**Morning Worship**

**April 21, 2024**

**4th Sunday after Easter**

**10:45 a.m.**

***GATHERING***

**WORD OF WELCOME**

**PRELUDE “Prealudium in E Major”** J. S. Bach

**CALL TO WORSHIP** (based on Psalm 23) Marti Kent

Our Good Shepherd has led us to this place.

**He leads us beside still waters; he restores our soul.**

Even though we walk through dark valleys, even though we are fearful and in need of comfort,

**our cup overflows with God’s goodness and mercy; we shall dwell in the house of the Lord our whole lives long.**

**\*PRAYER OF THE DAY** (unison)

 **Almighty God, you sent Jesus, our good shepherd, to gather us together. May we not wander from his flock, but follow wherever he leads us, listening for his voice and staying near him, until we are safely in your fold, to live with you forever; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

**\*HYMN NO. 417 “Christ is Made the Sure Foundation”** REGENT SQUARE

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

The joy of this Easter season continues as we are called to word and worship. Let us pause to confess our sins to our Good Shepherd.

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (unison)

 **Savior God, you guide us, but we are slow to follow and stubborn. You welcome us to your fold, but we make others feel as if they don’t belong. Forgive our life-alienating ways, our exclusion and judgment; the way we evaluate and compare, demean and degrade. Redeem us. Restore us. Help us be faithful as your flock. Amen.**

**SILENT CONFESSION**

**ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

 Christ forgives. Christ transforms. Christ renews. Christ leads us down the path of new beginnings. We are a new creation, ready to sing God’s glory and testify to God’s grace. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen.

**\*CHORAL RESPONSE “Gloria Patri”**

***THE WORD***

**CHILDREN’S MESSAGE Marcy Lyon**

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

 God our helper, guide us into and through your Word, that we might be shaped by your Spirit’s message to us today and transformed for service in your world. Amen.

**FIRST READING  *Genesis 4:1-16***

Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, "I have produced a man with the help of the Lord." Next, she bore his brother, Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. In the course of time, Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground, and Abel, for his part, brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain, and his offering, he had no regard. So, Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And, if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it." Cain said to his brother, Abel, "Let us go out to the field." And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother, Abel, and killed him.

Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" And the Lord said, "What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth." Cain said to the Lord, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!

Today you have driven me away from the soil, and I shall be hidden from your face; I shall be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth, and anyone who meets me may kill me." Then the Lord said to him, "Not so! Whoever kills Cain will suffer a sevenfold vengeance." And the Lord put a mark on Cain, so that no one who came upon him would kill him. Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**ANTHEM “How Can I Keep From Singing?”** R. Lowry

**SECOND READING  *I John 3:11-24***

  For this is the message you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.  We must not be like Cain who was from the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not be astonished, brothers and sisters, that the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another. Whoever does not love abides in death. All who hate a brother or sister are murderers, and you know that murderers do not have eternal life abiding in them. We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us—and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.

How 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? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And, by this, we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. And, 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. All 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.

**SERMON Pastor Stephen Sanders**

**“All You Need is Love”**

**\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** *from a Brief Statement of Faith*

**We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain, and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.**

**CALL FOR THE OFFERING**

Humbled by God’s generosity, let us offer our gifts to God and Christ’s church.

 **Offertory “Here’s That Rainy Day**  Bill Evans

**\*Doxology**

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Him all creatures here below.***

***Alleluia! Alleluia!***

***Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.***

***Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!***

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

God, you meet our needs and transform us for service. Accept these gifts as signs of our gratitude and our commitment to Christ’s ministry. Amen.

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.**

***SENDING***

**\*HYMN NO. 379 “My Hope is Built on Northing Less”**  SOLID ROCK

**\*BENEDICTION**

We are an Easter people! Christ is risen! Live into the hope of Christ’s resurrection and follow him as our Good Shepherd. May the grace, hope, peace and love of God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be with you now and always. Amen

**\*POSTLUDE “Bourree II from English Suite No. 2 in A Minor”**  J. S. Bach

**SERVING US TODAY**: Music Director, Dr. Kay White … Organist, Brennan Plummer … Sanctuary Choir Section Leaders: Miranda Albarez, Clay Donaldson, Trish Thatai, Chip White … Ushers: Edmundo Estrada, Barbara Long, Carolyn Ott, Mike Zobrist … Greeter: Barbara Waugh.

**SANCTUARY FLOWERS** are given today by Susan Chenevert in honor of her sister, Janei Jones.

**CHRISTIAN CONCERNS:**

Jessica Alexander, Pabby Arnold, Pabby Arnold’s cousin, Mark, Sammie Baker, Bob Barry, Katie Bass (Lyme Disease), Kathy Battaglia (back procedure), Barbara Beckmann, Infant Jane Marie Berry, Dave and Sue Blackshear, Andy Boykin (9), Barbara Brewster (96), Owen Carroll (17), Mary Coles, Jim and Elizabeth Davis, Hunter Derouse (infant), Carolyn and Shane Doling, Marguerite Guice, Dolores Hadskey, Rev. Joe Hahn, Blanche Hamilton, Dick Helvig, Mariano Hinojosa, Joy Hymel, Debbie and Jesse Jones, Charlie Jordan, Koen Langheinz, Mike Lopez, Jeff Marinchak, Lauren Johnson Muckleroy, Grant Nesbit, Gloria Ochomogo (Edmundo’s mom), Dan, Wilhelmina and Julia Palmer, Nell Phillips (fall), Rev. Judy Roeling, Kelly Root (kidney cancer), Jan and Steve Sauls, Bill Simmons, Dianne Smith (stroke), Dave Snyder, Dale Tullier, Helen Vogel, Mike Weinstein.

**OPPORTUNITIES**

**PRESCHOOL ART SHOW:** We have the most talented and artistic children. Please take a moment to look at all the beautiful artwork displayed on the bulletin boards in the education building hallways and classrooms today.

**BPECC’S MAY DAY PARADE to support St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital.** Our preschool children will ride their favorite tricycle, bicycle, or big wheel around the outside of the gym on May Day. If you would like to support one or more children (or make a donation), please see the flyer with more information on the table in the narthex. Thank you for supporting our children as they ride to help others.

**CAMP AGAPE** will be held June 16-22, 2024, at the Feliciana Retreat Center. Four different camps are offered for children 3rd grade through 12th. Camp brochures are on the table in the narthex. Please take one for your child, a grandchild, or a neighbor. The deadline to register is May 18, 2024.

**OUR DAILY BREAD DEVOTIONALS** are on the table in the narthex. Please take one for yourself and/or a friend.

**FRIENDSHIP PADS:** Please take a moment to sign your name on the Friendship Pads located on the back of the pew near the center aisle. Include any prayer requests or concerns.

**SOUTHEAST MINISTRIES**: **Canned Vegetables** is the requested item this week. Please bring it to Sunday school, the narthex or church office.

**CALENDAR**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 21, 2024**

9:30 Children’s Sunday School Conference Room and F-6

9:30 The Seekers Class Education Bldg. #E-3

9:30 The Walking Faith Class Fellowship Hall

10:45 Worship Sanctuary

12:00 Session Meeting Conference Room

**MONDAY, april 22, 2024 Earth Day**

4:00 Jehovah Jireh Basketball AB

6:00 Fencing Group AB

7:00 AA Fellowship Hall

**TUESDAY, APRIL 23, 2024**

 4:00 Our Lady of Mercy Basketball AB

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24, 2024**

9:30 Hug-A-Bears Alice Hondzinski’s Home

11:30 Sanctuary Choir Rehearsal Choir

4:00 Jehovah Jireh Basketball AB

6:00 Fencing Group AB

**THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 2024**

9:00 Preschool Chapel Time Sanctuary

4:00 Jehovah Jireh Basketball AB

**FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2024**

8:00 Preschool Parent/Teacher Conferences – No School Education Building

12:00 Noon Dismissal for MMO classes

12:30 Preschool Staff Meeting Fellowship Hall

6:00 Fencing Group AB

**SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2024**

9:30 Children’s Sunday School Conference Room and F-6

9:30 The Seekers Class Fellowship Hall

9:30 The Walking in Faith Class Education E-3

10:45 Worship Sanctuary