

**St. Matthew Lutheran Church  
North Tonawanda NY  
April 21st, 2024**



**AS WE GATHER**

Flocks of sheep can number in the hundreds or even thousands. An annual trek from winter quarters to summer pastures and back again at a location in rural Idaho consistently draws hundreds of spectators to a location where the sheep must cross a major highway to reach their destination. Keeping track of two or three thousand sheep on the move is quite a task! Jesus, our Good Shepherd, knows how to care for not just thousands but millions of His sheeplike people. The prophet Isaiah says of the Lord God that He "will tend His flock like a shepherd" (40:11). Assured and reassured that we are part of His flock, we travel through life following the guidance of our caring Shepherd!

\*\*\*\*The Lord's Supper will be celebrated at this service, Communion is offered to Lutheran members in Altar & Pulpit Fellowship only, we believe based on Scripture and the "Book of Concord", (The Lutheran Confessions) that only those who share the same faith and teaching of Doctrine should Commune together. **Acts 2:42, 1 Cor. 10:17, 1 Cor. 11:26 and Rom. 16:17** is where we find this written, if this is your first time at St. Matthew, and would like to take Communion, please talk to the Pastor before the service. If you are taking Communion, please fill out the Communion Registration form. \*\*\*\*

*Welcome to all our Members, Guests and Visitors today, if you're a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoy your time worshiping with us today.*

## **\*PREPERATION\***

### **LSB 465 Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds**

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

**Amen.**

### **OPENING SENTENCES**

Jesus said: "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

**Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ.**

To You, O LORD, I lift up my soul. O my God, in You I trust.

**Indeed, none who wait for You shall be put to shame.**

Lead me in Your truth and teach me, for You are the God of my salvation.

**All the paths of the LORD are steadfast love and faithfulness, for those who keep His covenant and His testimonies.**

Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting!

**And let all the people say, "Amen!" Praise the LORD!**

Let us humble ourselves before God, confess our sins to Him, and pray for His gracious forgiveness. We begin our time of Confession and Absolution as we sing the hymn "Out of the Deep I Call."

### **CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Let us confess our sins to God, our Father.

**O Lord God Almighty, we confess that we are sinful human beings by nature and by deed. We have not put You first at all times. We have not followed in the ways You have set forth for us. We have not always been thoughtful caretakers of Your creation and have not shared its bounty on all occasions. We have not kept our thoughts, words, and deeds fully pure and honorable. We have sinned in ways we know and in ways we do not even recognize. We have not honored those in authority and have not without reservation encouraged them. We have not completely put the best construction on all things and on all people. Have mercy on us,**

**O Lord. Forgive us all our sins, and finally by Your grace, bring us to everlasting life. Amen.**

The almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, forgiveness, and remission of all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

**Introit**

I am the good shepherd.

I know my own and my own know me, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul.

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

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will 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.

***Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.***

***Amen.***

**Kyrie**

***Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.***

### **Gloria in Excelsis**

Glory be to God on high.

*and on earth peace, goodwill toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heav'nly King, God the Father Almighty.*

*O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.*

### **SALUTATION & Prayer of the DAY**

The Lord be with you.

*And with thy spirit.*

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.*

### **First Reading Acts 4:1–12**

<sup>1</sup>As they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them, <sup>2</sup>greatly annoyed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. <sup>3</sup>And they arrested them and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. <sup>4</sup>But many of those who had heard the word believed, and the number of the men came to about five thousand. <sup>5</sup>On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, <sup>6</sup>with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. <sup>7</sup>And when they

had set them in the midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?”<sup>8</sup> Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders,<sup>9</sup> if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed,<sup>10</sup> let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well.<sup>11</sup> This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone.<sup>12</sup> And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

#### **Epistle 1 John 3:16–24**

<sup>16</sup>By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.<sup>17</sup> 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?<sup>18</sup> Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.<sup>19</sup> By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him;<sup>20</sup> for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.<sup>21</sup> Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;<sup>22</sup> and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him.<sup>23</sup> 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.<sup>24</sup> 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.**

#### **Verse**

Alleluia. We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die

again; death no longer has dominion over him. Alleluia. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me. Alleluia.

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the tenth chapter  
*Glory be to Thee, O Lord.*

<sup>11</sup>[Jesus said:] “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>He 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. <sup>13</sup>He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>And 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. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No 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 be to Thee, O Christ.*

**Nicene Creed**

**I believe in one God,  
the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth  
and of all things visible and invisible.  
And in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of His Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light,  
very God of very God, begotten, not made,  
being of one substance with the Father,**

by whom all things were made;  
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven  
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.  
He suffered and was buried.  
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures  
and ascended into heaven  
and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come  
again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,  
whose kingdom will have no end.  
And I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and  
glorified,  
who spoke by the prophets.  
And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church,  
I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins,  
and I look for the resurrection of the dead  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**LSB 477 Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven  
Sermon**

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from  
me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and uphold me with Thy free  
spirit. Amen.*

**Offering**

**Prayer of the Church**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord, beseeching Him for the needs of ourselves  
and others.

Trusting in God's loving response, we pray for the church and all who are called to lives of service to God's people, asking that the Lord will bless His undershepherds and all who care for His flock.

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for ourselves, that the Holy Spirit guide us into gracious ways and instill in us a holy confidence in the goodness of our God, aiding us in our prayers. With thanks for the faithful examples set by those whose earthly journeys are complete and whose witness to Christ yet inspires us, let us pray to the Lord:

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

We pray for the blessing of God upon our nation and its leaders that we may lead peaceable lives, and we pray for the needs of ourselves and others for healing and restoration, for solace and comfort, [*especially . . .*].

**Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.**

These things and all else that we should have asked grant us according to Your gracious will, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

### **Preface**

The Lord be with you.

*And with thy spirit.*

Lift up your hearts.

*We lift them up unto the Lord.*

Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

*It is meet and right so to do.*

It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, Lord our God. You call us to be Your people and invite us to bring our cares to You in prayer. You did so love the world that You sent Your only Son to be our Redeemer. By His sacrificial life and death and glorious resurrection He has brought us salvation and has shown us the path to life eternal. Pour upon us now the gift of the Holy Spirit that we may receive the body and blood of our Lord with true devotion in this sacred fellowship of Your pilgrim people. Grant us a foretaste of the feast to



come, heavenly Father, that we may with increased faith joyfully await a blessed eternity in Your glorious presence.

### **Sanctus**

*Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, blessed is He, blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.*

### **The Words of Our Lord**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also, He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

### **PROCLAMATION OF CHRIST**

As often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

#### **Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.**

O Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, in giving us Your body and blood to eat and to drink, You lead us to remember and confess Your holy cross and passion, Your blessed death, Your rest in the tomb, Your resurrection from the dead, Your ascension into heaven, and Your coming for the final judgment. So remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**LORD'S PRAYER**      *Matthew 6:9–13*

*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.*

**PAX DOMINI**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.  
**Amen.**

**Distribution / LSB 570 Just as I Am, without One Plea**

**Nunc Dimittis**

*Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word,  
for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before  
the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Thy  
people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.  
Amen.*

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,  
*and His mercy endureth forever.*

Let us pray.

*Amen.*

**Benedicamus**

The Lord be with you.

*And with thy spirit.*

Bless we the Lord.

*Thanks be to God.*

**Benediction**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.

*Amen, amen, amen.*

**LSB 523 O Word of God Incarnate**