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## SUNDAY WORSHIP

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 25, 2021 9:00am

***“I am the good shepherd.”—John 10:11***

*Prior to the service you are invited to prepare yourself for worship.*

*Some people prefer to meditate or pray,*

*while others may speak softly with their fellow-worshippers.*

*As the prelude begins, we invite you to open your ears and still your voices.*

Prelude

Oh, When the Saints

arr. David Marlatt

*We are called to worship, drawing our attention forward and upward.*

Welcome

\*Call to Worship

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

**God makes me lie down in green pastures; the Lord leads me beside still waters and restores my soul. God leads me in right paths for his name's sake.**

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I 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; my cup overflows.**

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

**And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

*We focus our attention on God's Glory and offer our praise in word and song.*

**\*Opening Prayer**

Eternal God, you have called us to be one people, the Body of Christ,  
the Family of Faith, and today we gather to celebrate your mercy in our midst.

**You know us well, and love us still. Give us vision to see your will,**

**courage to name your will, and strength to lead us into your will.**

**We may falter, but your grace is sure to pick us up and lead us on. Amen!**

**\*Hymn # 353 (You are invited to hum the melody)**

**My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less**

*Reflecting on God's Glory makes us aware of our common sinfulness  
and need for forgiveness.*

*This honesty before God and each other opens our hearts  
to receive God's forgiveness, which we celebrate with word and song.*

**Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Forgiveness**

All-knowing God, we see more easily in others the faults that hinder our own faith.

**We speculate their motivations to be sinister and conniving, while we believe we are righteous in our thoughts and positions. We feel good about ourselves when we are free from pain and worry, and expect others to pick themselves up and get busy on our plans. Forgive us for our indifference to you and to the people of our world for whom Christ died. Make us more sensitive to our spiritual shortcomings, that we may be motivated to serve you faithfully.**

God has been longsuffering toward the sins of the world.

**Indeed, God's love has shepherded us to seek forgiveness!**

And again today, we humbly and hopefully proclaim:

**In Jesus Christ, we all are forgiven. Alleluia! Amen!**

**Response**

**Lasst Uns Erfeuen**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.**

**Praise God, all creatures high and low. Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Praise God, in Jesus fully known:**

**Creator, Word, and Spirit one. Alleluia, alleluia!**

*Forgiven and restored, we give of what God has given us in time, talents, and treasure,  
and we pray together as an active part of our worship and witness.*

**Ministry Updates**

**Prayers of the People and the 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;**

**and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

*The Scriptures hold a central place in our worship, and so are read early and often.  
We ask God to inspire both the reading and the hearing of these words,  
and listen for what God may reveal in them.  
The music and messages are designed to help interpret the Scriptures  
and help us to apply them to our daily living.*

Prayer for Illumination

**Guide us, O King Eternal, into the truths of your holy scriptures,  
that we might follow them, and you, with confidence and hope. Amen.**

Scripture Reading

John 10:11-18

*“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.”*

Children’s Message

Special music

Andante from Sonata in B-Flat Major  
Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy

Sermon

“We Are God’s Flock”

Bob Sheldon

*Once we hear God’s Word we desire to respond in word and in deed,  
so we say and sing what we believe.*

Affirmation of Faith: Selections from the Larger Westminster Catechism

**The union which the elect has with Christ is the work of God’s grace, whereby they are spiritually and mystically, yet really and inseparably, joined to Christ as their head and husband; which is done in their effectual calling. Effectual calling is the work of God’s almighty power and grace, whereby (out of God’s free and special love to his elect, and from nothing in them moving him thereunto) God doth in his accepted time invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by Word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able, freely to answer his call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein. (Q. 66-67)**

Hymn # 802 (You are invited to hum the melody)

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

*We are sent into the world to bear witness to God’s glory and love,  
knowing that God has gone ahead of us to prepare the way and the people we will encounter.*

*Worship ends on this hopeful note and continues in all we do and become.*

## Blessing and Response

### Postlude

### Improvisation on The King of Love My Shepherd Is

\*You are invited to stand as you wish.

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FIRST PRES

**Leading us in worship** today are Rev. Bob Sheldon, Interim Pastor; Rev. Caroline Cupp, Executive Pastor; Sandor Kadar, Director of Music; Kira Boros, Choir Accompanist; The Miner Street Brass. Greeters today are Barbara Lade and Liz Single.

**Prayer for Today** - It's easy for me to get a little lost, O God. There's so much going on around me that I can forget where I am and where I am going. Thank you for giving us the scriptures to show us the way through this world and into your love. I'll try to be better at reading and following them every day. Amen.

**Love Offerings for Cole Seaman and Jennifer Drap** - First Pres is grateful for the service of two of our staff members who are stepping away from their current roles. Both Jen and Cole served this congregation with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. In appreciation for their years of dedicated service, we have established a Love Offering for both Cole and Jen. If you would like to contribute, you may make your contribution via personal check made out to First Presbyterian Church with Love Offering - Cole, or Love Offering - Jen in the memo line. You may also make your contribution online by clicking on "Give" on the church website and selecting the options for the Love Offerings.

**Mother's Day Flower Sale** - Save the date (Sunday, May 9) for the annual Youth Flower Sale. More details to come.

**Young Justice Builder's Club** - Elementary-aged children and their families are invited to the next session of the Young Justice Builder's Club next Sunday, May 2, from noon - 1 pm. In this program we'll read some stories to help us understand the difference between charity and justice, and how both are needed to make positive change in the world. We're hoping this session can meet - with safety precautions - in person outdoors, but that will be weather dependent. Contact Sara Pantazes if you are planning to attend.

**Service Project with the Melton Center** - As we emerge from the Covid pandemic, the Melton Center is re-imagining its summer programs for elementary and middle school age students and is looking for some helping minds and hands. We need assistance in creating a STEM-themed program (work that will be done from home this spring) as well as people willing to go to the Melton Center and assist with in-person camp this summer. If you are interested in helping or want more information, please contact Sara Pantazes.

**Sunday mornings with children** - Beginning next Sunday, May 2, children who attend worship in person will be invited to join Ms. Sara in Fellowship Hall for story time during the sermon. For those not comfortable returning in person, Sunday School will continue to be offered on Zoom at 10:00 every Sunday morning. The nursery is not yet open, but Herron Lounge is available a space for families to watch and listen to service while children play. We are excited to see our youngest disciples in person again soon!

**Upper Room Devotional Booklets** - Copies of the May/June issue of Upper Room are available at the Welcome Center, or please contact Elizabeth Hess (ehess@firstpreswc.com) if you would like a copy sent to you. These booklets include a Scripture, a short devotion, and a prayer for each day.

**2021 Contributions:** Current contributions as of 4/21/21 are \$353,985 out of \$1,047,133 budgeted.