

St. Matthew Lutheran Church
North Tonawanda, NY
April 26, 2026
Fourth Sunday of Easter
Good Shepherd Sunday



AS WE GATHER

Jesus calls Himself the door for the sheep and the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for them. That means we are not left to fend for ourselves in a dangerous world of false voices, sin, and death. Like sheep, we wander and cannot save ourselves. But Christ comes to seek, save, and gather us into His flock. Through His cross and resurrection, He forgives our sins and gives us abundant life. This sermon will focus on the comfort of belonging to Jesus, hearing His voice, and trusting that our Good Shepherd will lead, feed, forgive, and keep us forever.

Welcome to all of our Members, Guests, and Visitors today, if you are a visitor, please introduce yourself to the pastor after service in the Narthex. We here at St. Matthew pray that you enjoyed your time worshipping with us today.

LSB 463 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today; Alleluia

Stand

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

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

C *Amen.*

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C *who made heaven and earth.*

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

C *and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.*

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Stand

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Introit

I am the good shepherd.

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

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;

let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!

For the LORD is a great God,

and a great King above all gods.

Oh come, let us worship and bow down;

let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

For he is our God,

and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.

I am the good shepherd.

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

C *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

LSB 186

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

Gloria in Excelsis

LSB 187

- P** Glory be to God on high:
C *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 and Collect of the Day

- P** The Lord be with you.
C *And with thy spirit.*

- P** Let us pray.
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.

C *Amen.*

Sit

First Reading

Acts 2:42–47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Epistle

1 Peter 2:19–25

¹⁹This is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. ²⁰For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. ²¹For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²²He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Alleluia

LSB 190

C *Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.*

Holy Gospel

John 10:1–10

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

C *Glory be to Thee, O Lord.*

¹[Jesus said:] “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. ²But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and 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.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C *Praise be to Thee, O Christ.*

Apostles’ Creed

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,**

maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His 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 into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the
dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life † everlasting. Amen.**

Sit

LSB 710 The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want

Sermon

Stand

Offertory

LSB 192

**☞ *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.

Sit

Offering

Stand

Prayer of the Church

P Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Loving Father, Your Son is the great Shepherd of the sheep, who faithfully gathers His flock to Himself in the pastures of the Church. Grant us steadfast faith to hear His voice and follow Him, even through the valley of the shadow of death, that we may receive our portion in His abundant life. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Gracious God, bestow the gift of Christ's wisdom and tenderness upon all who are called to shepherd the souls of Your people. Teach believers everywhere to receive their pastors as a gift from You and to follow Christ, the Good Shepherd. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P O Lord, hear our prayers for all Christian homes. Preserve all married couples in love and faithfulness; strengthen all parents for their task as teachers of the faith; uphold the unmarried honorable and unashamed in their station; and with good deeds in every home, let the ignorance of foolish people be put to silence by Your divine institution. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Mighty Shepherd, You hold in Your hands all the might of man, and You hold accountable those who would govern Your people. Grant to us good government and leaders who will honor Your purpose, protect Your people, serve the cause of justice and defend our liberty. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Author of life, You gather us together in the fellowship of Christ and His apostolic Word and so lead us to intercede for one another in every need. Hear our prayers for the Church and for the world [*especially for* _____]. Work by Your mercy for their good now and eternally, and add to our number those who are being saved, until You bring us to the day when we will rest eternally in Your safekeeping. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Father of glory, You have promised to prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies and to fill our cup of salvation to overflowing. Bless all who receive the Sacrament at this altar this day, that even amid sin, death and the devil, Your goodness and mercy may follow us all the days of our lives, and we may dwell in Your house forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Heavenly Father, in Your name Your Son purchased us with His own most holy blood, and He now leads us through the gate of death to our eternal home with You. As the sheep of His fold, inspire us to hear His voice gladly and to follow Him steadfastly through every tribulation. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

- P** Graciously receive our prayers, deliver and preserve us, for to You alone we give all glory, honor and worship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.
- C** Amen.

Lord's Prayer

- P** Lord, remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- C** **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.**

Benedicamus

- A** Let us bless the Lord.
- C** *Thanks be to God.*

Benediction

LSB 202

- P** 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.
- C** *Amen, amen, amen.*

LSB 722 Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Three from Lutheran Service Book

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