live without You.
I cannot face tomorrow
without the promise of Your presence.
Today I choose to walk and live
under the protection of You, The Most High.
In Jesus' name.
Amen.*

