

ILCW Year-C Scripture Lessons for the Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 13:15-33 NIV

After the reading from the Law and the Prophets, the synagogue rulers sent word to them, saying, "Brothers, if you have a message of encouragement for the people, please speak." 16 Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said: "Men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship God, listen to me! 17 The God of the people of Israel chose our fathers; he made the people prosper during their stay in Egypt, with mighty power he led them out of that country, 18 he endured their conduct for about forty years in the desert, 19 he overthrew seven nations in Canaan and gave their land to his people as their inheritance. 20 All this took about 450 years. "After this, God gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet. 21 Then the people asked for a king, and he gave them Saul son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin, who ruled forty years. 22 After removing Saul, he made David their king. He testified concerning him: 'I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do.' 23 "From this man's descendants God has brought to Israel the Savior Jesus, as he promised. 24 Before the coming of Jesus, John preached repentance and baptism to all the people of Israel. 25 As John was completing his work, he said: 'Who do you think I am? I am not that one. No, but he is coming after me, whose sandals I am not worthy to untie.' 26 "Brothers, children of Abraham, and you God-fearing Gentiles, it is to us that this message of salvation has been sent. 27 The people of Jerusalem and their rulers did not recognize Jesus, yet in condemning him they fulfilled the words of the prophets that are read every Sabbath. 28 Though they found no proper ground for a death sentence, they asked Pilate to have him executed. 29 When they had carried out all that was written about him, they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb. 30 But God raised him from the dead, 31 and for many days he was seen by those who had traveled with him from Galilee to Jerusalem. They are now his witnesses to our people. 32 "We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers 33 he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: "'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'

Epistle

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. 10 And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." 11 All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" 13 Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes -- who are they, and where did they come from?" 14 I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. 16 Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. 17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Gospel

John 10:22-30

Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, 23 and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade. 24 The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." 25 Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, 26 but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. 27 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL, USA
(Easter 4-C) Good Shepherd Sunday  Other Sheep
April 21st 2013  9:30 am



1695 Bible woodcut of John 20: Mary Magdalene reports to the disciples that she has seen the risen Jesus ... the "little while" is over!

Courtesy of the Digital Image Archive, Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University
<http://www.pitts.emory.edu/DIA/detail.cfm?ID=3098>

OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Synod

6920 N. Socrum Loop Road—in north Lakeland, Florida

Mailing address: P. O. Box 91905—Lakeland, FL 33804-1905

PHONE (863) 859-3400— www.osllakeland.com

BIBLE CLASS 8:30 AM WORSHIP 9:30 AM FELLOWSHIP 10:30 AM

Pastor Andrew Burmeister (863) 430-5859

Organist: Janice Thomas (813) 650-9198

April 21, 2013 Easter 4C Jubilate' (Good Shepherd)

WELCOME to Our Savior! We are happy to have you worship with us today. If you are visiting us for the first time, we ask that that you please fill out a visitor card found in the pew cardholder and place it in the offering plate. If you are seeking a church home, our pastor would be glad to share information about our church with you and discuss membership at your convenience. Come and worship with us again! Thank you.

TODAY WE CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER: If you are new to the area and have never communed with us before, please speak with the pastor before the service. If you are not currently a member of an ELS or WELS congregation, we ask that you please wait to take communion until the pastor can speak with you. Out of Christian love and consideration to you the visitor, we want you to have the opportunity to learn what our church teaches about the Bible and Sacraments before you unite with us in taking Holy Communion. Thank you.

ORDER OF SERVICE *(See insert.)*

PLEASE NOTE: The service folder insert has been written so that it may be used more than once. If you prefer to use the hymnal, see page 15. Feel free to leave the service folder insert with an usher after the service. Thank you. May the Lord bless your worship!

Service		
Opening Hymn	1 (5v)	Open Thou, Thy Gates of Beauty
Hymn of Day	429 (3v)	Lord, Thee I Love With All My Heart
Sermon	John 10:22-30	"We NEED Our Good Shepherd"
Offering Hymn	644 (1v)	Praise God from Whom All Blessings
Sending Hymn	657 (4v)	Beautiful Savior, King of Creation
Closing Hymn	341 (5v)	Crown Him With Many Crowns

GRADUAL: Alleluia! Alleluia! The Lord has sent redemption to His people. Alleluia! It behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead and therefore to enter into His glory. Alleluia! ... from Psalm 66

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Here are **Congregation Responses** for the general **PRAYER of the CHURCH**

C: Thanks be to God! You give us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

C: Drive out all doubt and gloom that we may delight in Your glorious Triumph.

C: Worthy is the Lamb Who was slain to receive wisdom and power and honor and glory and praise.

C: Risen Lord, live in us that we may live for You.

C: Alleluia! Thanks be to God! Amen.

PRAYER REQUESTS:

Madeline Beck Richard Birkenmeier Jonathan Jumper (grandson of Elaine Jones) Tyler Kirby (nephew of Andrea Sawyer) George Wendt (brother of Steve Wendt)	Patty & Buster Brewbaker (former member) Dan Elwing Mariah Sawyer Ann Wentz
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Volunteers	This week	Next week
Greeter	Elaine Jones	Don & Bev Weinke
Usher	(Volunteer)	(Volunteer)
Treats	Robin Dux	Jon & Andrea Sawyer

COFFEE will be served in the Fellowship Hall following the service. Everyone is invited to stay! We thank our volunteers for serving today. We are **IN NEED OF SERVERS** for future Sundays. If you can help, PLEASE SIGN UP. Thanks!

Statistics	Last week	Year to date (average)
Sunday Worship	36	42
Sunday Bible Class	8	8
Thursday Bible Class	10	9
Sunday Offering	\$	(YTD total) \$

Calendar of Events		
Sunday, 4/21	8:30 am 10:45 am	Bible Study on "VIC" Genesis Chapter 2 Fellowship
Thursday 4/25	6:30 pm	Bible Study at Madeline Beck's
Sunday, 4/28	8:30 am 9:30 am 10:45 am	Bible Study Worship (no Lord's Supper) Fellowship

Congregational Notes

Please contact our Elders with any concerns about church matters: **Jim Vanesky 644-7807, John Weber 853-5458, & Don Wienke 863-815-8892.**

Upcoming Schedule Notes

"Picnic in the Park" - May 5th, 2013. Originally it had been planned to have "Worship in the Park" with the members of Peace Lutheran of south Lakeland. Peace is now planning on having their regular worship at their church, not in the park. Our Savior will now have our regular worship here at our church at the normal time, **9:30am**. Peace members still very much want and are planning on having the **picnic and fellowship starting at 11:30am**. This is a potluck meal where families are asked to bring meat and a potluck dish. Your meat can be cooked for you if you like. We hope many of us can come for this fellowship opportunity.

Pastor Andy's contact details:

Address: 4355 Corporate Avenue, #169 / Lakeland, FL 33809

Phone: 863 430-5859 / Email: anderuu@gmail.com

Easter4C *Jubi-Latte'?* John 10:22-30 "JESUS=GOOD SHEPHERD" 04.21.13

PRAYER: Lord Jesus, let Your Spirit keep us in faith and explain to our spirit that it is a little while we do not see You. Make us glad in hope, patient in tribulation and watchful in prayers. Give us steadfastness, and make us partakers of Your eternal joy. Amen." (*Romans 12:12*)

INTRODUCTION: One Sunday morning, following the church service, a layman accosted the pastor and said, "Pastor, this church has been insulting me for years, and I did not know it until this week." The stunned pastor replied, "What on earth do you mean?" "Well," said the layman, every Sunday morning the call to worship in this church ends with the words, *"We are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand."* And I have heard ministers over the years call the congregation, God's flock.' Then this past week I visited the stockyards. There I discovered that sheep are just about the dumbest animals God ever created. Why, they are so stupid that they even follow one another docilely into the slaughterhouse. Even pigs are smarter than sheep, and I would certainly be angry if my church called me a pig' every Sunday morning. So I'm not at all sure I want to come to church and be called a sheep' any longer...even God's sheep'."

The man had a point. But whether we like it or not, that is the language of the Bible: both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. We are called "God's sheep." The favorite psalm of many people is the 23rd, and it begins by saying, "The Lord is my shepherd..." And if "the Lord is my shepherd," then I am one of the Lord's sheep. Centuries before Christ, the prophet Isaiah said to his people: "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6) From the Bible, we have taken this pastoral imagery over into the Church. One of the symbols of the office of bishop across the centuries has been the shepherd's crook, that long staff with a hook on the end. And ministers are often called "pastors." In the dictionary, one of the meanings of "pastor" is "shepherd," coming from a Latin word which means "feeder." At the end of the Fourth Gospel we have that final resurrection appearance of the Lord by the Sea of Galilee when He asked Peter three times whether he loved Him, and Peter answered three times that he did. And Jesus **said to Peter, "Feed my sheep."**

The word "pastor" is a common one used to refer to an ordained person who is in charge of a congregation. Sometimes I wonder whether it is not a bit anachronistic, coming as it does from a rural, pastoral metaphor which seems rather out of date in our busy, urban, industrialized society...

THEME: Why **WE REALLY NEED OUR GOOD SHEPHERD, ...JESUS.**

"I am the Good Shepherd." Of all the images Jesus paints of Himself, this is the most comforting and the strongest. It embraces Redeemer and Savior - the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. It calls on **Psalm 23**, that song of shepherd-king David who boasts, "**Jehovah** is my Shepherd, therefore I lack nothing."

Jesus was walking about the temple courts at the Feast of the Dedication (Hannukah). The Son of David walks in the colonnade of David's son, Solomon. Was He the Promised One, the Messiah, the Christ? The people wanted to know. He's already told them by word and work, but they refused to believe. They

refused for a variety of reasons. He came from Nazareth, a with no prophetic past. He came in peace, not to declare war, at least their kind of war. He claimed to be one with the Father, the Father's Son. He claimed to be the Good Shepherd.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Luther said that even a seven year-old child knows what the Church is - "holy believers and sheep who hear the voice of their Shepherd" (SA XII.2). You are sheep in the Good Shepherd's flock. You are baptized, given ears to hear the voice of your Shepherd forgiving your sins, giving you life and salvation. "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand."

In the hands of the Good Shepherd, you are un snatchable and safe. The devil wants you for his own. He prowls about like a hungry wolf looking for the lone, stray, vulnerable sheep to snatch. The unbelieving world would entice you away from the saving voice of the Good Shepherd, away from His Word and His gifts. Wolves go for the lone sheep, the weak ones. But Good Shepherd Jesus will have none of that. He died for you, laid down His life that you might be a sheep of His pasture. He baptized you, marked you with His seal of ownership. He prepares a table for you in the presence of your enemies - sin, death, the devil. He gives you His own body and blood as your food and drink that you may dwell in His Father's house forever.

There are those who are not part of His flock. That doesn't mean that He didn't die for them too, or that He doesn't want them in. They are out not by His exclusion but by their refusal to be included. You can't be in the flock if you reject the shepherd. The shepherd makes the flock; the flock doesn't make the shepherd. "Strike the shepherd, the sheep will scatter," as Jesus' own disciples demonstrated.

Unbelief is refusal to have Jesus as your Shepherd. Refusal to be given to by Him, refusal of His Word, His gifts, His forgiveness. There is no other Shepherd who can save you; no other shepherd who will lead you through the dark valley of death to the life in the resurrection. Only Good Shepherd Jesus has gone the way of death and resurrection. Only Jesus is risen from the dead never to die again. Only Jesus reigns at the right hand of God. It isn't a question of whether or not we are going to have a shepherd. The only question is who it will be. Will it be a shepherd who leads us to death and destruction, or the Good Shepherd who leads to life and salvation.

The world is full of pseudo-shepherds, wolves in sheep's clothing who say "follow me," making all sorts of promises. Follow me, and you will be healthy. Follow me, and you will have wealth in abundance. Follow me, and you will be wise beyond your peers. Only Jesus comes with this promise: "Follow me, and I will give you eternal life and you will never perish." And He alone has the resurrection to prove it.

(DMV, EYE-TEST) In driving, there comes a time when experience and insight don't help. What is required is eyesight.

The problem with the old adage "what you see is what you get" is that vision is surprisingly subjective. Ask any police officer trying to get eyewitness reports at the scene of an accident and they will confirm that ten witnesses will give ten very different versions of the event. They eye might be an amazing piece of biological equipment. The eye might be a remarkable camera. The eye might be

a feat of unparalleled divine imagination. But the information behind the images the eye spies is processed by our whole being. Every "picture" our eyes take is colored, clouded, focused, and framed, by a lifetime of experiences and expectations.

To "the Jews" who questioned his identity and challenged him to tell them "plainly" if he were the Messiah, Jesus just didn't look right or sound right. His words and images were not what they expected.

How could suffering bring salvation?

How could weakness bring strength?

How could a shepherd stand up against a soldier?

How could the presence of Almighty God reside in such a humble spirit as this Jesus? ... These Jews failed their vision test...

Our own day too is filled with the howling wolves of false religion, of Law masquerading as Gospel, of works displacing faith, of "spiritualities" that have nothing to do with the Holy Spirit, false atonements for sin, false conceptions of sin, no conception of sin at all much less salvation and life. The Good Shepherd is also the slain and risen Lamb, the Shepherd who becomes the sheep. Therein is the mystery of your salvation. The Good Shepherd Son of God did not come to round you up like a herd of cattle, but to gather you as a shepherd gather His sheep, dying for you, rising for you, calling you to be His own. He embraces you in His own death; He takes on your sin; He makes His death and life yours. And He doesn't leave you alone, isolated in your prayers and pieties, sitting there in your armchair with your Bible. He calls you into a flock, a holy community, a communion of saints. His voice is a gathering voice that calls and gathers the sheep together, young and old, into one flock, **"one, holy, Christian, and apostolic Church."** (Apostles' Creed)

That isn't always apparent to our eyes. We look at Christianity as it is in the world today, and it seems more divided than ever. We look at our own congregation, and it rarely seems like a cohesive flock. It's really the presence of the shepherd that tells you that there is a flock.

We confess that "we believe in one holy Christian, and apostolic Church." We believe it precisely because we can't see it, just as we can't see faith in the heart, not even in our own hearts. We must believe, take God at His Word and trust Him, that the Church is one, that she is holy, that she is universal. And we can be sure of that only as she is faithful to the apostolic Word, to the Scriptures, the Word of God given to the apostles and handed down through the ages in the Church. Apostolic preaching, apostolic teaching is the Voice of Good Shepherd Jesus, who says of those He has sent, "He who hears you, hears me."

St. John was given the special gift to see what we now must believe, the Church in all her glory, the triumphant Church, a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, and language.

You will see that one day too, dear baptized believers, sheep of the Good Shepherd. The Lamb is your Shepherd. Though now you must wait and watch, though now you must suffer in patient endurance and hope, though now you must hear and cannot yet see, yet you are already one with this white-robed congregation. You sitting here today, tired, distracted, troubled, anxious. You

sinner, in despair. You, lost little sheep, trembling and afraid. Take heart! Trust! The Lord Jesus is your Shepherd who leads you to life.

Never again will you hunger, never again will you thirst - He gives you His body and blood. The sun will not strike you by day, nor any scorching heat - He has sheltered you in the shadow of His mercy. The Lamb who takes away the sin of the world is your Shepherd. He will guide you to springs of living water in your Baptism. He will wipe away ever tear of sorrow and grief from your eyes.

The Lord is your Shepherd; and in Him you lack nothing. **Amen.** **SDG**

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL, USA
Easter-4C (*Jubilaté*)  Jesus = *THE Good Shepherd*
April 21st 2013  9:30 am



Woodcut illustration from 1695 Bible – John 10: Jesus, the Good Shepherd, risks His own life to protect His sheep and lambs from the wolves.

Courtesy of the Digital Image Archive, Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology, Emory University
www.pitts.emory.edu/DIA/detail.cfm?ID=6815