

# 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

## *Earth Day and Good shepherd Sunday*

April 21, 2024 10:00am

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, ELCA  
Denver, CO



### **Introduction**

*As we observe Earth Day and Good Shepherd Sunday on the same day, we invoke the trinitarian source of life, nourishment, and renewal and recognize the good shepherd as the One who leads humanity into right relationship with all creation, utilizing Jesus' image of "the fold" as that desired eventuality. Grounded in the presence of our Creator, Creative, and Creating God (Greeting), we move from gratitude for water toward repentance and renewed desire to contribute to creation's well-being, sending us out with renewed relationships and our place in the fold assured.*

*"+" indicates the opportunity to stand as you are able.*

## Gather

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

### **Prelude**

"Brother James' Air"

(Martin)

### **Welcome and Moravian Daily Text Meditation**

#### **+ Thanksgiving for Baptism**

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

Look! Here is water!

What is to prevent us from giving thanks for baptism?

Here is water.

Rushing water. Surging water.

Pounding, crashing surf of water.

Foaming waters to wash us clean,

to scrub away the guilt, the burden that clings,

to wipe away the grime of archived fear.

Blessed be water.

**We give you thanks, Creator God,  
for sea and ocean, tides and waves.**

Here is water.

Tumbling water. Streaming water.

Free-flowing-shower-of-grace water.

Bubbling fount to soothe our hearts,

balm for the scars of angry division,

salve for the wounds of ignorant pride.

Blessed be water.

**We give you thanks, creative Word,  
for rain and snow, storm and mist.**

Here is water.

Clear water. Cool water.

Quench-the-thirst-of-our-soul water.

Still waters to restore our spirits, source of hope,  
refreshment for the journey toward the fold,  
sparkling with the promise of new life.

Blessed be water.

**We give you thanks, creating Spirit,  
for stream and pool, spring and lake.**

Here is water, through which God created and continues to create....

In the beginning, weaving with the Breath of life  
every living being;  
throughout history, a gateway for divine deliverance;  
in every moment, re-remembering the mystery of life,  
bonding all of creation as one.

We give you thanks, blessed Creator, for the gift of life,  
for this water without which life would cease,  
for the gift of baptism,  
through which these waters birth us again  
into your promise of newness, wholeness, and oneness.

Blessed be Creator God,  
creative ✚ Word,  
creating Spirit.

Blessed be each soul here and not here,  
one people,  
one with all that is.

Blessed be this water that births us,  
renews us,  
and welcomes us home. **Amen.**

**+Gathering Song**

"Earth, Earth Awake"

ACS #937

**+ Greeting**

The beauty of the Creator inspire us, the grace of the Good Shepherd be with us, and the unity  
of the Breath of Life enfold us all. **May it be so!**

*Refrain*

This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be peo - ple of God.

Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his. *Refrain*

2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:

Bless - ing, hon - or, glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men. *Refrain*

3 For the Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

*Final refrain*

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

## + Gathering Prayer

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, and all of creation, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## Hear the Word

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

### **A Reading from Acts:** Acts 4: 5-12

Bible pg. (NT) 125

*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.*

The next day [the] rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let 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. This Jesus is

'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders;  
it has become the cornerstone.'

There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

Word of God. Word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

### **Psalm: Psalm 23**

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not be in want. (Ps. 23:1)*

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

**The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.**

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

**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.**

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

**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**



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



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

+ Gospel Reading: John 10: 11-18

Bible pg. (NT)107

*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:] "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The 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. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care 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. I 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. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No 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.**

**Kid's Church**

*After Kids church, the children are invited to the "Playground" (back of the sanctuary) to play and pray with friends. Weekly activity sheets are provided. Our worship is inclusive of all ages and learners, welcoming all children, young and old, as Jesus did, to worship in a variety of ways in the same sacred space.*

**Sermon**

+ Hymn of the Day

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

ELW #502

+ Prayers of the People

*After each prayer petition, we respond: God of Grace, **hear our prayer.***

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

*A brief silence.*

Shepherding God, gather your church whenever we wander from you and one another. Empower our church in ministries around the world to worship and serve alongside global companions as equal partners and coworkers in the gospel.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God, preserve the health of biomes and ecosystems. Inspire scientists, researchers, conservation organizations, and all people entrusted with the task of caring for creation, that we may be better stewards of the world around us.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, lead nations and communities to share resources, cooperate in solving conflicts, and listen to the wisdom of Indigenous peoples. Help all those with power to share it and to use such power for good.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, protect the very young and the very old, those living without housing, victims of domestic abuse, and all who live with chronic illness or compromised immune systems. Guide communities to actively care for people who are vulnerable.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, help this and all communities of faith to listen for your voice. Call us away from things that distract us from following you. Invite us to more deeply love and serve people who are lonely, isolated, and on the margins.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Living God, we give thanks for our ancestors in faith (*including Anselm of Canterbury and all who labored to help generations understand the good news of the gospel*). Strengthen us to share the good news in our own day.

God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **Amen.**

#### **+ Sharing the Peace**

*We greet each other in the peace of the risen Christ. In so doing, may we honor the sacredness of each person and their body by asking for consent to enter their sacred space.*

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

## Bless and Share the Meal

*God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ*

### **Gathering Our Gifts**

#### **Musical Offering**

Choir

#### **+Offering Prayer**

Whatever we ask, in accordance with your will, we receive and our cup overflows. Confident in divine abundance and humbly eager to turn from covetous greed, we return what we have received for the Shepherd's work, that green pastures and safe fold will welcome any who live in fear; that peaceful waters will sustain hurting hearts; that a voice of welcome will be heard at each gate; that a feast will be prepared for all who hunger and thirst; and all may safely graze. In the name of the One who is our comfort. **Amen.**

## + Thanksgiving at the Table

Christ is risen!

### Christ is risen indeed!

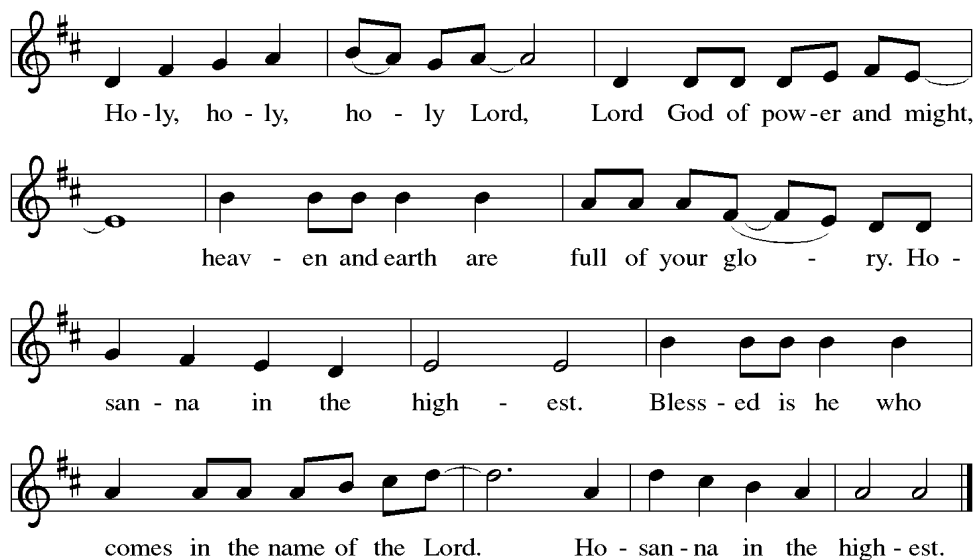
Let's celebrate this irrepressible life;

let's open our hearts to the joy and wonder of infinite possibility,  
of unquenched hope, of eternal resurrection.

We celebrate, we raise our voices and our hearts in worship and thanksgiving to the God who lives, singing...

## + Holy Holy Holy

ELW p. 173



Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly Lord, Lord God of pow-er and might,  
heav-en 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.

## + Words of Institution

Resurrection happened because Christ was first prepared to die.

Defying death, He refused to release His hold on life and love.

So now, as He encouraged us, **we choose to remember so that we too can truly live...**

At supper on the night before He died Jesus took bread and blessed it.

Then He broke it and gave it to His disciples saying: This is my body, broken so that you may know life. And he said...**Do this in remembrance of Me.**

After the meal Jesus took wine and blessed it. Then He gave it to His disciples saying: This is my blood, shed so that you may know life. And he said...**Do this in remembrance of Me.**

So, now, Lord of Life, we share in this meal, we celebrate together, and we remember You. And we will continue to do this until resurrection has flooded the whole creation. **Amen.**

May this bread and this wine become for us in this moment

your life-giving body and blood,

And may we who share this meal, be joined with you,

and with one another,

as one body united in resurrection life,

and sharing with all of creation in your eternal salvation. **Amen.**

...As we break this bread, we receive Christ's life.

**In all our diversity, in all our individuality, as we share this one loaf we are one.**

## + The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

## + Invitation to Communion

*At this meal, Jesus Christ is both the host and meal. Regardless of where you come from, who you love, the color of your skin, your religious background, if you have a little or a lot, are hungry or well fed; or if there is any barrier that you feel keeps you from experiencing God's grace, know that Jesus welcomes you to this meal - the body and blood of Jesus Christ! Bread, Wine, Gluten-Free and Grape Juice are provided.*

At Jesus' table, heaven and earth are joined as one. Come and see.

## + Lamb of God

ELW p. 174

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.

## Communion Distribution

### Communion Songs

"Shepherd me O God"

ELW #780

"You Satisfy the Hungry Heart"

ELW #484

## Table Blessing

### Prayer after Communion

Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend. **Amen.**



# Bless and Send

*God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world*

## Installation of Council Members

### Announcements

#### + Blessing

Little children, sheep of the Good Shepherd:  
As we journey toward the fold,  
we travel through the valley of shadow,  
growing in grace, becoming a blessing.  
Baptismal wells restore our souls,  
a rich feast is spread by divine abundance,  
and divisions end as our cup overflows.

**Amen.**

#### + Sending Song

"This is My Father's World"

ELW #824

#### + Send into Mission

Go in peace. Journey gently on this planet's green pasture. **Thanks be to God.**

#### Postlude

"Sheep May Safely Graze"

(Bach)

### Acknowledgements

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**Thank you to those who led us in worship today! Thank you to those who led us in worship today!**

<b>Ministers</b>	All the people of Holy Cross	<b>Pastor</b>	Libbie Reinking
<b>Organist</b>	Susan Cicirello	<b>Choir Director/Cantor</b>	Beth Letendre
<b>Asst. Minister</b>	Steve Iona	<b>Dir. Of Christian Education</b>	Anne Piphio
<b>Streaming</b>	Bernie Cicirello	<b>Sound</b>	Maurice Lydick
<b>Greeters</b>	Dale & Sarah H.	<b>Tellers</b>	Kay K. & Jim R.
<b>Ushers</b>	Emma K., Ryan K. & Roger K.	<b>Communion Stewards</b>	AnneMarie & Hannah K.

**This week, please pray for...** Willie Stemmer, Dale Crocker, Lloyd Eargle, Jerry Strecker, the family of Lois Knudson, the Otis and Pieta family at the death of Halina's cousin Don Otis, Marilyn Roll, Bob Christman (Karel Hemler's father), Merle Lydick.

**Continued prayers for...** Iona family, Esther Jacobson, Susan Raines, Dorothy Strecker, Shaundra Rana, Rex Thomsen, Bob Denning, Erik Weichselbaumer, Thea Hunter, John England, Phil Wolfe, the Nyok family, Norma Picket, Judy Makowski

**Prayers for our community and world...** Victims of gun violence; those who struggle for food, shelter, and sustainable employment; those displaced from their homes and countries - especially the influx of migrants into our community and those organizations that strive to assist them; peace among the nations, including Palestine, Israel, Myanmar, Iraq, Haiti, Russia, Ukraine, Ethiopia, and South Sudan...

**Remember in prayer...** Holy Cross church council and Excellence in Leadership participants, Holy Cross Ministry Partners, and the Rocky Mountain Synod

**The prayer list will be updated on a monthly basis.**

**If you want to add your name, or remain on the list, please contact the office.**

## Moravian Daily Text QR Code!

The Moravian Daily Texts (MDT) have become a daily habit for us, and we have found it's a very quick and powerful way to start, or end, our day. You can fit it into your schedule whenever it works for you! Let us all listen to God together and see where God takes us!



Welcome to

**HOLY CROSS**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

WHEAT RIDGE, CO

*Whether you've been attending church for years or haven't stepped into a sanctuary in decades, your presence this day has made this community more complete. If you are here for the first time, stop by our welcome table on your way out so we can connect!*

At Holy Cross Wheat Ridge, we have a simple hope:  
To Know Christ and share God's Love with You.

*This church is located on the ancestral homelands of the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Ute, and Lakota/Dakota peoples. We give thanks for their presence here and for all our Indigenous siblings who continue to call this land their home.*

### We are a Reconciling in Christ Congregation



Holy Cross Lutheran Church welcomes all who are seeking God's grace and love in an open and affirming congregation. We welcome people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; of every race, ethnicity, and culture; and of every socio-economic situation. Our doors are open to all regardless of religious background, age, abilities, or life experiences. We affirm the sacredness of all those who have experienced exclusion, whether by family, church, or society. We are a Reconciling in Christ Community. You are most welcome here.

We belong to the Rocky Mountain  
Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran  
Church in America (ELCA)



### Sundays @ Holy Cross

Education Hour @ 9:00am (Sept. - May)

Worship @ 10AM

Coffee @ 11AM

4500 Wadsworth Blvd.  
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033  
303-423-5654

office@holycrosswheatridge.org  
Office Hours: 10am - 2pm M-F

[www.holycrosswheatridge.org](http://www.holycrosswheatridge.org)

Pastor Libbie Reinking  
pastorlibbie@holycrosswheatridge.org  
c. 314-629-3923



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Holy Cross  
Website!



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**We hope you were at home here today. Come worship with us again!**

# For what shall we pray?

April 16, 2024



*“For what shall we pray?” is a weekly post inviting individuals, groups, and congregations to lift up our world in prayer. This resource is prepared by a variety of leaders in the ELCA and includes prayer prompts, upcoming events and observances, and prayer suggestions from existing denominational worship materials. You are encouraged to use these resources as a starting point, and to adapt and add other concerns from your local context.*

## **Prayer prompts:**

For justice and peace among nations where war and violence rage, especially Palestine and Israel, Iran, Myanmar, Iraq, Haiti, Russia and Ukraine, and South Sudan...

For people in Central and South America affected by the dengue fever outbreak...

For farmers and farm laborers as spring arrives...

For peaceful and fair elections in India beginning this week...

For corals that will die and ecosystems that will suffer as ocean temperatures rise...

For communities grieving gun violence, especially New Orleans, Louisiana; Salisbury, North Carolina; and Chicago, Illinois...

For areas of the nation experiencing storms and severe weather...

For safety, understanding, and earnest dialogue amidst protests in Illinois, California, New York, and Oregon...

## **Prayers from ELCA resources:**

*A prayer for the gifts of agriculture (ELW, p.78)*

God, our creator, you have ordered seedtime and harvest, sunshine and rain. Give to all who work the land fair compensation for the work of their hands. Grant that the people of this and every nation may give thanks to you for food, drink, and all that sustains life; may use with care the land and water from which these good things come; and may honor the laborers who produce them; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*A prayer for commerce and labor (ELW p.78)*

Almighty God, your Son Jesus Christ dignified our labor by sharing our toil. Guide us with your justice in the workplace, so that we may never value things above people, or surrender honor to love of gain or lust for power. Prosper all efforts to put an end to work that brings no joy, and teach us how to govern the ways of business to the harm of none and for the sake of the common good; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.