



First Presbyterian Church

149 Broad Street

Tonawanda, New York 14150 ~ 2111

Church: (716) 692-1319

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

Come, Worship the Lord, Our God

4th Sunday of Easter

CCLI License # 2839486

April 21, 2024

10:30am

PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

We gather in the presence of our God:

where grieving people and children with skinned knees have their tears wiped away.

We gather as the little children of God:

to worship the One who provides what we need, not what we want.

We gather around the Table of God:

to taste the goodness of God, to drink deeply from God's mercy.

GATHERING PRAYER

We are your people, O God—the sheep of your pasture, the flock you have gathered. Lead us beside still waters; teach us the way of righteousness; and feed us at your table; through Jesus Christ, our good shepherd. Amen.

***HYMN: "Alleluia, Alleluia! Give Thanks" #240**

ALLELUIA NO. 1

CALL TO CONFESSION

Knowing how easy it is to wander from the paths of right living; aware of all the shadowed valleys we wander; remembering how we have failed to place our trust in God - how can we not come to God with our confessions? Please join me as we pray, saying,

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Comfort of your people: we confess the emptiness of our souls which sends us searching for all those things which cannot nourish us. Our restless longing for the goods of the world fill us with every lust and envy. Our belief that still waters are stagnant causes us to thirst for whitewater thrills and adventures. Our trust in the hollow promises of our culture turns us away from the shelter you offer to us.

Forgive us, Goodness Incarnate. Call us back from our wayward lives, so we may find rest in the stillness of your gentle heart; we may find healing from your scarred hands; we may find that life for which we yearn, together in you and through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

Silence is kept

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

This is the good news: God will walk with us in every moment, God will fill us with goodness and mercy, God will bring us home to live forever.

Anointed with grace and forgiveness, our lives overflow with love for all people. Thanks be to God. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Lord God, good shepherd, by the leading of your Spirit, help us to listen for your voice and follow in your paths all the days of our lives; in Jesus' name. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 4:5-12

⁵The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, ⁶with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. ⁷When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, "By what power or by what name did you do this?"

⁸Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, ⁹if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, ¹⁰let it be known to all of you, and to all the people of Israel, that this man is standing before you in good health by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead.

¹¹This Jesus is 'the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.' ¹²There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved."

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

ALL GOD'S CHILDREN: The Parable of the Good Shepherd (Godly Play)

GOSPEL READING: John 10:11-18

¹¹"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care 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.

¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to 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 in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father."

RESPONSIVE PSALM 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd,

I shall not want.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

³he restores my soul.

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

⁴Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil;

for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

EPISTLE READING: 1 John 3:16-24

¹⁶We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us--and we ought to lay down our lives for one another. ¹⁷How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help?

¹⁸Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. ¹⁹And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him ²⁰whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

²¹Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; ²²and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. ²³And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. ²⁴All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON: "Created to Love"

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Chaffee

SERMON HYMN: "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" #801

CRIMOND

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

How does God's love abide in anyone who has the goods of the world and sees a brother or sister in need, yet refuses to help? With love for God and neighbor, let us offer our lives to the Lord.

THE OFFERTORY

DOXOLOGY: "Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks" #240 - chorus only

ALLELUIA NO. 1

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

As we offer our gifts to you, Gentle Shepherd, may we lay down our prejudices towards others, so they might find a welcome in our hearts; may we set aside our fears of the future, so you might lead us into your future, may we become the goodness and mercy for which others have been looking all their lives. This we pray in Jesus' name, Amen.

***HYMN: "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" #802**

ST. COLUMBA

CHARGE

Let us go to be bold before God.

We will speak up for all people who long for healing and hope.

Let us go to shepherd Jesus' sisters and brothers.

We will risk our lives for justice, we will serve the outcast.

Let us go to anoint others with the Holy Spirit.

We will bring goodness and mercy to all whose lives need restoring.

BENEDICTION

Volunteers This Week:

Liturgist: Tom Dugan
 Tech:
 Usher(s): Leslie Dugan
 Coffee Hour: Nancy Bassett
 Greeter(s): Bonnie Sibley

Volunteers Next Week 4/28:

Liturgist: Sue Schurr
 Tech: Betsy Crocker
 Usher(s): Linda Barry
 Coffee Hour: Bonnie Sibley
 Greeter(s): Janet Schurr

PRAYER CONCERNS

The prayer concerns have recently been updated. If you have a prayer request, please contact **Pastor Rebecca at 315-317-6140 or the church office at 716-692-1319.**

CALENDAR

Sunday, April 21

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)
 10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
 11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)

Monday, April 22

10:00 am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Tuesday, April 23

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
 1:00pm Deacons Meeting

Wednesday, April 24

9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours

Thursday, April 25

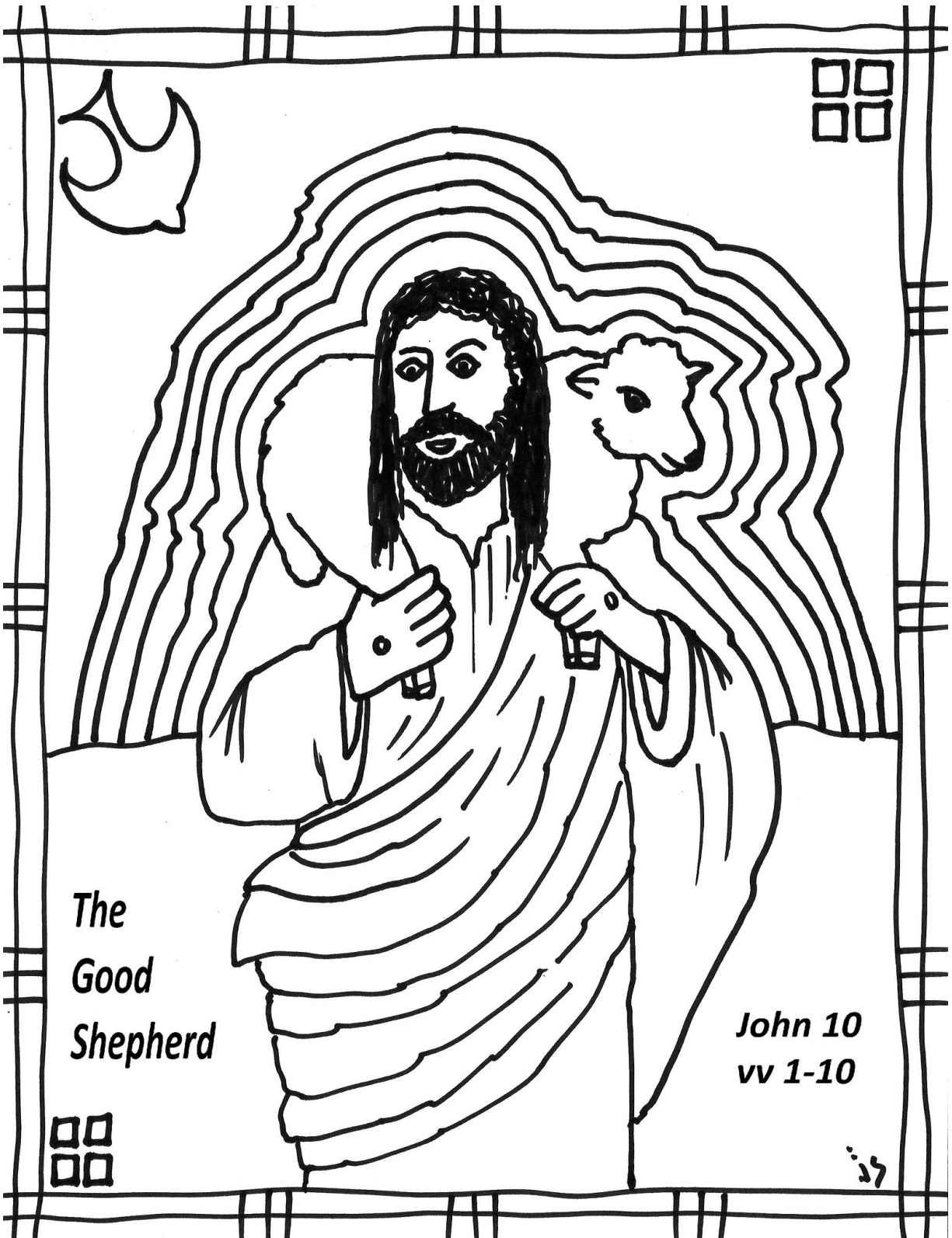
9:00am – 2:00pm Office Hours
 10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)
 6:00pm Hearts4Worship
 6:45pm Bell Choir
 7:15pm Choir

Saturday, April 27

10:00am Alcoholics Anonymous (Circle II Basement)

Sunday, April 28

9:30am Faith Formation (All Ages)
 10:30 am Sunday Worship for all ages (Sanctuary)
 11:30am Coffee Fellowship for all ages (Parlor)



*The
Good
Shepherd*

*John 10
vv 1-10*