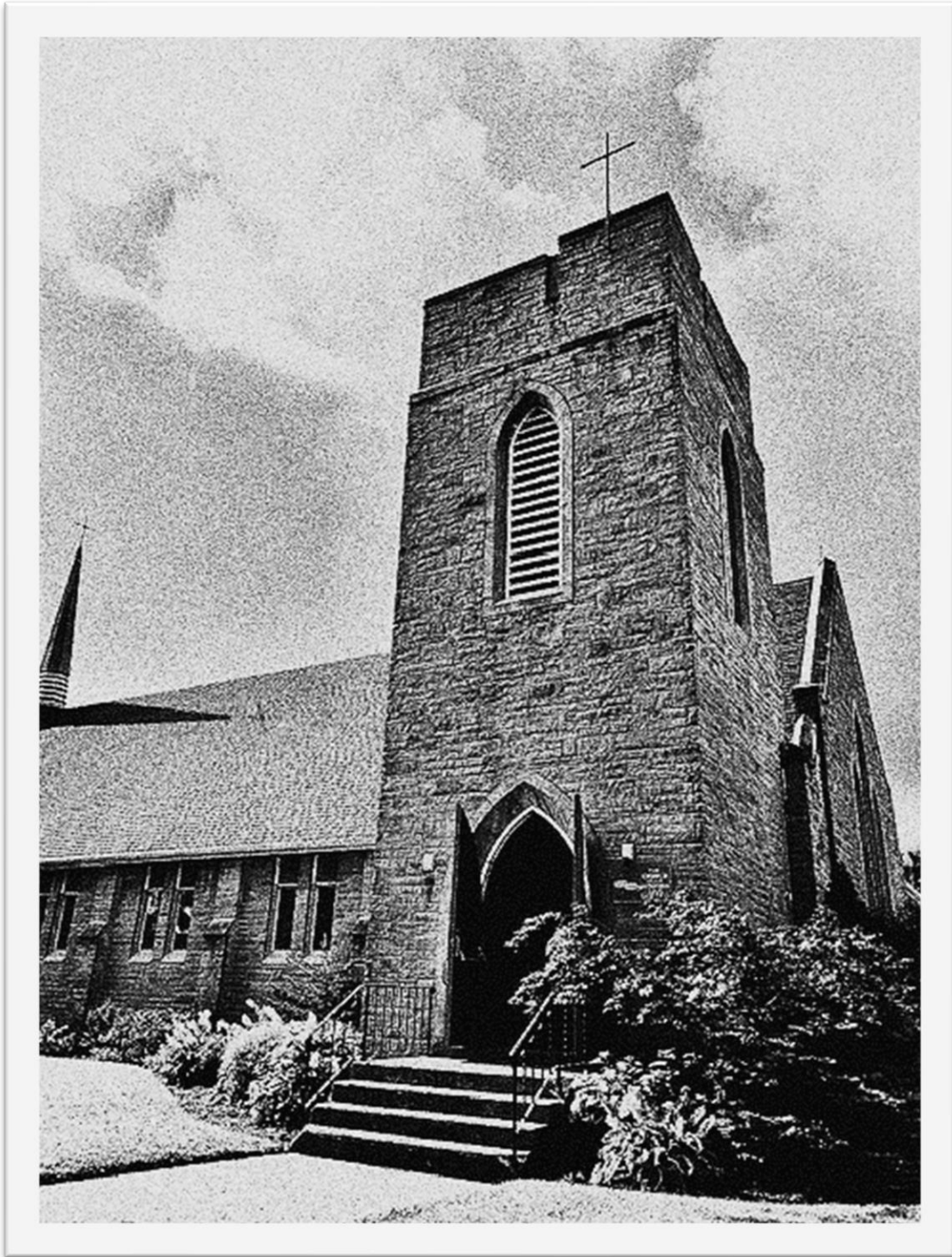


# 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 21, 2024



**CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH – ST. CATHARINES, ON**

140 Russell Avenue

St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1

Church: 905-685-8294

[www.christlutheransc.ca](http://www.christlutheransc.ca)

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**Office Hours:** Thursday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon  
**Bulletin Announcements:** Please send to [secretary@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:secretary@christlutheransc.ca).  
Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

**Pastor:** Pastor Todd Hoeffs (289-362-0113) [sr.pastor@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:sr.pastor@christlutheransc.ca)  
**Parish Assistant:** Louise Gondosch (905-329-8579) [parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca)  
**Business Manager:** Karen McCumber [business.manager@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:business.manager@christlutheransc.ca)  
**Secretary:** Pat Kimpel [secretary@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:secretary@christlutheransc.ca)  
**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC](http://www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC)  
**Bulletin by email:** [chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:chairman.outreach@christlutheransc.ca)

A recording of Sunday's service will be uploaded to YouTube at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING\\_TKT19c\\_OIBbMqGwLw](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpING_TKT19c_OIBbMqGwLw)

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Seminarian Vijay Samuel, Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary Student Fieldworker  
Rev. Noel Richard, Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary Colloquy Student Fieldworker

### DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS

Monday: Luke 23:8-25                      Wed.: Luke 23:26-56                      Friday: Luke 24:1-12  
Tuesday: 1 Samuel 13                      Thurs: 1 Samuel 14:1-23                      Saturday: 1 Samuel 13:24-52

### PRAYER BEFORE WORSHIPPING

O Lord Jesus Christ, you gave your apostles peace, shed down on us all your holy calm; gather together with your hand all those who are scattered, and bring them like sheep into the fold of your holy Church. Strengthen and confirm me, O Lord, by your cross, on the rock of faith, that my mind be not shaken by the attacks of the enemy. For you alone are holy. In your holy name I pray. Amen.

**Musician** – Mayumi Munoz + **Reader** – Noel Richards + **Greeter** – Judy Slingerland

### Welcome to Christ Lutheran Church!

#### We're glad you've joined us for worship!

Please be aware that our Worship Services are **recorded and posted on YouTube and Facebook**. There is, although very slight, a possibility that your image might be posted. If you have any concerns, please either speak to the Elder on duty or alternatively seat yourself more towards the back of the sanctuary or along either of the outside aisles. May our gracious and loving Lord bless you as you worship Him. We pray we all remain safe and healthy.

### ALSO HAPPENING THIS WEEK AT CHRIST LUTHERAN:

Monday:                      1:00 -4:00 PM - Sewing team  
   7:30 PM – Choir  
Tuesday:                      9:30 -11:00 AM – Precious Moments  
Thursday:                      10:00 -11:30 AM - SOUL  
   7:00 PM - Promise Band Practice  
Friday:                      11:00 AM - Ehlert Memorial Service  
   5:00 PM - CLTS Vicar's Dinner  
Sunday:                      9:00-9:50 AM - Sunday School & CHAT  
   10:00 AM - 5<sup>th</sup> Easter Holy Communion



**YOU ARE INVITED!! EVERY SUNDAY!!**

Hope to see you downstairs *for*

**COFFEE, TEA & TREATS !**

9:00 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

(during Sunday School & CHAT)

Anyone willing to help serve or bring treats, please contact: Judy Mason



### **APRIL 2024 WORSHIP SCHEDULE**

**April 14 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Easter - Creative Communion [Worship Band]**

**April 21 - 4<sup>th</sup> Easter - Morning Praise**

**April 28 - 5<sup>th</sup> Easter - Festive Holy Communion**

### **PARISH EDUCATION & FELLOWSHIP**

Today in Sunday School we learn of the promised Holy Spirit descending on the disciples. As they speak "in other tongues", their hearers from many other nations hear about God's Mighty Works in their own languages. Beginning with the Old Testament prophecies, Peter's sermon proclaims Jesus, the promised Messiah. Our Bible verse: You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38

**CONFIRMAND & YOUTH CHAT *Sundays April 21 & May 5th*** with youth leader Dan Figueroa. We will meet in the youth room from 9:00 - 9:50 a.m. Hope to see you there!

**FAMILY DAY EVENT - MAY 4 @ 4 PM!** Singing, a Scripture devotional, a pasta dinner (there will be a sign up for desserts or salads) and our organized game this time will be 'Crokinole'.

**SEWING TEAMS Mondays from 1-4 PM** in the church basement devoted to making necessary items for the Haiti mission and various other missions. Lots of seamstress duties are needed, but sewing is the #1 priority, and anyone is welcome to come. Please speak with Wendy Hyatt if you need any further information.

**EHLERT MEMORIAL SERVICE** will be held Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup> @ 11 AM at Christ Lutheran.

**SEMINARY VICAR'S DINNER** will be hosted by Mary Martha group here at Christ Lutheran April 26<sup>th</sup> beginning at 5 PM. [Vicars are student pastors who are sent out to work a full year under the mentoring under a pastor for a year prior to ordination.]



### **LWML-C/MARY MARTHA EVENTS**

**Tuesday, May 21** – 7:00 p.m.—Speaker / TBA.

**Tuesday, June 18:** Summer Pot Luck – 5:30 p.m. More details to follow.

Please feel free to join us for any or all events!



**LUTHER MANOR 2024 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:** Wednesday, April 24 at 7 PM in the Common Room at Luther Manor (128 Russell Ave.). Agenda will be:

- Review of the 2023 Audited Financial Statements
- Election of the 2024 Slate of Officers
- Director's Reports for 2023

All Members of the Corporation are invited to attend. If you would like to become a Member of the Corporation, please contact Karen McCumber ([luther.manor.inc@gmail.com](mailto:luther.manor.inc@gmail.com)) or Mark McCumber ([lminc.president@gmail.com](mailto:lminc.president@gmail.com)).

**ASCENSION OF OUR LORD DAY REGIONAL SERVICE** for Niagara Circuit Thursday, May 9 @ 7 PM hosted by St John Lutheran in Snyder, ON. Meal & conversation time to follow. All who attend are invited to bring a favourite food item to share.



**50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY!** Celebrate Lutheran Bible Translators of Canada's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary **May 17-18 at our offices at Messiah Lutheran Church, 700 Glen Forrest Blvd., Waterloo.** See poster my mail slots for details or contact LBTC at 519-742-3361 or [pastor.r.mohr@lbtc.ca](mailto:pastor.r.mohr@lbtc.ca) All events are free of charge or free-will offering, but reservations are needed for the meals by May 3.. Come WORSHIP with us, FEAST with us, and CELEBRATE all that our Lord has done and is doing to bring His Word to many people in the languages of their hearts.

**12th Regular Convention of Lutheran Women's Missionary League-Canada:** July 11-14, 2024, at the Four Points by Sheraton in London, ON.

**The convention theme is based on Psalm 149:1 'Sing to the Lord a new song'**

- Keynote Speaker will be Deb Burma who is a Christian author and LWML seminar leader.
- Special Interest Speakers will also tell of their cross-cultural ministry with the use of singing and music.
- The mites gathered throughout the past three years provided such great blessings to people around the world, from local support for a Bethlehem Walk in BC to International support of deaconesses in Nicaragua and Cambodia. Rev. Mark Smith will bring news of the work that is happening through those missions.
- Mission Grants for the next triennium will be voted on.

*If you would be interested in attending, either in person or online, speak to Lorraine Kaija. Registration forms will be available in the coming months. You can also check out the LWML web site [lutheranwomen.ca](http://lutheranwomen.ca)*

**SAVE THE DATE! VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL @ CLC JULY 22-26<sup>TH</sup> 9 AM – 12 NOON, extended care to 3:30 PM, grades 1-6. Scuba themed this year!**

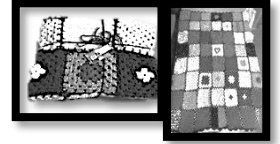
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Easter April 14<sup>th</sup>: 81**

**SOUL: 32, 16 PSWs**

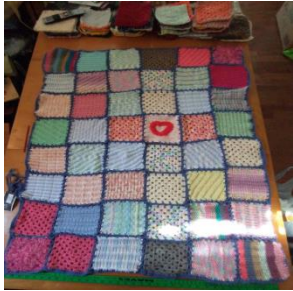
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>YTD</u>	<u>+ / (-)</u>
<b>Current:</b>	303,899.00	5,844.21	2,346.00	59,620.43	(28,042.74)
<b>LCC Missions</b>	17,500.00	336.54	84.00	6,005.00	956.92
<b>Property Improvement:</b>			55.00		

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** of offering received from Lulu Degasse to Christ Lutheran with thanks to God and in celebration of her 98th birthday on April 28.

**GRANNY SQUARES STILL NEEDED:** For about 9 months, we have shown Christ's love in our Caring Squares blankets (25 blankets!) Thank you for donating yarn or completed squares as we continue this project! Praise God!!



**STANDARD FIRST AID CERTIFICATE:** To ensure the continued and on-going safety and health of our congregation, the Social and Health Committee would like to determine who in the membership currently holds an up-to-date Standard First Aid – BLS CPR (HCP) Certificate. As well, if you have previously had a certificate that information would be helpful. Please speak to Judy Slingerland or contact her at [jslingerland@cogeco.ca](mailto:jslingerland@cogeco.ca) if this request applies to you.



**Granny Squares still needed:** This is an ongoing project we will gratefully accept more completed 6 inch knitted or crocheted Granny Squares in any pattern or colour. We would also appreciate any yarn that you may have, leftover yarn or full balls of yarn. In the narthex there is a white cube with yarn and hooks that you are welcome to take (or donate). There is another basket for completed squares. It has been about 6 months that we have been able to show Christ's love in our Caring Squares blankets. (23 blankets to date!) Thank you for donating yarn or completed squares as we continue with this project! Praise

God! If you have any questions, call Lorraine at 905 964 5837)

**100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY FOR REV. DR. HOWARD KRAMER:** A former member of Christ Lutheran and President of Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary from 1984-1990. He will turn 100 on June 3, 2024. He recently celebrated 75 years since his ordination as a pastor. He is currently living in assisted living in Columbia, MO after living in Oklahoma for 11 years. He lives near family, including one of his sons and his wife, a grandson and his wife, and two great-grandchildren. To mark this special occasion, his family suggests that **those who knew him send him a birthday card** and greeting. ***They ask that you mail the cards by May 15,*** if possible, so that all the cards can be given to him during the celebration on May 26, Memorial Day Weekend. Please send your cards and greetings to: **Howard Kramer c/o Michael Kramer 1702 Hayworth Ct Columbia, MO USA 65203-6279** It will be a wonderful surprise for him to receive a large card shower on that day.

# CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

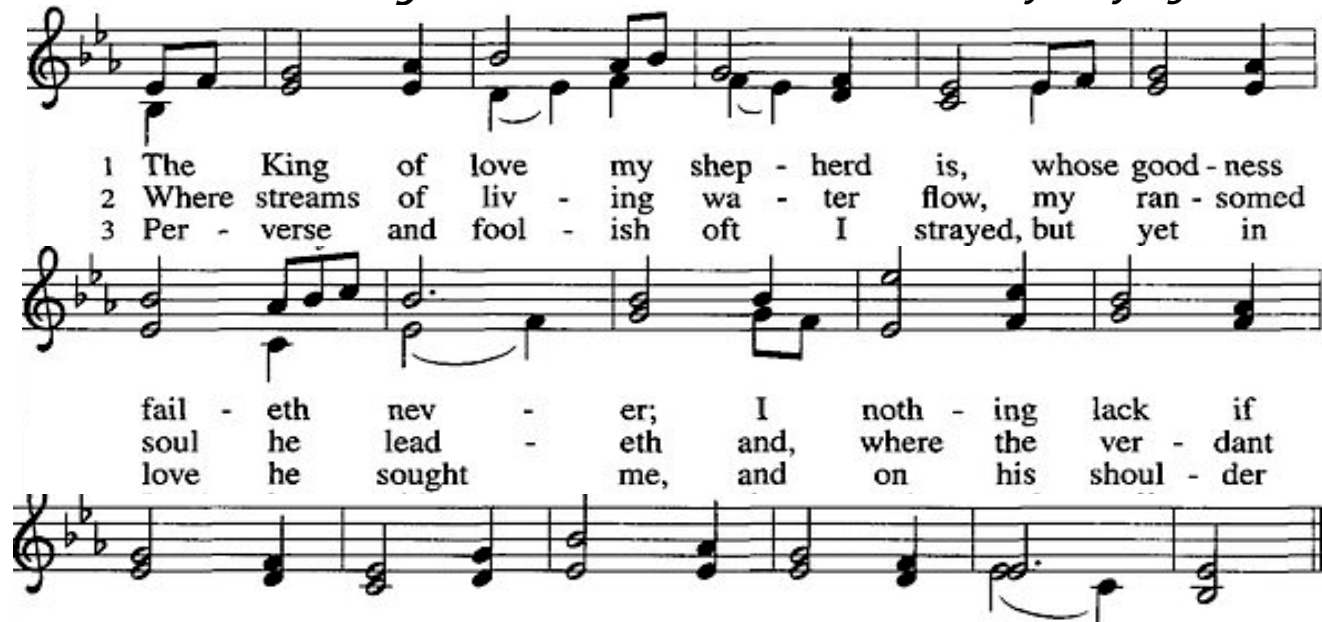
## MORNING PRAISE

THE 4<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY OF EASTER + GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY

April 21, 2024 -- 10 AM worship

GATHERING SONG "The King of Love"

[www. Hymnary.orgELW](http://www.Hymnary.orgELW)



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness  
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed  
3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in

fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant  
love he sought me, and on his shoul - der

I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.  
pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.

Text: Henry W. Baker, 1821-1877  
Music: Irish tune

ST. COLUMBA  
8787

SPOKEN MORNING PRAISE SCRIPTURE RESPONSES

Open up my lips O LORD!

**And my mouth will sing praises to Your Name!**

Come quickly to Help me, O Lord

**And be speedy to keep me away from harm.**

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**As it was then, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

Praise to You, O Christ!

**Alleluia! Alleluia!**

Give glory to our God, our Light and our Life!

**O Come, let us worship Him.**



## PSALMODY

### *Psalm 96 "Come Let Us Worship"*

Come let us wor-ship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord, our God, our  
Mak - er. Come let us wor - ship and bow down, let us  
kneel before the Lord, our God, our Mak - er. For He is our God, and  
we are the peo-ple of His pas - ture, and the sheep of His hand, and the  
we are the peo-ple of His pas - ture, and the sheep of His hand, and the  
sheep of His hand.

David Doherty © 1980 Maranatha Publishers <https://musescore.com/user/9170841/scores/4146941>

### PSALM 23 *(spoken together)*

*King James' Version*

**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever. Amen.**

### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray-- Almighty and eternal God, You have brought back from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep, to call us into His flock by His Word. Send us Your Holy Spirit, so that we may hear the voice of the good Shepherd and faithfully follow Him. We ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord and Shepherd, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## THE SCRIPTURES

### **First Reading**     *Acts of the Apostles 4:1-12*

While Peter and John were speaking to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came to them, much annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming that in Jesus there is the resurrection of the dead. So they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. But many of those who heard the word believed; and they numbered about five thousand. The next day their 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.'

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### **The Epistle**     *1 John 3:16-24*

We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. How 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? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. And 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. All 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.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

### CHOIR ANTHEM

#### ***"You, Jesus, Are My Shepherd"***

You, Jesus, are my Shepherd true, and I Your sheep quite helpless;  
My ever loving guide are You, Your ev'ry thought is selfless;  
You feed me, guard me, lead the way to peace at night and joy by day:  
I frolic in Your favour. I follow You. The path You choose,  
It is the best way for me; The lamb You love You will not lose,



You walk the way before me; And though I pass through death's dark vale,  
 It is my Lord's familiar trail; I know its glorious ending.  
 Surrounded when I am by foes who scorn me or ignore me,  
 In Your strong arms I find repose; You spread a feast before me! You welcome me!  
 I find a place of honour as Your heir of grace; At home with You forever.

*Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda Copyright 1987 Concordia Publishing House Music: Arr: Kevin Hildebrand Copyright 2006 Concordia Publishing House 2006 All Rights Reserved LSBHymnLicense.net 000010240*

### **Holy Gospel St. John 10:11-18**

The Holy Gospel, according to St. John, the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus says:] '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.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord: **Praise to You, O Christ!**

### CHILDREN'S TALK

#### GOSPEL SONG:

*"Saviour, Like A Shepherd Lead Us"*

[www.Hymnary.orgELW](http://www.Hymnary.orgELW)



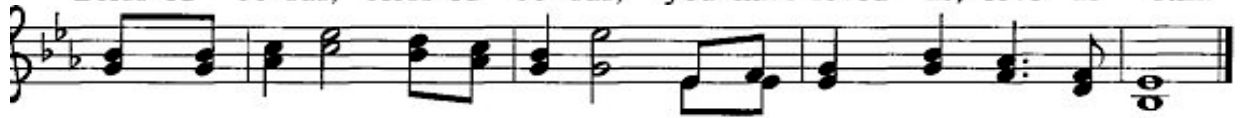
1 Sav - ior like a shep - herd lead us;	much we need your ten - der care.
2 We are yours; in love be - friend us,	be the guard - ian of our way;
3 You have prom - ised to re - ceive us,	poor and sin - ful though we be;
4 Ear - ly let us seek your fa - vor,	ear - ly let us do your will;



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.

xt: attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1779-1847  
 isic: William B. Bradbury, 1816-1868

BRADBURY  
 87 87 D

MESSAGE

EASTER SEASON PRAISE SONG

*"Who You Say I Am"*



1. Who am I \_\_\_ that the high - est King would wel - come me.  
 2. Free at last, \_ He has ran-somed me, His grace runs deep.



I was lost \_ but He brought me in. Oh, His love for me. Oh, His love for  
 While I was a slave to sin, Je - sus died for me. Yes, He died for



me. Who the Son sets free, oh is free in - deed. I'm a child of  
 me.



God, yes I \_\_\_ am. \_\_\_ In my Fa - ther's



house there's a place for me. I'm a child of God, yes I \_\_\_



\_\_\_ am. \_\_\_ I am cho - sen, not for - sak - en. I



am who You say I am. \_\_\_ You are for me, not a - gainst me. I



am who You say I am. I am (Oh) I am who You say I am. \_  
 \_ Who the Son sets free, oh is free in - deed. I'm a  
 Fa - ther's house there's a place for me. I'm a  
 child of God, yes I am. am. am. \_  
 child of God, yes I am. am. am. \_

CCLI Song # 7102401  
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THE OFFERINGS *are gathered.*

SHARING OF THE PEACE

## PRAYER

As sheep trust their shepherd for guidance and protection, let us turn to our God in prayer, certain that he hears our voice for the sake of Jesus Christ his Son. O Gracious Lord, be with your whole church on earth, and the church in this land. Keep her faithful, and let your message of forgiveness through Christ be heard and believed.

We pray to You: **Good Shepherd, hear us.**

Be with our national Synod church body and all of our partner churches and believers everywhere. We commend to you Lutheran Church Canada parishes and church leaders, and all men and women, young and old, who serve You. Uphold all in their daily callings with true faith and a godly life.

We pray to You: **Good Shepherd, hear us.**

Bless Canada, and help those in authority to strive for harmony, honesty and justice. Remember our King, Charles, our Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, our Premier, Doug Ford, those in our local government, and all who maintain order and safety with wisdom and care during our time of lockdown.

We pray to You: **Good Shepherd, hear us.**

Guide our industry, our education, our arts, culture and leisure activities, our mass media, our science and technology. Be with the unemployed and the overworked, the sick and the aged, the poor, the needy and the lonely. We especially remember today any who are sick or in need of healing -- *(names added here...)*.

We pray to You: **Good Shepherd, hear us.**

Seek out those who have wandered away from Your presence. Bring them back to your fold. Help us all to care for our lost brothers and sisters and to help where we can to remind them of your constant goodness and kindness. As You gather Your sheep from all corners of the world, and do not allow even one of your flock to be lost, may we and all people hear your voice, and be gathered into the one flock of our Lord Jesus Christ;

We pray to You: **Good Shepherd, hear us.**

Almighty God and Father, since You have given us grace at this time with one faithful voice to make our common concerns to You and as You have promised that when two or three are gathered in Your name You will grant their requests, fulfill now, O God, the desires and prayers of Your servants, as may be best for them, giving us in this world knowledge of Your truth, and in the world to come, everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord we pray, Who lives and rules with You, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, within our world today. **Amen.**

#### LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in Your Kingdom, and teach us to pray:

**Our Father, Who are in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name....**

#### LUTHER'S MORNING PRAYER

**I thank You, Heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger. And I pray that You would keep me this day, also, from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe have no power over me. Amen.**

#### BLESSING & BENEDICTION

Let us praise our Lord:

**Praise God.**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God the Father and the Communion of the Holy Spirit, + be with you all.

**Amen**

#### LAST SONG

*"I Am Jesus' Little Lamb"*

LSB # 740



1 I am Je - sus' lit - tle lamb; ev - er glad at  
2 Day by day, at home, a - way, Je - sus is my  
3 Who is hap - py as I am, e - ven now the



heart I am; for my Shep - herd gent - ly guides me,  
 staff and stay. When I hun - ger, Je - sus feeds me,  
 Shep - herd's lamb? And when my short life is end - ed,  
 knows my need and well pro - vides me, loves me ev - 'ry  
 in - to pleas - ant pas - tures leads me; when I thirst, he  
 by his an - gel host at - tend - ed, he shall fold me  
 day the same, e - ven calls me by my name.  
 bids me go where the qui - et wa - ters flow.  
 to his breast, there with - in his arms to rest.

TEXT: Henriette Louise von Hayn (1776). Tr. anonymous  
 TUNE: Herrnhut [c. 1740]; C. Gregor Choralbuch (1784)

7.7.8.8.7.7.  
 WEIL ICH JESU SCHÄFLEIN BIN (82 E)

REV. TODD HOEFFS

April 21, 2024 - 4<sup>th</sup> Easter + Good Shepherd Sunday

1 John 3:16-21

*It's Real Love, It's Really Really Real*

In the Bible, "love" appears almost 700 times.

And not the intimate passionate kind, that's depicted in movies.

It's the love centred in God's love for us, His people.

Makes love a pretty important teaching.

So often we think love is just emotional, or about feelings or sentimental words.

There's nothing wrong with those things and they can be very loving.

We all want to hear "we are loved".

We want to feel that warmth, security, and tenderness that comes with love.

At some point, love becomes real and tangible.

Words tied to actions.

As consistent as can be through the work of God's love in us.

This is how John writes his letter.

"We know love by this:"

Love in Greek here is AGAPE; its HESED in Hebrew.

Both are sacrificial love; generous, tied to an action.

We often disregard sacrificial love as something too big for us to carry.

Jesus did it, we can't or don't need to.

Even though He not only says we should, but we can and do.

Because of Him.

Because of God's love, which loved us from the beginning.

Jesus lays down His life for you, me and the world.

He is not the victim of another's power or agendas.

If he is a victim at all, He is the divine victim of His own all consuming love.

His life is not taken from Him;

He hands it over and gives it to us.

A free gift of grace.

This is why Jesus is the good shepherd.

Even the laying down has a relevant meaning for us today.

It is a choice.

You lay down money at the cash register to pay for goods.

You lay it on the line when you choose to be honest.

You lay your reputation down as your good word of truth.

Ancient people laid down their lives in complete honesty.

It exposes yourself to loss, damage or death.

When you have to go to bat for someone to help them, that is laying down your life.

When you do the right thing

even though all who look at you want you to do what's easy –

that is laying down your life.

When you give a few coins to a homeless person

and your friends say "oh he's just gonna buy beer", that is laying down your life.

When we give without strings attached.

When we give without expecting a return on our investment.

When we give because God's love moves us to give.

When we protect and defend those who need help.

All of these and more involves laying down your life.

The love part of it is both the action and the consistency.

We are not to be those who only do it when we are seen.

When we can get credit.

Integrity is doing the right thing when no one is looking.

Hired hands among the shepherding culture are like this.

They are motivated by what they get out of it and only help those they like.

Which is unchristian.

This is why so many Christ-like people suffer silently.

They patiently endure, loving, giving, helping.

God's love for humanity became tangible  
in the life, death, and resurrection of his Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

God begins with love.

He invites each of us to be with Him, to sit with Him, dine with Him, remain with Him.

*God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God,  
and God abides in them.*

We can trust in God's love,

For love is not an ideal, it's a relationship,

and is lived out in relationship with our God and our neighbours.

Love puts our selfish ego aside,

and sacrificing your immediate wants for other's needs.

It means seeing the need and doing something to help.

*We love because God first loved us*, our passage states,

not once, but three times, in slightly varying ways.

John reframes it again – that if we are loved, we can also love others.

I think we all know deep down,

it's often hard to actually do the loving thing.

We all know it's not loving to nurse grudges, seek revenge,

or act carelessly with the way other people live their lives.

We can't honestly see someone in need and keep our material goods closed up

And ignore them when compassion is so obvious.

A closed up heart can shut out God, love and a healthy conscience.

Just as we can't love an unseen God in truth when we act in dislike or apathy

To brothers and sisters whom we can see.

It's mostly because in our heart we don't want to lay down our lives.

Sacrifice costs.

Not even so much of our material goods.

No one wants to lay anything down on the line for another.

Then we are responsible and accountable.

Like the Good Samaritan putting up the beaten man in an inn with pay.

We spend out time getting out of work.

It's sinful feeling this way and makes ourselves very small and selfish.

Love is at the heart of our faith.

Jesus' laying down His body on the cross lays it all on the line.

Heaven, humanity, divinity, Word, reputation, all – all sacrificed

You allow us access to God through the crucified and resurrected Lord.

For Christ, love is lived;

and how we live comes with choice.

Our steps are all known and numbered by God; but we are not robots.  
In Christ we are moved by compassion and the life-line we can offer.  
This can begin with our own families, people in here, or on the other side of town.  
If we believe, we will love. If we do not love, neither do we believe.  
Our belief in Jesus cannot be separated from how and whom we love.  
Our belief in his name is revealed in laying down our life for another.  
This shows the relevance of the cross and empty tomb.  
Laying down our life becomes as natural and a part of life and sitting down to eat.  
Only because Jesus first laid down his life for us.  
The shepherd never takes his sheep somewhere he is unwilling to go.  
He never asks of his sheep something he is himself unwilling to give.  
Every time we lay down our life in love for another  
we remember Jesus' death and proclaim his resurrection  
even as we await the day of his coming.  
The opportunities for a laying down life kind of love are everywhere.  
You don't have to go far.  
They are the strangers who pass through our lives.  
They are the anonymous ones talked about as issues  
of poverty, hunger, homelessness, education.  
The opportunities are people, human beings created in the image and likeness of God.  
In Christ, we will be present, aware, open, willing and ready.  
It is no longer business as usual.  
The life and well-being of another person now is our mission and vision.  
This marks the beginning of a new life.  
A life that looks a lot like Jesus' life.  
Following where and when He leads.  
Trusting His way of generously loving.  
God creates with love, rules with love, judges with love.  
God loves becomes real when we're bathed into Jesus' Body with Baptism.  
God's love becomes real when we dine with Him at Jesus' Meal.  
Here Jesus' glorious Body and Blood abides in our Bodies.  
We become walking, talking bodies of Jesus.  
Christian author CS Lewis once wrote,  
"forgiveness is a lovely idea until you have something to forgive."  
We love, we help, we care, even if we don't like it.  
We are called into a life of living it. Embracing it. Treasuring it. Because it is real.  
In Jesus, there is always really real love.  
Amen.



# The Good Shepherd

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:11 (NIV)

The puzzle is based on John 10:11-18



P E P F E L D W S R L G F T T  
T B F L O C K P K M I U W E J  
Q V C Q K N O W F L F R I A Y  
L N B F O O H P J O E Q U T I  
Z G N L Q R I D Q V U C W N S  
A A I G O O D S T E T S A L S  
O S T M S J C N H S S D M L T  
B F G S R C Y Y Z E V R S I K  
D W E O H C A R E S E K H S A  
A O Q J B E O T M V C P C T K  
P L D V E F P Q T A R E T E T  
E F O O D H E H T E P K H N V  
N B G I S C U T E Q R A Y B S  
K G E C G B A O T R L S C V V  
U M R E Q O A T H D D D K X W

LISTEN

SHEEP

LOVES

WOLF

FLOCK

ATTACKS

CARES

PEN

GOOD

RUNS

SCATTERS

VOICE

SHEPHERD

LIFE

KNOW

# The Good Shepherd Jumble



LEFI

			3

HSEPE

1	5			4

RETHFA

		2	6	7	

GDOO

			8

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Bible Memory Verse

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

John 10:11 (NIV)

### CLUES

The opposite of death is \_\_\_\_\_.

Not a goat, but a \_\_\_\_\_.

A male parent is a \_\_\_\_\_.

The opposite of bad is \_\_\_\_\_.

A person who takes care of sheep is a \_\_\_\_\_.