

## Fourth Sunday of Easter

### The Sunday Collect:

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd of your people: Grant that, when we hear his voice, we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## **First Lesson: Ezekiel 34:1-10**

The word of the Lord came to me:

“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep?

You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them.

So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

“Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: As I live, declares the Lord God, surely because my sheep have become a prey, and my sheep have become food for all the wild beasts, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves, and have not fed my sheep, therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord:

Thus says the Lord God, Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require my sheep at their hand and put a stop to their feeding the sheep. No longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, that they may not be food for them.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*People:* Thanks be to God.

**Psalm 23** *Dominus regit me*

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd; \*  
**I shall not want.**
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.\*  
**He leads me beside still waters.**
- 3 He restores my soul.\*  
**He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**
- 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;\*  
**your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;\*  
**you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.**
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,\*  
**and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

*We sing together:*

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. World without end. Amen. Amen.

## Second Lesson: 1 John 3:1-10

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness. You know that he appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him; and he cannot keep on sinning, because he has been born of God.

By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother.

*Reader:* The Word of the Lord.

*People:* **Thanks be to God.**

*Deacon:* The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

*People:* **Glory to You, Lord Christ.**

**The Gospel: John 10:11-16**

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

*Deacon:* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People:* **Praise to you, Lord Christ**