

## Sermon followed by Service - May 11, 2025 - John 10:25-27

You heard it - “no need to worry. No need to worry about anything.” Are you there yet? I’m not. So how do we get there? Or better, how do we get there [stained glass window lamb] - “The LORD is my shepherd, I’m set - no worries.”

In our lesson, there were some people who didn’t want to get there, at least not with Jesus as Shepherd. Jesus was getting in their way, crimping their style. If they didn’t have Jesus in their way, they could do what they wanted, get what they wanted; they could live life, handle life the way they wanted ... or so they thought. But listening to Jesus was messing with their conscience, messing with their pride, getting in the way of their freedom to live life their way.

Sound familiar? Have you ever thought - “if we didn’t have church on Sunday ... if I didn’t have Sunday School and Bible Class ... if I didn’t have to sit around waiting for that home devotion ... if I didn’t have Jesus telling me what to do, what not to do - then I could do what I want, when I want, the way I want.” Ever been there? Listening to Jesus can mess with our sense of freedom, our pride, our conscience. So what do we do? Sometimes we pretend that Jesus doesn’t matter or care what we do. Sometimes we pretend we’re all fine and good without Jesus.

So what does Jesus do? Before our lesson and after our lesson Jesus calls out the fakes and frauds, the pretenders. But in our lesson, Jesus tells us about his real sheep. **“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them**

**eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”**

Sounds good, doesn't it? Sheep of the Shepherd - real sheep of the real Shepherd - get to face life safe and secure. Now it doesn't always feel that way, does it? As confirmands (and no matter what our age, we're all being confirmed - either confirmed with God or confirmed with the world) ... every day it is good for us to re-live our confirmation as we face what's coming. Every day we have new challenges, new opportunities, new temptations, new troubles, new lessons to learn, new tests to pass. Some days it can be tiring, overwhelming, and maybe even scary - and it's good for us to be re-confirmed in God's promises and strength. Some days are exciting and invigorating - and it's good to be re-confirmed in the direction God wants us to go. Some days, people fill our ears with all sorts of garbage, some of it stinky, but some of it sounds so good ...; it is good for us to be re-confirmed, to fill our ears and hearts with what Jesus says.

And what does Jesus say? Exactly what we need to hear. How can that be? Jesus knows you. He knows your hurts; he knows your struggles. He knows when you need a lift or a nudge or a hook. He knows what you need to hear today. Jesus knows what you need from him.

So what does Jesus say? **“I give [my sheep] eternal life, and they shall never perish.”** What does that mean for us? **“I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.”** We might think, “That will be great then and there, but what about here and now?” Confirmed with Jesus, **“Surely goodness and love will**

**follow me all the days of my life.”** Again we might think: “Sure sounds great, but I’m not seeing it. When I look around, it’s all dark.” And what about those dark times, what do we get to remember? Confirmed with Jesus - **“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.”**

We want that, don’t we? When we’re in the valley of the shadow of death ... when we’re in deep and dark with trouble all around us, we want Jesus with us, don’t we? Because if Jesus isn’t with us, then we’re like sheep without a shepherd. And what do we know about sheep without a shepherd? Sheep without a shepherd can’t find their way. Oh, they think they can, but they get themselves lost, in trouble and in danger. Sheep without a shepherd are easy prey, easy pickings for the thief, the wolf, the coyote. Sheep without a shepherd are as good as dead.

It’s no fun to think about, but we’ve all been there. Just like Isaiah said: **“We all like sheep have gone astray; each of us has gone our own way.”** But the Good Shepherd didn’t leave us lost and on our own. He didn’t leave us as good as dead. No, the Good Shepherd became one of the sheep, and not just any sheep, Jesus came as the Lamb of God. As the Lamb of God, Jesus took the sin of the world. As the Lamb of God, Jesus took your sin and mine; he took our place as guilty. As the Lamb of God, Jesus was cursed and crushed, crucified and killed - all to pay for our sin, all to set us right with God. But that altar isn’t a memorial to a dead lamb; that [stain-glass] window isn’t a memorial to a dead shepherd. With Easter, Jesus lives! Jesus lives to save and

protect. He lives to lead and provide. Jesus lives to find us and call us.

And that's what he's done; that's what he's doing! Jesus has found you! He's calling you! You get to say: "I'm set."  
**"The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not be in want.** You get to know: "I'm in a good place; I'm going to a better place."  
**"Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever."** You get to sing, with sweet abandon: "I am Jesus' little lamb."

So now what? Walk off? Wander off? Go our own way? No, what does our Shepherd say? **"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."** Jesus' sheep listen to his voice. We listen to his voice in here [Bible]. We flock together to listen to his voice in worship, in Family Bible Hour, Sunday School, Bible Study. Why? Oh, I could give you a sales pitch for worship and Bible Study together and tell you: "it's relevant and important; it's good for us and worth our while." And even if you don't think so, it would still be true. Or I could say: "people who love each other are eager to listen to each other." But Jesus simply says: **"My sheep listen to me; my sheep follow me."**

So don't shelve your shepherd; don't bury him in a pile. Don't blow him off or rush on by like you have something more important to do. Don't think you need to be given the right sales pitch for Bible Study to be worth your time. You don't. Sheep have nothing more important in their life than the voice of their

shepherd; without our shepherd we're as good as dead. So listen to the voice of your Shepherd; follow him, flock together to hear him; and then what? He will make this true for you - **“The LORD is my Shepherd; I shall not be in want. ... Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”** Amen.

May 11, 2025

## DIVINE SERVICE II

**IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ...** we observe two special celebrations - Good Shepherd Sunday and Confirmation Sunday. May God bless us to follow our Good Shepherd forever!

### OPENING HYMN

*"Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus"*

**Hymn 704**

Let us ever walk with Jesus, follow his example pure,  
flee the world which would deceive us and to sin our souls allure.  
Ever in his footsteps treading, body here, yet soul above,  
full of faith and hope and love, let us do the Father's bidding.  
Faithful Lord, abide with me; Savior, lead; I follow thee.

Let us suffer here with Jesus, to his image e'er conform;  
heaven's glory soon will please us, sunshine follow on the storm.  
Though we sow in tears of sorrow, we shall reap in heav'nly joy,  
and the fears that now annoy shall be laughter on the morrow.  
Christ, I suffer here with thee; there, O share thy joy with me.

Let us also die with Jesus; his death from the second death,  
from our soul's destruction, frees us, quickens us with life's glad breath.  
Let us mortify, while living, flesh and blood and die to sin,  
and the grave that shuts us in shall but prove the gate to heaven.  
Jesus, here I die to thee, there to live eternally.

Let us gladly live with Jesus; since he's risen from the dead,  
death and grave must soon release us. Jesus, thou art now our head.  
We are truly thine own members, where thou livest, there live we;  
take and own us constantly, faithful Friend, as thy dear brethren.  
Jesus, here I live to thee, also there eternally.

## INVOCATION

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

C: **Amen.**

## CONFESSION

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.

C: **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.**

**For faithless worrying and selfish pride,**

**For sins of habit and sins of choice,**

**For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,**

**I deserve to be cast away from your presence forever.**

**O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

## ABSOLUTION

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

## LORD, HAVE MERCY (*Kyrie*)

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: **Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

C: **Christ, have mercy.**

M: For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

C: **Lord, have mercy.**

M: Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

C: **Amen.**

#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty and eternal God, you always cause your church to grow, and with your light and grace, you strengthen the hearts of those to whom you have given new birth through water and the Spirit. Let all who have been instructed in your truth continue to increase both in faith and knowledge, that they may rejoice in their baptism and grow as members of the holy body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

#### READING

*Proverbs 3:5–6*

Trust in the LORD with all your heart  
and lean not on your own understanding;  
in all your ways submit to him,  
and he will make your paths straight.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

#### PSALM 23

**The LORD is my shepherd.  
I lack nothing.  
He causes me to lie down in green pastures.  
He leads me beside quiet waters.  
He restores my soul.  
He guides 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 set a table for me in the presence of my foes.  
You drench my head with oil.  
My cup is overflowing.  
Surely goodness and mercy will pursue me all the days of my life,  
and I will live in the house of the LORD forever.**



## SECOND READING

*Colossians 3:12–17*

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*Revelation 2:10*

Alleluia. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor's crown. Alleluia.

## GOSPEL

*John 10:22–30*

Then came the Festival of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple courts walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews who were there gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly."

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to you, O Christ!**

PSALM OF THE DAY

*Psalm 23F*



1 My shep - herd will sup - ply my need, Je -  
 2 When I walk through the shades of death, his  
 3 The sure pro - vi - sions of my God at -

ho - vah is his name; in pas - tures fresh he  
 pres - ence is my stay; one word of his sup -  
 tend me all my days; oh, may his house be

makes me feed be - side the liv - ing stream.  
 port - ing breath drives all my fears a - way.  
 my a - bode and all my work be praise.

He brings my wan - d'ring spir - it back when  
 His hand, in sight of all my foes, will  
 There would I find a set - tled rest while

I for - sake his ways and leads me, for his  
 still my ta - ble spread; my cup with bless - ings  
 oth - ers go and come, no more a stran - ger

mer - cy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.  
 o - ver - flows; his oil a - noints my head.  
 or a guest but like a child at home.

SERMON

*John 10:25–27*

Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father's name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

## OFFERING PRAYER

O Lord, as our Good Shepherd, you wondrously, generously, graciously provide us with all that we need. Help us to live and to give without fear or worry, stinginess or selfishness, but with contentment, thanksgiving, and a heart eager to reflect your goodness - for your glory and the good of your flock. **Amen.**

## OFFERING

*If you prefer to give online, the code at the right will take you to our Online Giving page. We invite our online givers to join in our offering with an "I Give Online" card in the pew racks.*



## CHOIR

### *"The Potter's Hand"*

*Beautiful Lord, wonderful Savior  
I know for sure all of my days are held in Your hand  
And crafted into Your perfect plan*

*You gently called me into Your presence Guiding me by Your Holy Spirit  
Teach me dear Lord, to live all of my life Through Your eyes*

*And I'm captured by Your holy calling  
Set me apart, I know you're drawing me to Yourself Lead me Lord, I pray*

### **Refrain:**

*Take me and mold me, use me, fill me I give my life to the Potter's hand  
Call me, you guide me, lead me, walk beside me I give my life to the Potter's hand*

*You gently call me into Your presence Guiding me by Your Holy Spirit  
Teach me dear Lord, to live all of my life Through Your eyes*

*I'm captured by Your Holy calling  
Set me apart, I know You're drawing me to yourself Lead me Lord, I pray*

### **Refrain 2x:**

## RITE OF CONFIRMATION

### CONFIRMANDS

Grace Adelaide Haak

Colby Sean Rockwell

Michael Jeffery Thies

### APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe 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 is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there 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.**

**M:** Gracious Father, you have adopted our brothers and sister in Baptism and anointed them with your Holy Spirit. Renew and strengthen them by that same Spirit so that they may continue to grow in faith and boldly confess you before others.

Lord, in your mercy:

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**M:** Move them to faithfully hear your holy Word and joyfully receive your sacrament that they may again and again be assured of your gracious love and forgiveness. Lord, in your mercy:

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**M:** Give them the sincere desire to die each day to sin and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Lord, in your mercy:

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**M:** Protect them from the powers of evil and give them the weapons to fight against the devil. Lord, in your mercy:

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**M:** Keep them faithful and holy, so that they may inherit eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

#### **HYMN**

#### ***“Gracious Savior, Gentle Shepherd”***

**Hymn 757**

Gracious Savior, gentle Shepherd, children all are dear to you;  
may your loving arms enfold them in your care their whole life through.  
By your tending and protecting keep them safe in all they do.

Tender Shepherd, never leave them, never let them go astray;  
by your warning love directed, may they walk the narrow way.  
Thus direct them, thus defend them lest they fall an easy prey.

By your holy Word instruct them, fill their minds with heav’nly light;  
by your pow’rful grace convince them always to approve what’s right.  
Let them feel your yoke is easy, let them find your burden light.

Taught to love the holy praises which on earth your children sing,  
with their lips and hearts, sincerely, glad thank-off’rings may they bring,  
then with all the saints in glory join to praise their Lord and King.

#### **MOTHER’S DAY (RESPONSIVE)**

*Brief intercessory prayers may be added at the end of the prayer.*

Eternal God, in the beauty of Eden you created a man and a woman and brought them together in marriage. You enabled them to be fruitful and increase in number and so you established the family. Help us to see in your creating wisdom your love for parents and children.

**Move us to be thankful for mothers and fathers and for all the blessings you bring to our homes.**

Today we remember the mothers who loved us even before we were born, who endured childbirth, and who cared for us when we could not care for ourselves. On this day and on other days cause us to recall the hours they spent and the sacrifices they made so that we could be content and carefree as we grew up.

**Lead us to express our thanks and return the love our mothers showed to us.**

We cannot thank you enough for mothers and fathers, too, who brought us to Holy Baptism, taught us simple prayers at mealtime, and read us Bible stories at bedtime. Forgive us for resenting their correction and ignoring their guidance as they desired to keep us on the narrow path of life with Christ.

**Never let us forget the Christian training they gave to us.**

We remember with compassion the mothers who were not always able to reflect your love in our lives. Help us understand the pressures they carried and the sadness they experienced. Take away unhappy memories and rid us of resentment.

**Lead us to forgive them as you have forgiven us.**

We confess our failures to hold our parents in love. For the naughtiness of childhood, the flare-ups of youth, the overconfidence of adulthood, and for all the words and actions spoken in haste and to hurt, we ask you and our parents for pardon.

**Give us courage to make up for past sins when we can.**

As their minds and bodies age, help us to support our parents as well as we can. Give us patience to accept their struggles for independence and strength to deal with their weaknesses. Enable us to keep them mindful of Jesus and his promises of a perfect life in heaven.

**As they brought us to your Word, so lead us to keep them close to your Word.**

Keep in your care all the mothers of our world. Comfort mothers who have been separated from their children. Give strength to mothers who care for children who are sick or troubled. Encourage mothers in societies where mothering is disrespected or discouraged. We pray especially for those who long to be mothers but have not been so blessed.

**We pray you to preserve and protect the blessed task of motherhood.**

Hear us, Lord, as we pray in silence.

*Silent prayer.*

So many women have influenced our lives. Lead us to think about their wisdom, compassion, patience, and encouragement and give us opportunities to say thank you when we can. Help us imitate their care for us as we work and play with children and young adults.

**Strengthen us to love others as Jesus loved us. Amen.**

#### **PRAYER AND 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 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.**

#### **BLESSING**

**M:** The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. Amen.

## CLOSING HYMN

## *"I Am Jesus' Little Lamb"*

Hymn 804

I am Jesus' little lamb; ever glad at heart I am,  
for my Shepherd gently guides me, knows my need and well provides me,  
loves me ev'ry day the same, even calls me by my name.

Day by day, at home, away, Jesus is my staff and stay.  
When I hunger, Jesus feeds me, into pleasant pastures leads me;  
when I thirst, he bids me go where the quiet waters flow.

Who so happy as I am, even now the Shepherd's lamb?  
And when my short life is ended, by his angel host attended,  
he shall fold me to his breast, there within his arms to rest.

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