



“PEOPLE OF HIS PASTURE”

Sunday, November 22, 2020 9:00AM

Worship Service

AS WE GATHER

Today is the Last Sunday of the Church Year. This Sunday is traditionally filled with themes of Christ’s roles as King and Judge. But consider these words from Psalm 95: “We are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.” We are God’s chosen sheep. He is our Shepherd. We follow Him as He goes to seek the lost, bring back the stray, and bind up the injured.

WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

“Behold a Host, Arrayed in White”

LSB 676

- 1 Behold a host, arrayed in white,
Like thousand snow-clad mountains bright!
With palms they stand;
Who is this band
Before the throne of light?
These are the saints of glorious fame,
Who from the great affliction came
And in the flood
Of Jesus’ blood
Are cleansed from guilt and shame.
They now serve God both day and night;
They sing their songs in endless light.
Their anthems ring
As they all sing
With angels shining bright.
- 2 Despised and scorned, they sojourned here;
But now, how glorious they appear!
Those martyrs stand,
A priestly band,
God’s throne forever near.
On earth they wept through bitter years;
Now God has wiped away their tears,
Transformed their strife
To heav’nly life,
And freed them from their fears.
They now enjoy the Sabbath rest,
The heav’nly banquet of the blest;
The Lamb, their Lord,
At festive board
Himself is host and guest.
- 3 O blessèd saints in bright array
Now safely home in endless day,
Extol the Lord,
Who with His Word

Sustained you on the way.
The steep and narrow path you trod;
You toiled and sowed the Word abroad;
 Rejoice and bring
 Your fruits and sing
Before the throne of God.
The myriad angels raise their song;
O saints, sing with that happy throng!
 Lift up one voice;
 Let heav'n rejoice
In our Redeemer's song!

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Stand

INVOCATION

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

C Amen.

OPENING SENTENCES *(Psalm 95:1–3a, 6–7)*

P Oh come, let us sing to the Lord;

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

P Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving!

C For the Lord is a great God.

P Oh come, let us worship and bow down.

C For He is our God,

P and we are the people of His pasture,

C and the sheep of His hand.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

P Indeed, our heavenly Father has called us to be His people. He has led us to green pastures and still waters. Yet, there have been times when we have treated our fellow sheep with disdain, when we have wandered away from our Shepherd. But our Good Shepherd does not abandon us, and we confess our sins before Him and one another.

Silence for reflection

P Heavenly Father,

C we confess that we have wandered away from You. We confess that we have acted shamefully toward our brothers and sisters in Christ. We have sinned in our thoughts, words, and actions. We have failed by our inactivity. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, O Lord, that we might follow You to the green pastures and still waters of everlasting life.

P Our heavenly Father has heard Your confession and sent His only Son, Jesus, to be our Good Shepherd. Jesus searches for each one of His sheep. He brings back those who have strayed. He binds up the injured. He even lays down His life for the sheep. By Christ's death and resurrection, God forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen. We are sought by our Shepherd. We are forgiven in Christ.

INTROIT

P In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,
C **the home of righteousness.**

P O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days;
C **let me know how fleeting I am!**

P Behold, you have made my days a few handbreadths,
C **and my lifetime is as nothing before you.**

P And now, O Lord, for what do I wait?
C **My hope is in you.**

P Deliver me from all my transgressions.
C **Do not make me the scorn of the fool!**

P Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my cry; hold not your peace at my tears!
C **For I am a sojourner with you, a guest, like all my fathers.**

C **Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P In keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,
C **the home of righteousness.**

HYMN of PRAISE

“I’m But a Stranger Here”

LSB 748

- 1 I’m but a stranger here,
Heav’n is my home;
Earth is a desert drear,
Heav’n is my home.
Danger and sorrow stand
Round me on ev’ry hand;
Heav’n is my fatherland,
Heav’n is my home.
- 2 What though the tempest rage,
Heav’n is my home;
Short is my pilgrimage,
Heav’n is my home;
And time’s wild wintry blast
Soon shall be overpast;
I shall reach home at last,
Heav’n is my home.
- 3 Therefore I murmur not,
Heav’n is my home;
Whate’er my earthly lot,
Heav’n is my home;
And I shall surely stand
There at my Lord’s right hand;

Heav'n is my fatherland,
Heav'n is my home.

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SALUTATION

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P Let us pray.

Eternal God, merciful Father, You have appointed Your Son as judge of the living and the dead. Enable us to wait for the day of His return with our eyes fixed on the kingdom prepared for Your own from the foundation of the world; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24

¹¹“For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out. ¹²As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. ¹³And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country. ¹⁴I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁶I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice. . . .

²⁰“Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD to them: Behold, I, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹Because you push with side and shoulder, and thrust at all the weak with your horns, till you have scattered them abroad, ²²I will rescue my flock; they shall no longer be a prey. And I will judge between sheep and sheep. ²³And I will set up over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he shall feed them: he shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them. I am the LORD; I have spoken.”

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

1 Corinthians 15:20–28

²⁰But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. ²¹For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. ²³But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. ²⁴Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. ²⁵For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. ²⁶The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷For “God has put all things in subjection under his feet.” But when it says, “all things are put in subjection,” it is plain that he is excepted who put all things in subjection under him. ²⁸When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him, that God may be all in all.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31–46

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the twenty-fifth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

³¹[Jesus said:] “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

⁴¹“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, 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

HYMN of the DAY

“Standing On the Promises of Christ”

1 Standing on the promises of Christ my King,

Through eternal ages let His praises ring,
Glory in the highest, I will shout and sing,
Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.

2 Standing on the promises that cannot fail,
When the howling storms of doubt and fear assail,
By the living Word of God I shall prevail,
Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.

3 Standing on the promises I now can see
Perfect, present cleansing in the blood for me;
Standing in the liberty where Christ makes free,
Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.

4 Standing on the promises of Christ the Lord,
Bound to Him eternally by love's strong cord,
Overcoming daily with the Spirit's sword,
Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.

5 Standing on the promises I shall not fall,
List'ning every moment to the Spirit's call.
Resting in my Savior as my All in all,
Standing on the promises of God.
Standing, standing,
Standing on the promises of God my Savior;
Standing, standing,
I'm standing on the promises of God.

SERMON

"Trusting in God's Promises"

Stand

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

P Dear heavenly Father, You promise to seek the lost. We pray for all those who have wandered away from Your Church. We pray that You would strengthen us to reach out to them, to receive them with open arms and open hearts when they return home. Hear our prayer, O Lord.

C Give ear to our cry.

- P** Lord, You promise to strengthen the weak. Send Your strength and courage to all those who need it, to the aging, the lonely, the tired, and the vulnerable. Protect and defend them from the wolves of this world. Hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C** Give ear to our cry.
- P** Lord, You promise to feed Your sheep with good pasture. Raise up faithful servants and shepherds to share the nourishment of Your Word and Sacraments with all Your sheep. Hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C** Give ear to our cry.
- P** Lord, You promise to rescue Your flock from all enemies. Guard and keep us from the enemies of sin, death, and Satan. Lead us away from temptation and always closer to the arms of our Good Shepherd. Hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C** Give ear to our cry.
- P** Lord, You promise to bind up the injured. Bring Your healing to all those who suffer now through injury, illness, and oppression, [*especially* . . .]. Heal them according to Your good and gracious will. Hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C** Give ear to our cry.
- P** Lord, by Your Word You have told us that the last enemy to be destroyed is death. As we await the return of Jesus and the resurrection of the dead, we still grieve and mourn when the enemy of death strikes our friends and family. Be near all those who are mourning the death of loved ones, [*especially* . . .]. Comfort them with the hope of the resurrection to eternal life. Hear our prayer, O Lord.
- C** Give ear to our cry.
- P** Into Your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord.
- C** Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

- 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.

BENEDICTION

- P** 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.
- C** Amen.

- 1 Jerusalem the golden,
 With milk and honey blest—
 The promise of salvation,
 The place of peace and rest—
 We know not, oh, we know not
 What joys await us there:
 The radiancy of glory,
 The bliss beyond compare!
- 2 Within those walls of Zion
 Sounds forth the joyful song,
 As saints join with the angels
 And all the martyr throng.
 The Prince is ever with them;
 The daylight is serene;
 The city of the blessed
 Shines bright with glorious sheen.
- 3 Around the throne of David,
 The saints, from care released,
 Raise loud their songs of triumph
 To celebrate the feast.
 They sing to Christ their leader,
 Who conquered in the fight,
 Who won for them forever
 Their gleaming robes of white.
- △ 4 O sweet and blessed country,
 The home of God’s elect!
 O sweet and blessed country
 That faithful hearts expect!
 In mercy, Jesus, bring us
 To that eternal rest
 With You and God the Father
 And Spirit, ever blest.

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