

***“People of Christ  
Making a  
Difference”***

**Fourth Sunday of Easter**

**April 26, 2026**

**8:30 AM &  
11:00 AM**

## **WELCOME TO ST. STEPHEN'S!**

A nursery is provided for children through age 4 for both worship services and for infants and toddlers during Sunday School. The nursery is located at the end of the hall on the right side.

Children's bags can be found in the "Kid's Corner" of the narthex.

Restroom facilities are located down the hall on the left side.

First Aid, Emergency Equipment, and a wheelchair are located down the hall on the right by the stairwell.

If for any reason you must leave the sanctuary, the service is live streamed in the Agape Sunday School classroom. Any usher will be glad to direct you.

Sunday school classes are provided for 2 year olds through adults.

Listening devices and larger print bulletins are located in the narthex. Ushers are also available to assist you.

If you are a visitor feel free to sign-in using the QR code. Here's how it works: Point your camera at the image, tap the link that appears on your screen, and share whatever information you desire. Thank you! Hope to see you again soon!



## **GREETING, ANNOUNCEMENTS, AND PEACE**

### **PRELUDE**

*"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"*

Gerhard Krapf

(We Stand)

### **BRIEF ORDER FOR CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

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

**Amen.**

By our baptism into the death and resurrection of Christ, God raises us up to new life. Let us confess to God our sins and all that waits for resurrection in our lives.

**Amen.**

God of grace and glory,

**You have brought us through the night of sin into the light of Jesus' resurrection. Yet our lives are still shadowed by sin. Make us alive in Christ, O God. Make us new as you make all things new. Rescue us from evil and the gloom of sin, renew us in grace, and restore us to living in your holiness, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

**Amen.**

Rejoice with all creation around God's throne! The light of the risen Christ puts to flight all evil deeds, washes away sin, restores innocence to the fallen, casts out hate, brings peace, and humbles earthly pride. God is merciful and gracious, granting forgiveness through Jesus Christ to all who confess their sin.

**Amen.**

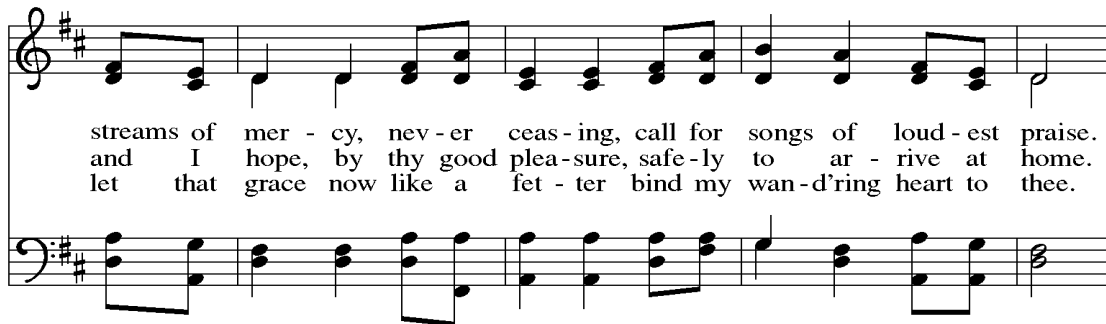
GATHERING HYMN

*"Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing"*

ELW 807



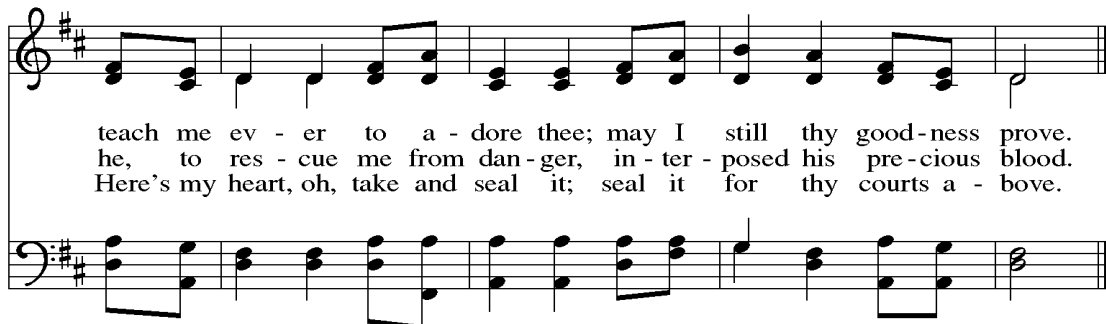
1 Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
 2 Here I raise my Eb - en - e - zer: "Hith-er by thy help I've come";  
 3 Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con - strained to be;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.  
 and I hope, by thy good plea - sure, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.  
 let that grace now like a fet - ter bind my wan - d'ring heart to thee.



While the hope of end - less glo - ry fills my heart with joy and love,  
 Je - sus sought me when a strang - er, wan - d'ring from the fold of God;  
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it; prone to leave the God I love.



teach me ev - er to a - dore thee; may I still thy good - ness prove.  
 he, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.  
 Here's my heart, oh, take and seal it; seal it for thy courts a - bove.

**GREETING**

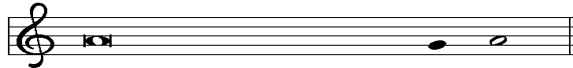
Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!**

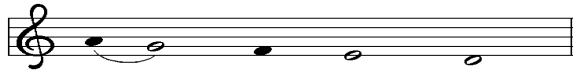
The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you always.

**And also with you.**

**KYRIE**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



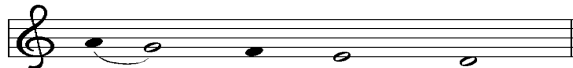
Lord, have mer - cy.



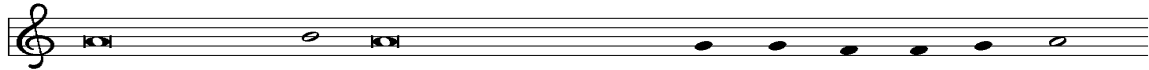
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord. Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

## CANTICLE OF PRAISE

*Refrain*

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and

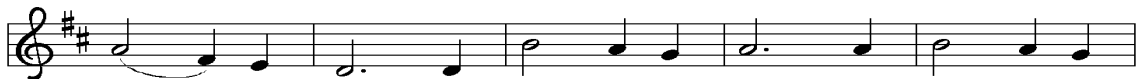


strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

*Refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

*Final refrain*



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

## THE SALUTATION

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

(We Sit)

## WELCOMING OF NEW MEMBERS

### FIRST READING

Acts 2:42-47

<sup>42</sup>[The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup>Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup>All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup>they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup>Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

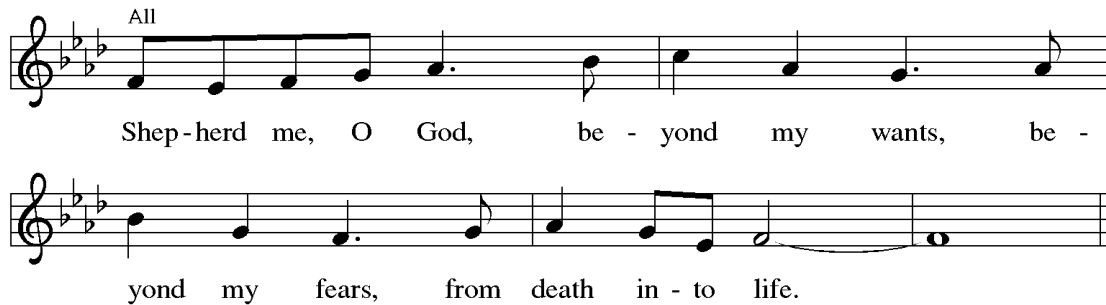
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

### PSALMODY

ELW 780

All



Shep-herd me, O God, be - yond my wants, be -  
yond my fears, from death in - to life.

God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want, I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love, I walk by the quiet waters of peace. *Refrain*

Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul, you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth, my spirit shall sing the music of your name. *Refrain*

Though I should wander the valley of death, I fear no evil, for you are at my side, your rod and your staff, my comfort and my hope. *Refrain*

You have set me a banquet of love in the face of hatred, crowning me with love beyond my pow'r to hold. *Refrain*

Surely your kindness and mercy follow me all the days of my life; I will dwell in the house of my God forevermore. *Refrain*

## SECOND READING

1 Peter 2:19-25

<sup>19</sup>It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup>If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. <sup>21</sup>For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup>"He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." <sup>23</sup>When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. <sup>24</sup>He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup>For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

(We Stand)

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 10:1-10

The holy gospel according to St. John, the 10th chapter.

**Glorify 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.**

(We Sit)

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Pastor Jason

SERMON

Pastor Jason

(We Stand)

HYMN OF THE DAY

"Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

ELW 789



1 Sav - ior like a shep - herd lead us; much we need your ten - der care.  
 2 We are yours; in love be - friend us, be the guard - ian of our way;  
 3 You have prom - ised to re - ceive us, poor and sin - ful though we be;  
 4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor, ear - ly let us do your will;



In your pleas - ant pas - tures feed us, for our use your fold pre - pare.  
 keep your flock, from sin de - fend us, seek us when we go a - stray.  
 you have mer - cy to re - lieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.  
 bless - ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, with your love our spir - its fill.



Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have bought us; we are yours.  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, hear us chil - dren when we pray.  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, ear - ly let us turn to you.  
 Bless - ed Je - sus, bless - ed Je - sus, you have loved us, love us still.



**THE NICENE CREED**

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL**

(We Sit)

**OFFERING**

God calls us to be generous stewards for the sake of our ministry near and far. You can support our ministry by putting your offering in the offering plate, mailing it to the church, giving online (sslc.org or use the QR Code) or through the Givelify app. If you would like more details on direct deposit giving please contact our Parish Administrator, Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, at (803) 359-6562.



(8:30) Anthem *“My Shepherd”* Page/Shafferman

My Shepherd will supply my need; Jehovah is His name. In pastures fresh he makes me feed, beside the living stream. He brings my wandering spirit back, when I forsake His ways: and leads me, for His mercy’s sake, in paths of truth and grace.

The King of Love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never. I nothing lack if I am His, and He is mine forever. And so through all the length of days, Thy goodness faileth never. Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise within Thy house forever.

(11:00) Voluntary *“My Shepherd Will Supply My Need”* Hal H. Hopson

(We Stand)

OFFERTORY

ELW 184

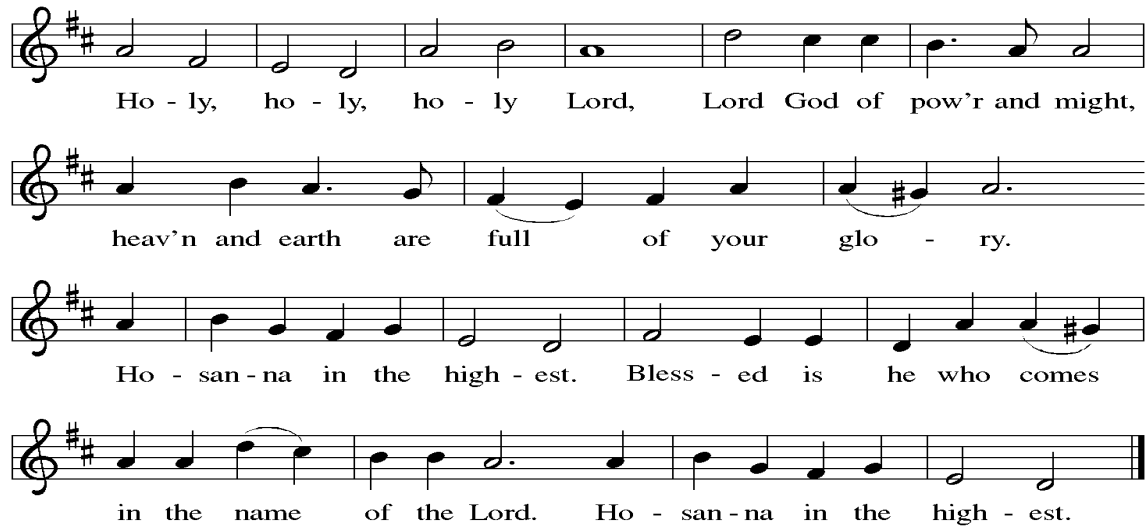
Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of  
bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that  
we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of  
all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble  
with your pres-ence, and give us a fore-taste of the feast to come.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al-so 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.

## THE PREFACE

### THE SANCTUS



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.  
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 EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

#### 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.

#### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

(We Sit)

## THE AGNUS DEI



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, grant us peace.

## RECEPTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Christ welcomes you to this Holy Meal of the Baptized! We receive communion this morning at the center aisle. Communion will be brought to the front rows for those who wish to remain seated. Children who commune should be assisted by adults near them. Those unable to partake of wine or wheaten bread are assured of our Lord's presence in, with, and under each element alone. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.

Communion Music

*"Come to Me"*

Dan Forrest

"Come to me, all you who labor, come to me, and I will give you rest.  
Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and you will find rest for your souls.  
Come, my child, learn my heart, for I am gentle and lowly.  
See how great my love for you, That I have called you, My child."

*The Congregation is encouraged to participate in the following Communion Hymn.  
The hymn can be found in the back portion of the WOV (Blue) Hymnal in your pew rack.*

Communion Hymn

*"Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God"*

WOV 783

(We Stand)

## BLESSING OF THE COMMUNICANTS

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

**Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

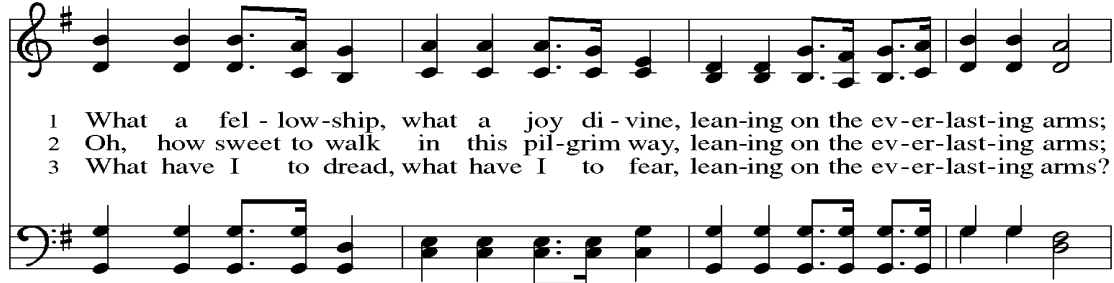
May God, the Father, + the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who has brought us from death to life, fill you with great joy and bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

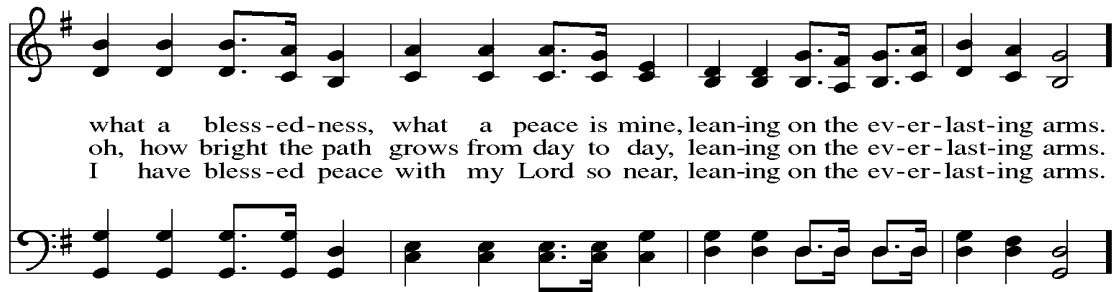
**SENDING HYMN**

*“What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine”*

ELW 774



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

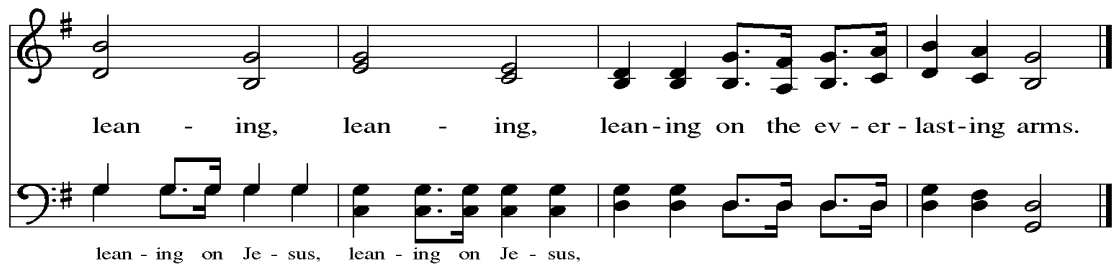


what a bless-ed-ness, what a peace is mine, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.  
oh, how bright the path grows from day to day, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.  
I have bless-ed peace with my Lord so near, lean-ing on the ev-er-last-ing arms.

*Refrain*



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



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

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace to share the good news that Christ is Risen!  
Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

**POSTLUDE**

*“Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken”*

Franz J. Haydn

## **Sunday, April 26, 2026**

### **4th Sunday of Easter**

#### **An Abundant Life**

Abundant life is promised to those who follow Jesus. But what is meant by abundant life? Some Christians, and much of contemporary American culture, interpret an abundant life to mean the “good life” of many fine things, an opulent lifestyle. Much of our economy and leisure time revolves around consumerism—shopping and buying things which we hope will make us happier and our lives better. But an abundance of things does not necessarily lead to an abundant life.

What does Jesus mean when he says that he came so that we may have an abundant life? Psalm 23 provides us with a good illustration of what Jesus is promising to his followers. The psalm imagines an abundant life not in material terms but in relational terms. An abundant life is one lived in the presence of God, in the company of the Lord. Whether one is in green pastures or the darkest valley, there is nothing to want, because God is present. We are in the gracious and generous care of our Lord through times of material abundance and in times of want and scarcity. This relationship between our Lord and us who are his followers is a relationship with one who knows us abundantly, who knows us by name, and who knows what we truly need to be fulfilled. The image of Jesus as our shepherd reminds us that he is with us at all times, and our relationship with him provides us all we need.

## **The Readings on This Day**

Brought over from the second Sunday of Easter in the medieval one-year lectionary is the beloved Good Shepherd Sunday. In this “figure of speech” as used in the Bible, shepherds represent the archetypal Israelite past, and sheep, far from being dirty and stupid, are gifts from God that give life to the community.

### **John 10:1-10**

The church understands Christ as both the shepherd and the gate, itself as the flock, and the enclosure as the church. According to John, sheep are a communal metaphor for shared abundant life. In John’s gospel are eleven passages in which the name of God, I am, is tied to an image, and today’s selection includes one of them: I am the gate. Christians have seen the sacraments as the pasture for the flock.

### **Acts 2:42-47**

Christians have seen in Luke’s inspiring description a goal for the Christian life. Baptism is to lead to care for the poor and to the praise of God.

### **1 Peter 2:19-25**

This passage from 1 Peter is moved out of its sequence so that the reference to God as shepherd in verse 25 fits with the dominant metaphor of the day. The whole community is now guarded by Christ the shepherd.

**ALTAR FLOWERS** are given to the glory of God and in memory of my wife, Judy Redman, by her husband.

**SERVING TODAY:**

**Ushers:** (8:30) Reuben Eargle, Sandy Shealy, Jim Nantz, Daryl Hooker, and Rick Logging;  
 (11:00) Otis Rawl, G Kolb, Mike Burgess, Myra Strock, Roy Windham,  
 and George Mathias

**Soloist/Cantor:** Austin Means

**Greeters:** (8:30) Neil Brown; (11:00) Sarah Kolb

**Readers:** (8:30) Melissa Rawl; (11:00) Jamie Early

**Communion Assistants:** (8:30) Paige Johnson; (11:00) Shannon Burnett

**Order of St. Stephen's:** (8:30) [A] Caroline Hooker [C] Katy Hooker;  
 (11:00) [A] Carsyn Antley [C] William Carrero

**The Church Staff**

**Website: [www.sslc.org](http://www.sslc.org)**

The Rev. Jason T. Antley	The Rev. Ralph G. Hill
Mrs. Shannon Burnett, Director of Family Life	Mrs. Tonya Reynolds, Parish Administrator
Ms. Susan Wilson, Director of Music/Organist	Mrs. Julie Tworzyanski, Preschool Director
	Mrs. Sylvia Looney, Organist Emeritus

**Sunday School Information:**

<u>Locations for Children's Classes</u>	<u>Locations for Adult Classes</u>
<b>Nursery</b> – Room #105	<b>Agape Adult Class</b> Room #102 (Closest to Narthex)
<b>2—4 year olds &amp; 5K</b> – Room #103	<b>Saints &amp; Sinners with PJ and PR</b> Room #203 (Large Upstairs Room)
<b>1<sup>st</sup>—5<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> – Room # 216	<b>Women Digging Deeper</b> Parlor
<b>6<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> – Room #212	For those not attending a Sunday School class but waiting on a child to get out of one, feel free to sit in the Social Hall!
<b>9<sup>th</sup>—12<sup>th</sup> Grade</b> – Room #217	If you are interested in beginning a new Sunday School class please contact Mrs. Shannon.

If you are not receiving the weekly announcements and monthly newsletter via email and would like to receive them, please email Shannon ([Shannon@sslc.org](mailto:Shannon@sslc.org)) so she can add you to the distribution list.