A photograph of a sunlit forest path. Sunbeams (crepuscular rays) stream through the dense green foliage, creating a bright and peaceful atmosphere. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads into the distance. The text is centered over the image in a white, bold, sans-serif font with a slight drop shadow.

**HE LEADS ME IN THE PATHS
OF RIGHTEOUSNESS
FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE.
PSALM 23:3**

The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills
The Fourth Sunday of Easter
April 21, 2024



THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF VESTAVIA HILLS

201 So. Montgomery Highway Birmingham, Alabama 35216
Church office: 205-823-1883 PreSchool/MDO: 205-791-5200
Web Site: www.vestavialutheran.org
WORSHIP: 8:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sundays
SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:15 a.m.
Church Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday



PASTOR: The Reverend Michael D. Ahlemeyer – pastor@vestavialutheran.org text: 205-201-8866
PASTOR EMERITUS: The Reverend Clifford Hellmers – vestluth@juno.com
VICAR: Matthew Vatthauer – vicar@vestavialutheran.org
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY: Ruth Johnson – ruthinbham@gmail.com
DIRECTOR OF MOTHER'S DAY OUT: Brooke Heisler – bheisler@vestavialutheran.org
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR: Leigh Walter – lwalter@vestavialutheran.org
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR ASSISTANT: Amy Alvis - aalvis@vestavialutheran.org
BOOK KEEPER: Melanie Goodson - bookkeeper@vestavialutheran.org
ADOPTED MEDICAL MISSIONARIES - Arianna and David Shirk, Madeline & Annabelle - shirkdavid@gmail.com



TO OUR GUESTS: We offer you a warm welcome in the name of Jesus. Please sign the Friendship Register. If you do not have a church home, we would be delighted to have you become a part of our church family. Please feel free to speak with the Pastor about membership in our congregation. If you do have a church home, we pray that God will bless you as you continue your growth in faith and love.



SUNDAY SCHOOL Adult Bible Classes meets in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall at 9:15 a.m. Children, Confirmation, and Youth classes also meet at 9:15 a.m. in the class rooms downstairs.



CHILDREN'S CHURCH and NURSERY Following the Children's Message, all children ages 3-7 are invited to Children's Church downstairs. They will return to the sanctuary after the sermon. A nursery attendant is provided for children ages birth to 3 years during our 8:00 AM and 10:30 AM services.



COMMUNION We invite all baptized Christians who acknowledge their sinfulness, trust in Christ as their Savior, and who recognize the real presence of Christ's Body and Blood in the bread and wine to join us at the Communion table. The practice of our congregation is to place the bread into the extended hand of the communicant. The wine is offered in individual cups; please take one from the tray as it is offered by the Elder. The common cup will be offered to those who do not take an individual cup. The cups in the center of the tray are filled with non-alcoholic wine, in consideration of persons who should not drink wine. Also, children who have not received Communion instruction are invited to come to the Communion rail, fold their hands and receive a blessing. Please notify an usher if you need a communion assistant to bring the Lord's Supper to you in the pew.

The Lutheran Church of Vestavia Hills

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 21, 2024

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING HYMN

"Shepherd of Tender Youth"

LSB #864 (v. 1,4-5)



1 Shep - herd of ten - der youth, Guid - ing in
4 O ev - er be our guide, Our shep - herd,
5 So now, and till we die, Sound we Your



love and truth Through de - vious ways; Christ, our tri -
and our pride, Our staff and song. Je - sus, O
prais - es high And joy - ful sing: In - fants and



um - phant king, We come Your name to sing
Christ of God, By Your en - dur - ing Word
all the throng, Who to the Church be - long,



And here our chil - dren bring To join Your praise.
Lead us where You have trod; Make our faith strong.
U - nite to swell the song To Christ, our king!

INVOCATION

In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Like a shepherd He will care for His flock.

With His arms He will gather the lambs.

~Isaiah 40:11

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

We have come into the presence of God, Who created us to love and serve Him as His dear children. But we have disobeyed Him and deserve only His wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to Him and plead for His mercy.

Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against You and do not deserve to be called Your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to Your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.

God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all Your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, He has removed Your guilt forever. You are His own dear child. May God give You strength to live according to His will.

Amen.

PSALMODY

~Psalm 23 read in unison

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 forever.

HYMN OF PRAISE

"All People That On Earth Do Dwell"

LSB #791 (v. 1-3)



1 All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, Sing to the
2 Know that the Lord is God in - deed; With - out our
3 O en - ter then His gates with praise; Ap - proach with



Lord with cheer - ful voice. Him serve with mirth, His
aid He did us make. We are His folk, He
joy His courts un - to. Praise, laud, and bless His



praise forth - tell; Come ye be - fore Him and re - jice.
doth us feed, And for His sheep He doth us take.
name al - ways, For it is seem - ly so to do.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, merciful Father, since You have wakened from death the Shepherd of Your sheep, grant us Your Holy Spirit, that when we hear the voice of our Shepherd we may know Him who calls us each by name and follow where he leads; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Micah 5:2-4

(The Messiah Will Be a Shepherd)

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.

And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM (10:30 a.m.)

arr. L Larson

"Good Shepherd of My Soul"

Good shepherd of my soul, come dwell within me;

Take all I am and mold Your likeness in me.

Before the cross of Christ, this is my sacrifice:

a life laid down and ready to follow.

The troubled find their peace in true surrender;

The pris'ners, their release from chains of anger.

In springs of living grace, find a resting place,

A place to rise refreshed, determined to follow.

I'll walk this narrow road with Christ before me,

*Where thorns and thistles grow and cords ensnare me.
Though doubted and denied, He never leaves my side,
But lifts my head and calls me to follow.
The King of Love my Shepherd is, Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His and He is mine forever.
And when my days are gone, my strength is failing;
He'll carry me along through death's unveiling.
Earth's struggles overcome, Heav'n's journey just begun,
Heav'n's journey just begun, to search Christ's depth and ever to follow.
Good Shepherd of my soul, come dwell within me.*

EPISTLE

1 John 3:16-24

(Love One Another)

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

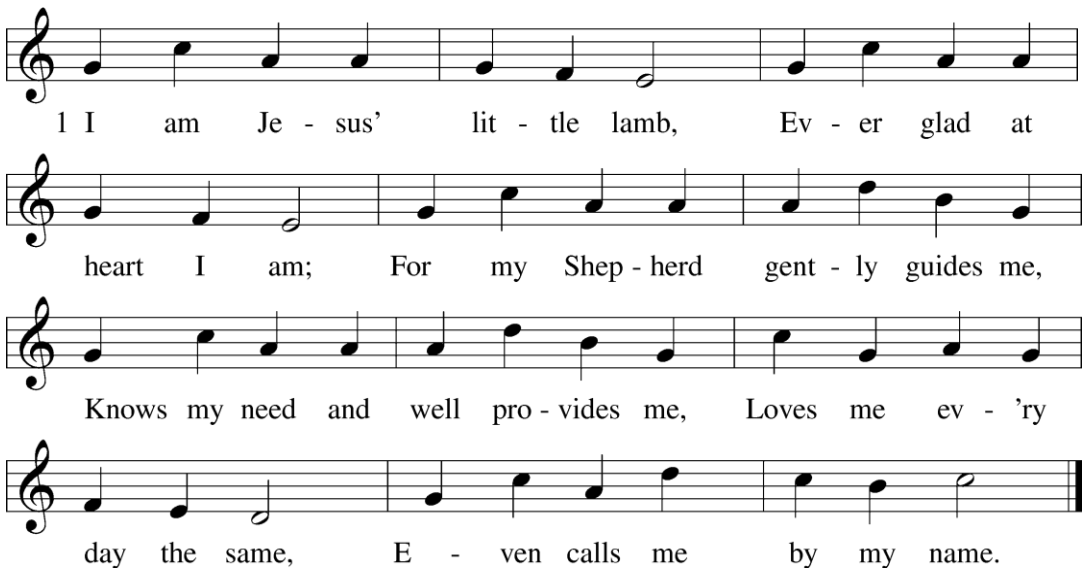
This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL PREPARATION VERSE

"I Am Jesus' Little Lamb"

LSB #740 (v. 1)



I I am Je - sus' lit - tle lamb, Ev - er glad at
heart I am; For my Shep - herd gent - ly guides me,
Knows my need and well pro - vides me, Loves me ev - 'ry
day the same, E - ven calls me by my name.

HOLY GOSPEL

John 10:11-18

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter.

Glory to You, O Lord.

(Jesus Our Good Shepherd)

¹¹I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

¹²He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.

¹⁶And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this

reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again.
18No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to You, O Christ.

APOSTLES' CREED

~inside back cover of the LSB pew hymnal

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”

LSB #709 (v. 1-2)



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, Whose good - ness
2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, My ran - somed



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
soul He lead - eth And, where the ver - dant



I am His And He is mine for - ev - er.
pas - tures grow, With food ce - les - tial feed - eth.

SERMON

“He Leads Me”

Psalms 23:3

Rev. Michael Ahlemeyer

HYMN OF THE DAY

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

LSB #709 (v. 5-6)



5 Thou spreadst a ta - ble in my sight; Thine unc - tion
6 And so through all the length of days Thy good - ness



grace be - stow - eth; And, oh, what trans - port
fail - eth nev - er; Good Shep - herd, may I



of de - light From Thy pure chal - ice flow - eth!
sing Thy praise With - in Thy house for - ev - er!

OFFERING

~please sign the Record of Fellowship during the Offering

VOLUNTARY

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

LORD'S PRAYER

~inside back cover of the LSB pew hymnal

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

Amen.

~Please be seated for the Distribution~

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

"Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good"

LSB #819 (v. 1-4)



1 Sing praise to God, the high - est good, The au - thor of cre -
2 What God's al - might - y pow'r has made, In mer - cy He is
3 We sought the Lord in our dis - tress; O God, in mer - cy
4 He nev - er shall for - sake His flock, His cho - sen gen - er -



a - tion, The God of love who un - der - stood
keep - ing. By morn - ing glow or eve - ning shade
hear us. Our Sav - ior saw our help - less - ness
a - tion; He is their ref - uge and their rock,



Our need for His sal - va - tion. With heal - ing balm our
His eye is nev - er sleep - ing. With - in the king - dom
And came with peace to cheer us. For this we thank and
Their peace and their sal - va - tion. As with a moth - er's



souls He fills And ev - 'ry faith - less mur - mur stills:
of His might All things are just and good and right:
praise the Lord, Who is by one and all a - dored:
ten - der hand, He leads His own, His cho - sen band:



To God all praise and glo - ry!
To God all praise and glo - ry!
To God all praise and glo - ry!
To God all praise and glo - ry!

"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"

LSB #710



1 The Lord's my shep - herd, I'll not want; He makes me
 2 My soul He doth re - store a - gain And me to
 3 Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, Yet will I
 4 My ta - ble Thou hast fur - nish - ed In pres - ence
 5 Good - ness and mer - cy all my life Shall sure - ly



down to lie In pas - tures green; He
 walk doth make With - in the paths of
 fear no ill; For Thou art with me,
 of my foes; My head Thou dost with
 fol - low me; And in God's house for -



lead - eth me The qui - et wa - ters by.
 righ - teous - ness, E'en for His own name's sake.
 and Thy rod And staff me com - fort still.
 oil a - noint, And my cup o - ver - flows.
 ev - er - more My dwell - ing place shall be.

"Have No Fear, Little Flock"

LSB #735



1 Have no fear, lit - tle flock; Have no fear, lit - tle
 2 Have good cheer, lit - tle flock; Have good cheer, lit - tle
 3 Praise the Lord high a - bove; Praise the Lord high a -
 4 Thank - ful hearts raise to God; Thank - ful hearts raise to



flock, For the Fa - ther has cho - sen To
flock, For the Fa - ther will keep you In
bove, For He stoops down to heal you, Up -
God, For He stays close be - side you, In



give you the King - dom; Have no fear, lit - tle flock!
His love for - ev - er; Have good cheer, lit - tle flock!
lift and re - store you; Praise the Lord high a - bove!
all things works with you; Thank - ful hearts raise to God!

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Hear the prayer of Your people, O Lord, the lips which have praised You here may glorify You in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of Your Son may long for His coming again, and that all who have received in His true body and blood the pledge of Your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

BLESSING

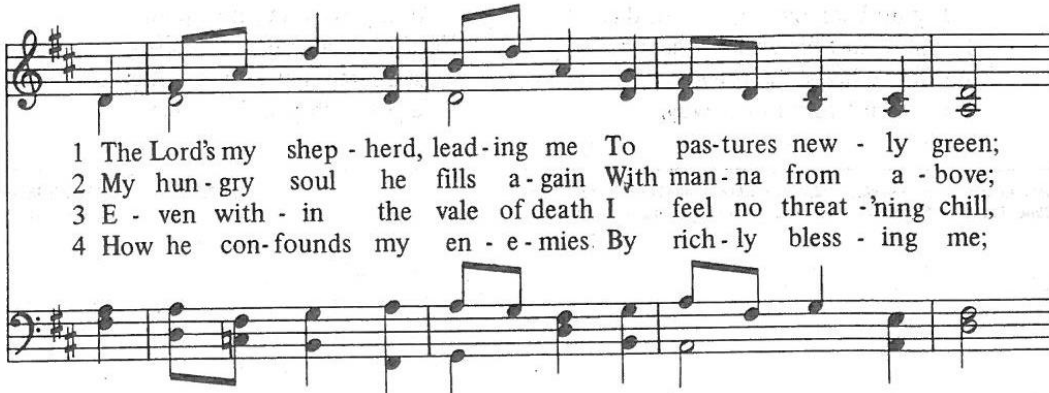
The LORD bless you and keep you;
The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you;
The LORD look upon you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

"The Lord's My Shepherd, Leading Me"

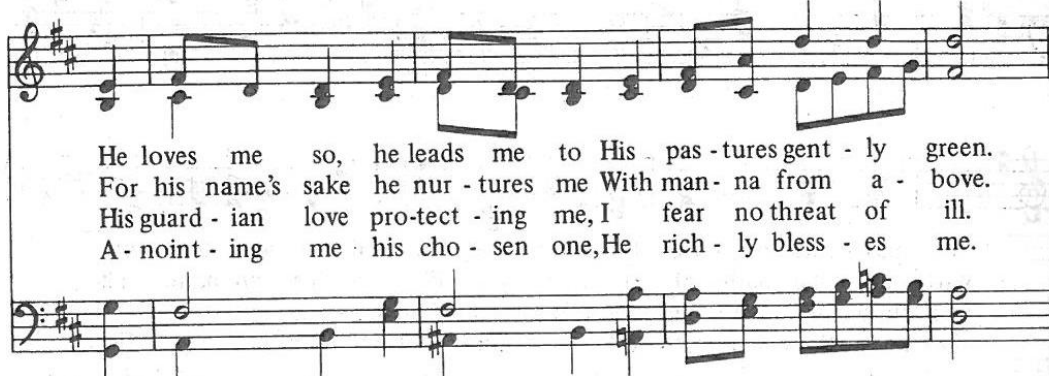
LW #417



1 The Lord's my shep - herd, lead - ing me To pas - tures new - ly green;
2 My hun - gry soul he fills a - gain With man - na from a - bove;
3 E - ven with - in the vale of death I feel no threat - 'ning chill,
4 How he con - founds my en - e - mies By rich - ly bless - ing me;



Deep flow the wa - ters of his care, His mer - cies un - fore - seen.
He sets my foot - steps right a - gain In path - ways of his love.
His rod and staff pro - tect - ing me, His love be - side me still.
His cup of prom - ise o - ver - flows With gen - er - os - i - ty.



He loves me so, he leads me to His pas - tures gent - ly green.
For his name's sake he nur - tures me With man - na from a - bove.
His guard - ian love pro - tect - ing me, I fear no threat of ill.
A - noint - ing me his cho - sen one, He rich - ly bless - es me.

EASTER DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

