

April 30, 2023

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

The Security of an Open Door

The parakeet had two favorite sentences: "More milk, please," learned by eavesdropping on dinner table conversations in a household with four children, and "Shut the door!" learned from adults who couldn't seem to convince those children that the furnace was not big enough to warm both the house and the back yard.

In John 10, Jesus says, "I am the door" (RSV) or "I am the gate" (NRSV). In some contexts, the image of a door or gate might conjure up exclusion, as when we hear about gated communities or read the sign, "authorized personnel only" on a door. Doors and gates often exist to be shut, to keep warm air inside in the winter or to keep some perceived danger out.

By contrast, when Jesus calls himself the gate for the sheep, it is clear that this gate is not closed, but open. "Whoever enters by me will be saved," Jesus says. You enter by an open door, rather than a closed one. Furthermore, those who enter "will come in and go out and find pasture." This gate allows the sheep freedom to move around as well as something else sheep need from day to day: enough to eat.

Often in public life, security is placed over against freedom, as if our lives will be safe only if we relinquish certain freedoms for ourselves or others. Yet Jesus doesn't require this trade-off of those who hear his voice and follow him. Jesus is a door that does not need to be shut to be useful. He is a gate that offers security and freedom together. Those who enter by this gate are saved, free, and provided for--all at the same time. Maybe this combination is what Jesus is talking about when he says, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

First St. John Lutheran Church

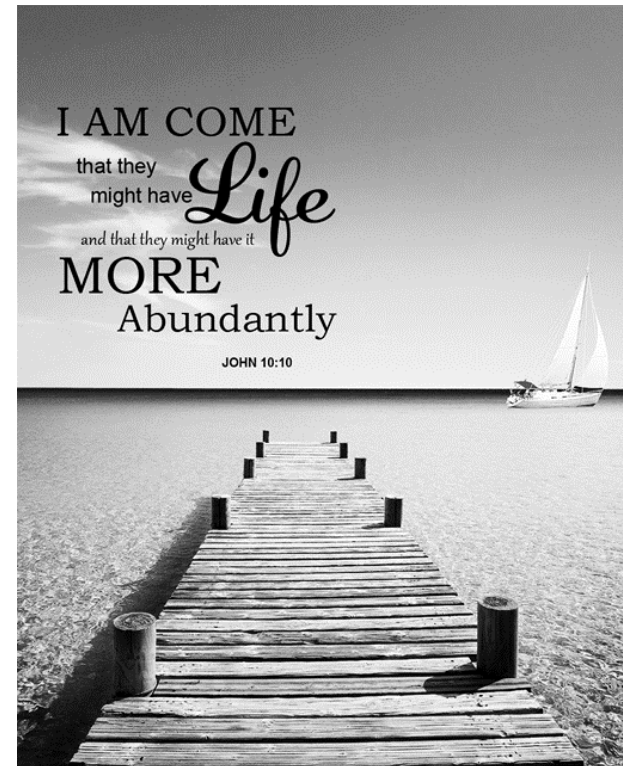
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Rev. Jerald K. Rayl

Dr. Anthony Pattin - Church Musician
Jacob Kelly - Youth & Family Minister



Called through faith; Gathered in worship; Serving the community

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Fourth Sunday of Easter

Welcome to First St. John Lutheran Church! We offer two services with Sunday School for youth and adults and catechism between the services. Our regular Sunday schedule is:

8:00 am	Early Worship
9:15 am	Sunday School / 1st Year Catechism
9:15 am	Adult Bible Study
10:30 am	Late Worship
11:30 am	2nd Year Catechism every other Sunday

Livestream and Recorded Worship: We livestream the service on our church website at www.firststjohn.com. Also, the service will be recorded and published to the website.

Adult Sunday School meets at 9:15 am in the Youth Room area in the basement of the Educational Building.

Children ages 3 through 5th grade will meet at 9:15 am for Sunday School in the basement of the church (the JAM Room!).

Catechism Classes: First year class will be held from 9:15 to 10:15 am each Sunday. Second year class will meet every other Sunday from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm.

Nursery is in the church basement and is currently unstaffed; you are welcome to sit with your child. A diaper changing table is available in the ladies restroom in the basement of the church.

Restrooms are in the church basement. Go to the Narthex (lobby) and take either set of steps to the basement hallway. The ladies room is at one end, and the men's room is at the other.

Flowers: If you would like to sign up for altar flowers, there is a book in the lounge. Or, you can call the church office during the week to check on availability.

Memorials: If you wish to give a memorial in honor or memory of a loved one, you may mail it in or pick up a memorial card in the church office.

PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY

Please purchase full size items.

dish soap	shampoo, child	disposable razors
paper towel	laundry soap	toothbrush, adult
toilet paper	fabric softener sheets	toothpaste, adult
tissues	body lotion	sanitary pads
deodorant	body soap	band aids
shampoo, adult		

This is a list of the items that will provide a month's worth of hygiene supplies to families or individuals in our neighborhood to help them stay clean and healthy. We always welcome any donations from our congregation members.

If you would like to donate items, please donate only full size products as sample sizes will not last a month. If you would prefer a Pantry volunteer to do the shopping for you, we welcome monetary donations. Please make out checks to First St. John Lutheran Church and write Personal Needs Pantry on the memo line.



PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICES

8:00 AM Service:

ELDERS

Ben Hodges, Matt Miller

READER

Lisa Anderson

10:30 AM Service:

ELDERS

Ted Hagedorn, Jeff Smith

READER

Bob Haar

SOUND BOARD

Mark Ackerman

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude Mary Mortemore

Ringing of the Bell *(Please stand)*

Opening Hymn *“Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing”* No. 389

Introduction

Thanksgiving for Baptism

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

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, by whose hand we are given new birth, by whose speaking we are given new life.

C: Amen.

P: Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are welcomed, restored, and supported as citizens of the new creation.

P: Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism. Holy God, holy and merciful, holy and mighty, you are the river of life, you are the everlasting wellspring. In mercy and might you have freed us from death and raised us with Jesus, the firstborn of the dead.

P: In baptismal waters our old life is washed away, and in them we are born anew.

Water is poured into the font as the presiding minister continues.

P: Glory to you for oceans and lakes, for rivers and streams. Honor to you for waters that wash us clean, quench our thirst, and nurture both crops and creatures. Praise to you for the life-giving water of baptism, the outpouring of the Spirit of the new creation.

C: Wash away our sin and all that separates us from you. Empower our witness to your resurrection. Strengthen our resolve in seeking justice for all.

P: Satisfy the world’s need through this living water. Where drought dries the earth, bring refreshment. Where despair prevails, grant hope. Where chaos reigns, bring peace. We ask this through Christ, who with you and the Spirit reigns forever.

C: Amen.

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us share the peace of the Lord.

Passing of the Peace

The congregation may greet one another by shaking hands, fist bumping, or any other form of greeting with the words, "Peace be with you."

We conclude the passing of the peace by singing:

"Jesus Christ is Risen Today" No. 365, v. 1 & 2

Prayer of the Day

P: Let us pray. 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.

C: Amen.

(Please be seated)

Announcements

FIRST READING: Acts 2:42-47

Here we have a description of community life following Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit was poured out on God's people. This new community is founded on the teachings of the apostles and sustained in the breaking of the bread.

[The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Reader: Word of God. Word of life.

C: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 23

You anoint my head with oil. (Ps. 23:5)

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

(Please be seated)

The Offering

Mary Mortemore

Offertory Music

(Please stand)

Offering Prayer

P: Our generous heavenly Father, all good gifts come from you and from these riches we bring this offering. Help us to use it for the furtherance of your purpose in this place, and for the benefit of those in need, through our resurrected and living Lord, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Pastoral Prayer *(Each petition concludes with this response)*

P: God in your mercy,

C: hear our prayer.

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 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.

Blessing

P: The God of all, who raised † Jesus from the dead, bless you by the power of the Holy Spirit to live in the new creation.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn *"God Be With You Till We Meet Again"* No. 536

Dismissal

P: Go in peace. Serve the Risen One.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Mary Mortemore

GOSPEL: John 10:1-10

Jesus uses an image familiar to the people of his day to make a point about spiritual leadership. Good shepherds bring people to life through Jesus, but those who avoid Jesus are dangerous to the flock.

[Jesus said:] "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. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

Gospel Response

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

(Please be seated)

SERMON

Sermon Hymn "The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

Pastor Rayl

No. 502

(Please stand)

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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;

³ he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

⁴ 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.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:19-25

Peter addresses the theme of suffering. Jesus, the shepherd and guardian of our souls, models for Christians how one suffers for doing what is right.

It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. ²¹For 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."

²³When 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. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Reader: Word of God. Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Please stand)

Gospel Acclamation



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



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

Gospel Announcement

P: The Gospel according to St. John Chapter 10.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.