



“By This We Will Know: The Dance of Love”

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 25, 2021

Worship with First Lutheran Church

Welcome! Our Easter celebration continues. We are thankful for the many ways the Holy Spirit connects us together. Yes, the risen Jesus appears where we are, awakening us to a beat that will not stop stirring our hearts to move, with all creation to a song of resurrection, that not even death can stop. Come and join the dance that has no end.

**Prelude -
Welcome and Announcements**

Protocols for the congregation's safe gathering can be found on page 12.

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Leader: Easter is the unstoppable, unpredictable expression of God's love for humankind! The call of Jesus is to live fully in the power of that love – alive in each of us. We learn about that divine love as it is embodied in the person and ministry of Jesus, the one who is compared to a good shepherd. As we look to him to learn how to love, may our hearts praise the One who raised Jesus and raises us to abundant life and love!

**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,
Dare to dance again!**

[music continues softly...]

Leader: If we are to dance with abandon, we learn and follow – then we can begin to lead. We can learn the steps to the dance of love through the lead of Jesus and those who have gone before us. May we dare to dance even as we continue to learn the way of love.

**Dare to dance with dreamers, sing their song,
Dare to dance their stories, sing out strong.
Dare to dance with freedom your whole life long,
Dare to dance again!**

Greeting

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed!

Prayer -

Let us pray,

Holy One, Justice-Seeker, Lover of Creation –

We know your voice, the sounds of your steps.

Your love gathers us, urges us, encourages us.

Come and dance with us, engage with us, as we seek you –

so that we can be risen with Christ and in Christ.

Be with us now, we pray. **Amen.**

SONG OF PRAISE: *Let All Things Now Living* (ELW 881 v 2)

2 God rules all the forces:
the stars in their courses
and sun in its orbit obediently shine;
the hills and the mountains,
the rivers and fountains,
the deeps of the ocean proclaim God divine.
We too should be voicing
our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration a song let us raise
till all things now living
unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, hosanna and praise!"

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

PSALM: Psalm 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 beside 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. R**

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. R**

SECOND READING: 1 John 3:16-24

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 ACCLAMATION - ELW 172**

Halle, Halle, Hallelujah

Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

Music: Caribbean traditional

GOSPEL: John 10:11-18

The holy gospel according to Luke.

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

Shepherd Me, O God

Refrain
All

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

to stanzas 1, 2, 3, 5 | *to stanza 4*

*1 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*

*2 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*

*CREED

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
 creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
 and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.*

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
 and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again 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 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.

A brief silence.

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*). 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 (*specific concerns may be named*), 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

**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.**

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.

*The people may turn in their places and greet one another with a sign / wave of Christ's peace,
and may say, "Peace be with you,"*

Offering Our Resources and our Energy

Leader: How do we know the rhythm and dance of our lives is faithful? Drummer of the Grateful Dead, Mickey Hart wrote "To fall in love is to fall in rhythm." It is love for each other by which we know we are followers of Jesus, the ever-attentive shepherd. In the face of societal rules and attitudes that strive to foster "everyone for themselves," our hope is that others will know we are Christians by our love. Let us "fall in rhythm" with our neighbors and our planet in order to build up the whole through our offerings this day.

SONG OF THANKSGIVING: *(Instrumental of Dare to Dance as people reflect upon what they are grateful for)*

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us to step out in mission for the world.

Praising God, Nurturing Faith, and Serving All

Benediction

Leader: May we hear the music of the Spirit and follow in the steps of Jesus whose love sets us free to dance with abandon.

And may the Loving God, Risen Christ,
and Dancing Spirit fill you with all you need for the days ahead.

And all God's people said, "**Amen!**"

Christ is risen!

Christ is risen indeed! Thanks be to God!

SENDING SONG "They Will Know We are Christians"

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
They will know we are Christians by our love.

We will dance with each other, we will dance side by side
We will dance with each other, we will dance side by side
And we'll guard each one's dignity and save each one's pride
And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love
They will know we are Christians by our love

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

OFFERINGS

Offerings may be placed in the plates as you go out from this worship to live in service to God throughout the week.

Or you can give online <https://firstlutheransandpoint.breezechms.com/give/online>.

Postlude:

Worship Notes:

Image from Tanner, Henry Ossawa, 1859-1937. Good Shepherd, from **Art in the Christian Tradition**, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=58136> [retrieved April 21, 2021]. Original source: https://commons.m.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Henry_Ossawa_Tanner_-_The_Good_Shepherd.jpg.

Liturgy adapted from “Dare to Dance” www.worshipdesignstudio.com/easterdance
And From sundaysandseasons.com.

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Worship Team:

Piano Recorded- Colleen Culwell

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Announcements:

New Members - The pandemic delayed several family units from joining the church around this time last year. We are looking at a Sunday, May 2nd to welcome those still interested. If you have questions about what membership is or are curious about how to get more connected with the community, let Pastor Lori know.

Prayer List: Royce Howell, Libby DeLong, Michelle Thurston, George Marker, Lynn Franck, Chris Ingham; Randy Petersen; Charles Shobe Sr., Nicky Schripsema; Wendi Lies; Gerda Burke; Kara Schripsema; Trey Haberlock; Tom Taylor; Hunter Taylor; Eugene Kurwicki; Mike Shobe; Marguerite Suttmeier, Sylvia Greenwood; Janet Merrill, and those on your hearts and minds today.

The family and friends of former member, Carol Klipstein, who died last Sunday.

The Rev. Ken Bartle, his family, and the congregation of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Pinehurst, ID as he retires today.

We include prayers for Luther Park - its staff, residents, and their families and all senior living communities as we continue to learn how to live with Covid-19 as communities, in our worship, and mission as the church.

Church Office: Lisa Tyrrell, our Church Secretary on Council will be working with Pastor Lori to update our infrastructure and prepare for another staff search. In April and May, please be patient with your requests. Messages by phone and email will be checked regularly on the days when staff are not in the office.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Covid - 19 Protocols for Gathering

Please note the following things to support you in your worship:

- First, thank you for adjusting to and heeding the precautions we have put in place to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus, while we gather.
- In addition to wearing face masks, remaining 6' apart from other family groups or friend cohorts, staying home if you do not feel well, and refraining from shaking hands or hugging:
- The Children's Playroom and Nursery is not available for use.
- We ask that you meditate on or hum the songs as the music plays, rather than singing.
- During the passing of the peace, we invite you to wave, show a peace sign, extend your arms in a gesture of blessing, etc. as you remain in your pew.
- At the end of the worship, please remain seated until the ushers dismiss you by rows. The upright piano side of the sanctuary will leave through the door up front. The lectern side will exit the way you came in.
- Fellowship is encouraged with social distancing, once you are outside of the building.
- We requested your name and phone number in case we need to notify you of a potential exposure to Covid-19. We will heed HIPAA laws if or when the need arises.
- On Sundays, the fellowship hall door that leads out to the Ontario St. parking lot will be exit only for anyone who might be seated in the overflow seating. The Main Ontario St. door and the doors nearest the church office will be the only doors unlocked for entry.
- Even with all of this, we cannot eliminate the risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus while gathering indoors. Therefore, we will record each worship and post for those who choose to stay home. Yes, the Holy Spirit connects us all together wherever we are, with the saints today, and all those who have gone before us in the faith.