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**Morning Prayer: The Fourth Sunday of Easter - 2020**

Alleluia! Christ is risen.  
*The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia!*

Christ has entered, not into a sanctuary made with hands, a  
copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in  
the presence of God on our behalf.    *Hebrews 9:24*

You shall receive power when the Holy Ghost has come upon  
you; and you shall be my witness in Jerusalem, and in all  
Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.    *Acts 1::8*

**Confession of Sin**

*The Officiant says to the people*

Dearly beloved, we have come together in the presence of  
Almighty God our heavenly Father, to set forth his praise, to  
hear his holy Word, and to ask, for ourselves and on behalf  
of others, those things that are necessary for our life and our  
salvation. And so that we may prepare ourselves in heart and  
mind to worship him, let us kneel in silence, and with  
penitent and obedient hearts confess our sins, that we may  
obtain forgiveness by his infinite goodness and mercy.

*Silence may be kept.*

*Officiant and People together, all kneeling*

Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,  
and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen.

*The Priest alone stands and says*

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all  
goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in  
eternal life. *Amen.*

**The Invitatory and Psalter**

*All stand*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Officiant* | Lord, open our lips. |
| *People* | And our mouth shall proclaim your praise. |

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*Officiant and People*

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as  
it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

*Except in Lent, add*    Alleluia.

Alleluia. The Lord is risen indeed: Come let us adore him.  
Alleluia.

**Christ our Passover**     *Pascha nostrum  
1 Corinthians 5:7-8; Romans 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22*

Alleluia.  
Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us; \*  
    therefore let us keep the feast,  
Not with old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, \*  
    but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia.

Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; \*  
    death no longer has dominion over him.  
The death that he died, he died to sin, once for all; \*  
    but the life he lives, he lives to God.  
So also consider yourselves dead to sin, \*  
    and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Alleluia.

Christ has been raised from the dead, \*  
    the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.  
For since by a man came death, \*  
    by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.  
For as in Adam all die, \*  
    so in Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia.

**The Psalm or Psalms Appointed**

**Psalm 23**

***Dominus regit me***

1 The Lord is my shepherd; \*  
I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures \*  
and leads me beside still waters.

3 He revives my soul \*  
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I shall fear no evil; \*  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; \*  
you have anointed my head with oil,  
and my cup is running over.

6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, \*  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
    as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

**The Lessons**

**Acts 2: 42-47**

Those who had been baptized devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day 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, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

**9**    **The First Song of Isaiah**    *Ecce, Deus*  
         *Isaiah 12:2-6*

Surely, it is God who saves me; \*  
    I will trust in him and not be afraid.  
For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, \*  
    and he will be my Savior.  
Therefore you shall draw water with rejoicing \*  
    from the springs of salvation.  
And on that day you shall say, \*  
    Give thanks to the Lord and call upon his Name;  
Make his deeds known among the peoples; \*  
    see that they remember that his Name is exalted.  
Sing the praises of the Lord, for he has done great things, \*  
    and this is known in all the world.  
Cry aloud, inhabitants of Zion, ring out your joy, \*  
    for the great one in the midst of you is the Holy One of Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
    as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

**1 Peter 1:17-23**

It is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If 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. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin,  
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When 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. He 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. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

**19**    **The Song of the Redeemed**    *Magna et mirabilia*  
          *Revelation 15:3-4*

O ruler of the universe, Lord God,  
great deeds are they that you have done, \*  
    surpassing human understanding.  
Your ways are ways of righteousness and truth, \*  
O King of all the ages.

Who can fail to do you homage, Lord,  
and sing the praises of your Name? \*  
    for you only are the Holy One.  
All nations will draw near and fall down before you, \*  
    because your just and holy works have been revealed.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
    as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

**Hymn 174 At The Lamb’s High Feast Salzburg**

At the Lamb’s high feast we sing  
praise to our victorious King,  
who hath washed us in the tide  
flowing from his pierced side;  
praise we him, whose love divine  
gives his sacred Blood for wine,  
gives his Body for the feast,  
Christ the victim, Christ the priest.

Where the Paschal blood is poured,  
death’s dark angel sheathes his sword;  
Israel’s hosts triumphant go  
through the wave that drowns the foe.  
Praise we Christ, whose blood was shed,  
Paschal victim, Paschal bread;  
with sincerity and love  
eat we manna from above.

Mighty victim from on high,  
hell’s fierce powers beneath thee lie;  
thou hast conquered in the fight,  
thou hast brought us life and light:  
now no more can death appall,  
now no more the grave entrall;  
thou hast opened paradise,  
and in thee thy saints shall rise.

Easter triumph, Easter joy,  
sin alone can this destroy;  
from sin’s power do thou set free  
souls newborn, O Lord, in thee.  
Hymns of glory and of praise,  
Risen Lord, to thee we raise;  
Holy Father, praise to thee,  
with the Spirit, ever be.

**A Reading from the Gospel According to John 10:1-10**

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

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

**Sermon –**

*Easter 4A – 2020*

*One of the most profound things said by Winston Churchill during his long life of memorable quips and quotes was, “We cannot move London.” A friend once said of Churchill, he was often a master of the blatantly obvious.*

*In the years prior to the rise of Nazi Germany, Winston Churchill was a voice crying out in the wilderness about the very real danger posed by the rise of Hitler and the deadly earnestness of his followers to expand across Europe.*

*Churchill went to the House of Commons and said that the capital city of England was “the greatest target in the world, a kind of tremendous, fat, valuable cow, tied up to attract the beast of prey.”*

*What Churchill could see clearly is that the coming war would rise and fall on the ability of an enemy to bring the war to their doorsteps with the rise of airpower in the form of bombers. That old cow, London, would simply look up and see the bombs coming down upon it. Eight to nine million people looking to the skies at certain death.*

*In the face of such a calamity, Churchill and a few others simply assumed that half of the population would flee the city for the countryside, thereby leaving London empty and non-functioning. Others feared that there would be mass panic and hysteria, with the remainder too scared to continue working and walking the streets where hundreds of thousands would be dying.*

*It turns out that Churchill was only half right in his predictions.*

*Indeed, Germany bombed, and bombed, and bombed London during 1940 and 1941. Targeting every sing supply chain, every factory, and every target with military significance. And while the Germans were certainly hoping to inflict material damage to the English capital, their deeper and additional goal was to demoralize the British people, steal their courage and conviction, with raids night and day for 8 long months. 57 days in a row at the outset.*

*Certainly these people will crumble. Certainly these people will fold. Certainly these people will evaporate in a cloud of fear and dismay.*

*Thousands of bombs were falling. Tens of thousands of bombs were falling. Forty thousand people were killed. Fifty thousand people were injured. Entire sections of the city demolished; at least 1,000,000 people losing their homes.*

*In preparation for this onslaught the British had set up psychiatric hospitals outside of the city; their prediction was that there would be trauma on a massive scale. Their prediction essentially was that Germany was right; the people would fold internally as well as externally.*

*However, these psychiatric hospitals sat empty.*

*With a war raging over their heads, bombs landing in their homes, with a war meeting them on their doorsteps every day and night, the vast majority of the British people never panicked, or surrendered their sense of destiny and possible victory.*

*The writer Malcolm Gladwell explained why in his book David and Goliath:*

*So why were Londoners so unfazed by the Blitz? Because forty thousand deaths and forty-six thousand injuries—spread across a metropolitan area of more than eight million people—means that there were many more remote misses who were emboldened by the experience of being bombed than there were near misses who were traumatized by it.*

*Citing the work of psychologist J.T. MacCurdy, Gladwell explains there are typically three responses to a situation like this:*

*(1) The people who are killed. This group obviously receives the worst outcome; but the morale of the community at large depends on those who survive.*

*(2) The near misses. This group saw the bombings firsthand, were impacted by the destruction and likely injured in the process, but lived to talk about it. Many of these people were in a state of shock and rightfully traumatized by their experiences.*

*(3) The remote misses. This group got lucky. They heard the bombings and sirens and may have been close to the destruction but they came away from the experience feeling emboldened. Feeling grateful for their lives, which had been spared.*

*Gladwell explains, “A near miss leaves you traumatized. A remote miss makes you think you are invincible.”*

*The reaction of a London worker at the time paints the picture for you:*

*In the midst of the Blitz, a middle-aged laborer in a button-factory was asked if he wanted to be evacuated to the countryside. He had been bombed out of his house twice. But each time he and his wife had been fine. He refused. “What, and miss all this?” he exclaimed. “Not for all the gold in China! There’s never been nothing like it! Never! And never will be again.”*

*Gladwell remarked that citizens in other countries had similar reactions. The gratitude of survival creates an unmistakable zeal for life and new possibilities.*

*It’s estimated most cities recovered in just 10-15 days while some took more like 3 months.*

*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* {Summary borrowed from Ben Carlson}*

*In the words of Ben Carlson, “A global pandemic is not a war in the traditional sense but it does feel like we are at war with this virus.”*

*Clearly, the sacrifices we are being asked to make are not the same as the terrifying prospect of hearing a foreign army’s boots marching down mainstreet. However, we are engaged with an unseen and unpredictable enemy that is causing lives across the globe to be changed and burdened in ways not unlike that of wartime.*

*This virus has turned out the lights, and turned off the music. And every person is being invited to draw upon internal resources that may, or may not, have been neglected for decades. It is too soon to know if the psychiatric hospitals will be needed or not.*

*Unemployment will be the new normal for many. A retirement in austerity will be the new normal for many. A partial recovery to “life as we have known it” will be the new normal for many. And death will introduce many to a new normal. The microscopic bombing will continue; and the living will daily face the opportunity to surrender to anxiety, or discover the gratitude that another day has been given to enjoy to the glory of God, and work for the benefit of our neighbors.*

*Like the Bombing of London, like the Blitz, we do not know how we are going to be victorious; it is most likely certain that any victory over this virus will present each of us with some sort of difficulty and sacrifice.*

*I believe there is no doubt that each of us is calling out for guidance. This is a time, these are the circumstances, in which the voice of a Good Shepherd will not be falling on deaf ears.*

*Being anxious, being afraid in life, is not an unreasonable or irrational response; that is why we value courage as a virtue. Encouragement is the medicine necessary when all seems to be falling around us.*

*And when we are afraid, when we are anxious about the world that we have known exploding around us, we have the choice of where to tune the third ear of our hearts. We have a choice in the voice to whom we choose to listen. In the midst of the new normal that this fallen world is constantly presenting to us, we have a choice of how to face the future.*

*Ben Carlson points to an observation from psychologist J T MacCurdy, “We are also prone to be afraid of being afraid, and the conquering of fear produces exhilaration.…”*

*The God who created us, loves us more than the fear and the anxiety which penetrate our hearts and minds when our worlds come tumbling down. The God who created us does not leave us to listen only to the voices of our own imaginations.*

*“He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.”*

*In the late 1800’s, the Old Testament scholar G. A. Smith tells of watching shepherds in Judea. "Sometimes we enjoyed our noonday rest beside one of those Judean wells to which three or four shepherds come down with their flocks. The flocks mixed with each other, and we wondered how each shepherd would get his own again. But after the watering and the playing were over the shepherds one by one went up different sides of the valley, and each called out his peculiar call; and the sheep of each drew out of the crowd to their own shepherd" (G. A. Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land , 210-11, quoted in Beasley-Murray, 168)*

*Jesus is calling every day. It is simply that we need to hear his voice more clearly at a time when the natural limitations of a mortal life, in a fallen world, are causing our spirits to fail. This virus and its consequences are telescoping the questions that must be asked in the midst of any life. Who am I? What am I? Whom do I serve? Myself, or one greater than myself?*

*Like the bombs falling on Britain, this virus is presenting us with the clarity of an existential dilemma; what is my life in the face of an approaching death?*

*It is a time to listen deeply. It is a time for us to remember in the midst of the bombing of this present time, there is alternative to panic and the nursing of an ever present anxiety.*

*One response to this quarantine, and its reminder that all human life ends in a physical death, is for us to be listening for the voice of the Good Shepherd. In the midst of the speculation, the blame, the anxiety that our present situation is generating, there is a voice of hope and of courage. And we are seeing it lived in the work of those who are caring for the sick and dying in our hospitals.*

*The voice of our Good Shepherd means for us to have a life beyond this life; and He is not driving us from behind like a cruel taskmaster. The noble and beautiful shepherd leads first, and then calls. He leads by going first, going ahead for us into death, and once He has made that path safe, He then calls us to follow. Over and over in the Gospels Jesus is telling his friends that when they are with Him they are not lost; when they are with Him, they will have those things that provide a real life.*

*“Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”*

*Author Joyce Rupp recounts an Ethiopian legend about a shepherd boy named Alemayu. One night he was stranded on a frozen mountain, clothed only in a thin wrap. When he arrived back home, the villagers were amazed that he had survived so well. When asked to explain he said, "The night was bitter. When all the sky was dark, I thought I would die. Then far, far off I saw a shepherd’s fire on another mountain. I kept my eyes on the red glow in the distance, and I dreamed of being warm. And that is how I had the strength to survive."*

*When we are with Christ, we are never lost, either in the midst of this life or the next. In His voice is the truth of the message of the Gospel;*

*“I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”*

**The Apostles' Creed**

*Officiant and People together, all standing*

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
    creator of heaven and earth;  
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
    He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
        and born of the Virgin Mary.  
    He 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.

**The Prayers**

*The People stand or kneel*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Officiant* | The Lord be with you. |
| *People* | And also with you. |
| *Officiant* | Let us pray. |

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*Officiant and People*

|  |
| --- |
| 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,      for ever and ever. Amen. |

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**Suffrages B**

V.    Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance;  
R.    Govern and uphold them, now and always.  
V.    Day by day we bless you;  
R.    We praise your name for ever.  
V.    Lord, keep us from all sin today;  
R.    Have mercy upon us, Lord, have mercy.  
V.    Lord, show us your love and mercy;  
R.    For we put our trust in you.  
V.    In you, Lord, is our hope;  
R.    And we shall never hope in vain.

*The Collect of the Day*

O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people: Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Sundays*

O God, you make us glad with the weekly remembrance of  
the glorious resurrection of your Son our Lord: Give us this  
day such blessing through our worship of you, that the week  
to come may be spent in your favor; through Jesus Christ our  
Lord. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Mission*

O God, you have made of one blood all the peoples of the  
earth, and sent your blessed Son to preach peace to those  
who are far off and to those who are near: Grant that people  
everywhere may seek after you and find you; bring the  
nations into your fold; pour out your Spirit upon all flesh;  
and hasten the coming of your kingdom; through Jesus  
Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

*Authorized intercessions and thanksgivings may follow.*

﻿*For Sick Persons*

O Father of mercies and God of all comfort, our only help in  
time of need: We humbly beseech thee to behold, visit, and  
relieve all they sick and ill servants, for whom our prayers are desired.  
Look upon them with the eyes of thy mercy; comfort them with  
a sense of thy goodness; preserve them from the temptations  
of the enemy; and give them patience under their affliction. In  
thy good time, restore them to health, and enable them to lead  
the residue of this life in thy fear, and to thy glory; and grant  
that finally they may dwell with thee in life everlasting; through  
Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*For Doctors and Nurses, Hospital Administrators, and Hospital Staff*

Sanctify, O Lord, those whom you have called to the study  
and practice of the arts of healing, and to the prevention of  
disease and pain. Strengthen them by your life-giving Spirit,  
that by their ministries the health of the community may be  
promoted and your creation glorified; through Jesus Christ  
our Lord. *Amen*.

*For Those Accepting Isolation On Behalf of the Community*

This is another day, O Lord. I know not what it will bring  
forth, but make me ready, Lord, for whatever it may be. If I  
am to stand up, help me to stand bravely. If I am to sit still,  
help me to sit quietly. If I am to lie low, help me to do it  
patiently. And if I am to do nothing, let me do it gallantly.  
Make these words more than words, and give me the Spirit  
of Jesus. *Amen.*

*A Collect for Guidance*

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our  
being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by  
your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our  
life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are  
ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
*Amen.*

**Hymn 494 Crown Him With Many Crowns Diademata**

1 Crown him with many crowns,  
the Lamb upon his throne;  
Hark! how the heavenly anthem drowns  
all music but its own;  
awake, my soul, and sing of him  
who died for thee,  
and hail him as thy matchless King  
through all eternity.

2 Crown him the Son of God  
before the worlds began,  
and ye, who tread where he hath trod,  
crown him the Son of man;  
who every grief hath known  
that wrings the human breast,  
and takes and bears them for his own,  
that all in him may rest.

3 Crown him the Lord of life,  
who triumphed over the grave,  
and rose victorious in the strife  
for those he came to save;  
his glories now we sing,  
who died, and rose on high,  
who died, eternal life to bring,  
and lives that death may die.

4 Crown him of lords the Lord,  
who over all doth reign,  
who once on earth, the incarnate Word,  
for ransomed sinners slain,  
now lives in realms of light,  
where saints with angels sing  
their songs before him day and night,  
their God, Redeemer, King.

5 Crown him the Lord of heaven,  
enthroned in worlds above;  
crown him the King,to whom is given,  
the wondrous name of Love.  
Crown him with many crowns,  
as thrones before him fall,  
crown him, ye kings, with many crowns,  
for he is King of all.

*The General Thanksgiving*

*Officiant and People*

Almighty God, Father of all mercies,  
we your unworthy servants give you humble thanks  
for all your goodness and loving-kindness  
to us and to all whom you have made.  
We bless you for our creation, preservation,  
and all the blessings of this life;  
but above all for your immeasurable love  
in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jesus Christ;  
for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.  
And, we pray, give us such an awareness of your mercies,  
that with truly thankful hearts we may show forth your praise,  
not only with our lips, but in our lives,  
by giving up our selves to your service,  
and by walking before you  
in holiness and righteousness all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory throughout all ages. Amen.

*Alleluia, alleluia!*  Let us bless the Lord.  
*Thanks be to God.  Alleluia, alleluia!*

*The Officiant may then conclude with one of the following*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and  
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.  
*Amen.*    *2 Corinthians 13:14*

May the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in  
believing through the power of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*  
*Romans 15:13*

Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely  
more than we can ask or imagine: Glory to him from  
generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus  
for ever and ever. *Amen.*    *Ephesians 3:20,21*