

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

APRIL 26, 2026



ST. PAUL'S

Evangelical Lutheran Church

WELCOME

Welcome! We are glad you are joining our community of faith for worship today. Whether you are a long-time Lutheran, or you come from another Christian tradition, or you're wandering or wondering about faith and the church, you are welcome to participate in worship in whatever ways are comfortable for you. If you are new to St. Paul's you can request more information on our web site contact page here:
www.stpaulsbrenham.org/contact

Our worship liturgy is rooted in the ancient church's practice of gathering on Sundays to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus through hearing God's Word and sharing the communion meal in the presence of Christ. We welcome all baptized Christians to receive communion. Children who are communing in other churches are invited to commune here. All who are not receiving are invited to come forward for a blessing—you may indicate you want a blessing by holding your hands together or crossing your arms in front of you.

This bulletin is a helpful guide to our worship liturgy, as are ushers and friendly people gathered here with you to worship God together.

ST. PAUL'S STAFF

Michael Coffey	Lead Pastor
Donna Krueger	Pastor of Care Ministry
Diane Garrett	Organist
Larry Smith	Choir Director
Dr. Sarah Burke	Director of Contemporary Music
Lisa Eben	Financial Director
Thomas Johnson	Communications Coordinator
Anne Briggs	Membership Coordinator
Sarah Zwahr	Director of Youth and Family
Julie Guiberteau	Media Technician
Sandra Ehlinger	Head of Christian Day School

CONTACT US

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*St. Paul's is a congregation of
the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.
Learn more at www.elca.org*

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Today is sometimes called "Good Shepherd Sunday." Jesus is called the "gate" of the sheep in today's gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world's violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God's tender care to all creation.

HEALING PRAYER

Once a month we offer healing prayer, a ministry that has been a part of the church's practice since ancient times. The early church described Jesus as the Great Physician, who is both the doctor and the medicine, giving the remedy of himself to those with whom he is in relationship. In the completeness of Christ's nature, including both humanity and divinity, Jesus enacts for us both physical and spiritual healing. Those who wish to receive healing prayer with laying on of hands and anointing with oil may come to the altar rail at any time during the communion distribution.

OFFERING

Offering plates are on the welcome table in the narthex. Feel free to leave your offering there. The offering will be presented during the worship liturgy. You can also make an offering online at www.stpaulsbrenham.org/give

FIRST AID

A First Aid Kit and AED (defibrillator) are located in the closet of the usher room in the Narthex.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

An Easter Suite: Procession Charles Callahan

SOUNDING OF THE BELL

WELCOME

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God, the fountain of living water,
the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you created us in your image
and placed us in a well-watered garden.

In the desert, you promised pools of water for the parched,
and you gave us water from the rock.

When we did not know the way, you sent the Good Shepherd to lead us to still waters.

At the cross, you washed us from Jesus' wounded side,
and on this day, you shower us again with the water of life.

We thank you, God of grace.

We praise you for your salvation through water,
for the baptismal waters in this font, and for all water everywhere.

We praise you, God of grace.

Bathe us in your forgiveness, grace, and love.

Satisfy all who thirst, and give us the life only you can give.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ, our living water,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

We honor you, God of grace. Amen.

GATHERING SONG

ELW 807 *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Please be seated.

(10:30) DISMISSAL FOR CHILDREN'S CHURCH

WORD

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 34:7-15

God will shepherd Israel

⁷ Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:

⁸ As I live, says the Lord GOD, because my sheep have become a prey and my sheep have become food for all the wild animals, since there was no shepherd, and because my shepherds have not searched for my sheep, but the shepherds have fed themselves and have not fed my sheep, ⁹ therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD: ¹⁰ Thus says the Lord GOD: I am against the shepherds, and I will hold them accountable for my sheep and put a stop to their feeding the sheep; no longer shall the shepherds feed themselves. I will rescue my sheep from their mouths, so that they may not be food for them.

¹¹ For thus says the Lord GOD: I myself will search for

my sheep and will sort them out. ¹² As shepherds sort out their flocks when they are among scattered sheep, so I will sort out my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places to which they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³ I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the watercourses, and in all the inhabited parts of the land. ¹⁴ I will feed them with good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel shall be their pasture; there they shall lie down in good grazing land, and they shall feed on rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I will make them lie down, says the Lord GOD.

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

PSALM

Psalm 23

The cantor sings the refrain, and the congregation repeats it. The psalm is sung responsively.



The LORD is my shep-herd; I shall not be in want.

¹ The LORD¹ is my shepherd;

I shall not¹ be in want.

² **The LORD makes me lie down¹ in green pastures
and leads me be-¹ side still waters.**

³ You restore my¹ soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways¹ 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. Refrain**
⁵ You 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. Refrain**

SECOND READING

1 Peter 2:19-25

Doing the right things does not guarantee that one will not experience difficulties, hardships, rejection, or even suffering. Here Christ is presented as the model for our path of endurance and loyalty to God, particularly amid adversity.

¹⁹ It is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.
²² "He committed no sin,

and no deceit was found in his mouth."
²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

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

Please stand as you are able for the Gospel

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

ELW 174 Celtic Alleluia

The assembly sings the Alleluia. The cantor sings the Gospel verse and the assembly repeats the Alleluia.

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

Cantor: Jesus says, I am | the good shepherd. I know my own and my | own know me. (John 10:14)*

GOSPEL

John 10:1-10

The holy gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said:] ¹ "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He

calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers."

⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them.

⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Please be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Michael Coffey

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW 502 *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*

APOSTLES' CREED

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come 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

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Savior. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

And also with you.

Greet one another with the peace of Christ. After the Peace, please be seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEAL

OFFERING

*An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.
Offering plates are on the welcome table in the narthex before and after the service.*

MUSICAL OFFERING

(8:00) *The Day of Resurrection* John Ferguson
(10:30) *Come, Christians Join to Sing*

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERING SONG

ELW 674 stanzas 1, 2 *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:
2 Christ is a - ble to make us one, at the ta - ble he sets the tone,
3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear - ing fruit in a world of doubt,



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.
teach - ing peo - ple to live to bless, love in word and in deed ex - press.
gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im - man - u - el) ev - 'ry - where!

Refrain



Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

OFFERING PRAYER

Merciful God,
**accept the fruits of our labor,
gathered to give you glory.
You have set a table before us,
a glimpse of that great day
when we will hunger and thirst no more.
Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus,
that goodness and mercy may follow us
and bless the world you love.
In the name of Jesus, Amen.**

DIALOGUE AND PREFACE

The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

And also with you.

We lift them to the Lord.

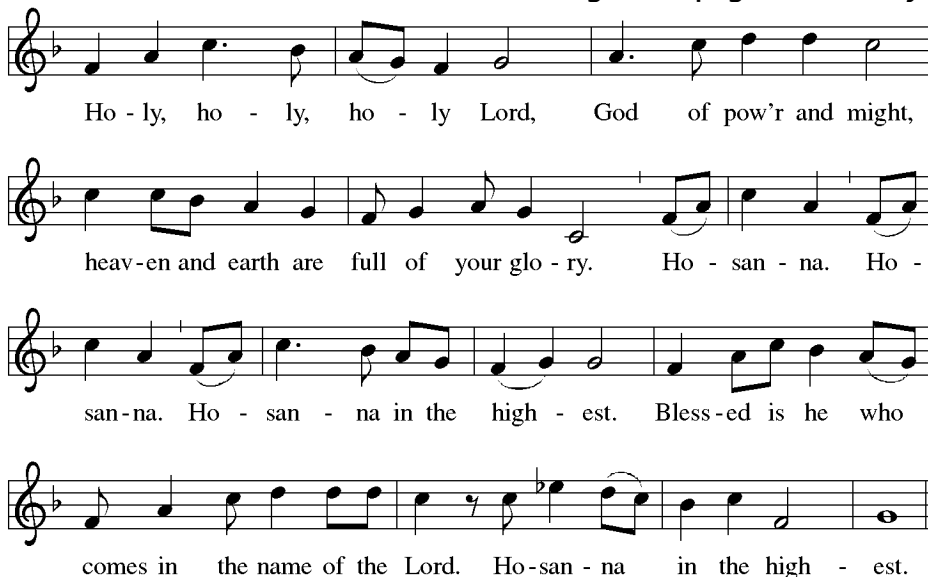
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

ELW Setting Three page 144

Holy, Holy, Holy



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. 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.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, living, and loving God,
we praise you for creating the heavens
and the earth.

We praise you.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family
through the waters of the flood, for freeing
your people Israel from the bonds of slavery,
and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We bless you.

We give you thanks for Jesus who, living
among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry,
and with a love stronger than death,

gave his life for others.

We thank you.

In the night in which he was betrayed...
Remembering, therefore, his life-giving death
and glorious resurrection, we await your
promised life for all this dying world.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and
cup: carry us in your arms from death to life,
that we may live as your chosen ones,
clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

Come, Holy Spirit.

Through him all glory and honor is yours,
Almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit,

in your holy Church, both now and forever.
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.**

INVITATION

We welcome all baptized Christians to receive communion. Children who are communing in other churches are invited to commune here. All who are not receiving are invited to come forward for a blessing—you may indicate you want a blessing by holding your hands together or crossing your arms in front of you. Please follow the guidance from the ushers. Gluten-free wafers are available on request.

*Wine is red; grape juice is white. Those unable to come forward,
remain seated and communion will be brought to you.*

LAMB OF GOD

ELW Setting Three page 146

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.

HEALING PRAYER

Anyone seeking healing on body, mind, or soul may come to the altar rail during the communion distribution for healing prayer with laying on of hands and anointing with oil.

MUSIC DURING COMMUNION

MUSIC

Christ lag in Todesbanden Andrew Clarke

SONG

ELW 764 *Have No Fear, Little Flock*

Please stand as you are able.

TABLE BLESSING

May the presence of the risen Christ in this meal increase your faith and empower your service to neighbors everywhere.

Amen.

SONG AFTER COMMUNION

ELW 674 stanza 3 *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*
Stanza 3 is on page 7 of this bulletin.

SENDING

BLESSING

God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end,
Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead,
and the Spirit, our advocate and peace,
✠ bless you now and forever.

Amen.

SENDING SONG

ELW 883 *All People That on Earth Do Dwell*

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Go in peace. Serve the risen Lord.

Thanks be to God. Alleluia!

POSTLUDE

The Strife is O'er Michael Helman

GOSPEL MESSAGE

Our Good Shepherd

The images in today's texts provide us with much food for thought and action. Psalm 23 tells of a shepherd who leads us to green pastures and refreshing waters, walks alongside us as we face challenging times, takes us to a table already set, and anoints us with oil to mark each of us as chosen. We are heard, seen, known, valued, and loved, and remain in the Shepherd's presence for all time.

Jesus' words in the gospel reading add to the image of a loving and caring shepherd. The shepherd calls each sheep by name, while the sheep follow because they recognize that voice. Jesus, our Good Shepherd, knows us well and calls each of us by name. Jesus also serves as the gate for the sheep, guarding and protecting us in the sheepfold, while also providing access to pastureland. This protection and access give us the space to be who we are, with no need to play games or pretend to be someone we are not. And when it comes right down to it, the Good Shepherd comes to give us abundant life—new life in relationship with God, others, and all creation.

The reading from Acts 2 provides an image of abundant life among the early Christians, a life with an extravagance of worship, fellowship, prayer, generosity, service to others, and thankfulness.

How does the image of the Good Shepherd sit with you? How do you picture the relationship between you and Jesus—with shepherd and sheep imagery, or something else? Where and how do you recognize the Good Shepherd's voice? Do you know someone who has abundant life in Christ—a life of faith, joy, and love? What would such a life look like for you, and for your faith community?

COMMEMORATIONS

Catherine of Siena, theologian, died 1380

This theologian was the first woman among Roman Catholics to receive the title "Doctor [teacher] of the Church." Catherine was a Dominican sister known for her mystical visions as well as her work on behalf of people who were poor and imprisoned.

Wednesday, April 29, 2026

Philip and James, Apostles

Philip was one of the first disciples of Jesus, and called Nathanael to "come and see." Little is known of James, the son of Alphaeus, called "the Less" to distinguish him from another apostle named James.

Friday, May 1, 2026

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, died 373

Best remembered for defending the teaching that Christ was fully God against those who taught otherwise, Athanasius was an influential church leader around the time of the Council of Nicea. He was banished from Alexandria five times for his forthright views.

Saturday, May 2, 2026