

# St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

## Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 26, 2026 - 9:30 a.m.

---



*Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism.*

*Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.*

---

Pastor Christian McMullan  
Daniel S. Bower, Music Director  
Craig Miller, Director of Youth and Family Ministries

2440 Conestoga Road, Chester Springs, Pennsylvania  
610-458-5675  
[www.stmatthews-church.org](http://www.stmatthews-church.org)

# WELCOME

Please stand

## GREETING

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: **Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

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

C: **And also with you.**

## OPENING 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.

## THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

P: In the name of † the One  
who was, who is, and who is to come.

**C: Amen.**

P: Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection,  
and called to live new life,  
let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

*Water may be poured into the font as the presiding minister continues.*

Holy God,  
we give you thanks for your cleansing waters,  
waters that make us your own,  
that restore to wholeness,  
and empower us to be witnesses in your name.

Baptized into you, O Living One,

**C: make us one as you are one.**

P: We give you thanks for your healing waters,  
waters that strengthen us in faith and trust,  
and give new life to your servants;  
waters that extend your boundless love  
and cross barriers of our own making.

Baptized into you, O Living One,

**C: make us one as you are one.**

P: We give you thanks for the waters of baptism,  
waters that open hearts through your Word,  
and give a voice in the night to those who are burdened;  
waters that set us on a new path,  
rejoicing in the Holy Spirit's power.

Baptized into you, O Living One,

**C: make us one as you are one.**

P: Grant us grace, love, and faith, O Living One,  
that our every day is shaped by these waters  
and your Word that makes us alive in you.

We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Crucified and Risen One.

**C: Amen.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

**C: 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.**

*Please be seated*

## FIRST READING

**Acts 2:42-47**

A: A reading from the Book of Acts, the second chapter.

<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 through 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.

A: The Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

## SECOND READING

## Psalm 23

A: A reading from Psalm 23.

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

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

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

C: <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.**

A: <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.

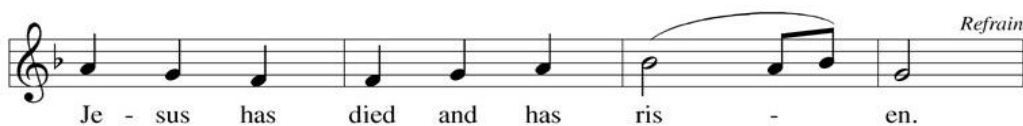
C: <sup>6</sup>**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

A: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand

## HYMN OF PRAISE



## GOSPEL

## John 10:1-10

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter.

C: **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.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

## MESSAGE

## HYMN

## Shepherd Me, O God ELW 780

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,  
beyond my fears, from death into 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.

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,  
beyond my fears, from death into life.

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.

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,  
beyond my fears, from death into life.

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.

Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,  
beyond my fears, from death into life.

## THE PRAYERS

P: 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.*

P: ...Merciful God,

**C: Hear our prayer**

P: 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.

**C: Amen.**

## THE SHARING OF THE PEACE

P: The Peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*Please be seated*

## THE OFFERING

### PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

*In gratitude to God we give out of the abundance that God has given us.*

*Please stand*

## OFFERING PRAYER

P: Merciful God,  
accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory.  
You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day  
when we will hunger and thirst no more.  
Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus,  
that goodness and mercy may follow us  
and bless the world you love.  
In the name of Jesus,  
**C: Amen.**

## GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.  
**C: And also with you.**  
P: Lift up your hearts.  
**C: We lift them to the Lord.**  
P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**C: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

P: Holy God, we praise you. Let the heavens be joyful, and the earth be glad. Praise to you for creating the heavens and the earth. Praise to you for saving Noah and all creatures from the waters of the flood. Praise to you for bringing the Israelites safely through the sea to a land of milk and honey. Praise to you for the words and deeds of Jesus, your anointed one. Praise to you for his death and resurrection that reconciled all things to you. Praise to you for your Holy Spirit poured out on all nations, inspiring us to love, live, and serve.

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.

With this bread and cup we remember our Lord's Passover from death to life as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**C: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

P: Empower our celebration with your Holy Spirit, feed us with your life, fire us with your love, confront us with your justice, and make us one in the body of Christ.

**C: Amen.**

P: Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**C: 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.**

*Please be seated*

## **COMMUNION**

*This is God's table so all are welcome to join the feast.*

*Grape juice and gluten free wafers are available.*

P: Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

P: 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,  
**C: Amen.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Please stand*

## **BLESSING**

P: God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,  
Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,  
and the Spirit, our advocate and peace,  
✠ bless you now and forever.  
**C: 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 -  
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.

## DISMISSAL

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**C: Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

P: Go in peace. Praise the Lord! Alleluia!

**C: Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

**St. Matthew's Staff**

Pastor Christian McMullan cmcmullan71@gmail.com

Daniel Bower, Music Director worship@stmatthews-church.org

Craig Miller, Director of Youth and Family Ministries 484-320-0785

Sandy Elkins, Director St. Matthew's School 610-458-3381

Sara Richardson, Church Administrator 610-458-5675

Sandy Dewees, Cemetery Operations Coordinator 610-458-8121