



Hope Lutheran Church Worship Service ***April 21, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.***

We express our appreciation for being able to meet on the traditional, ancestral, unceded territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation. May we always look for ways to confront past injustices and support Snuneymuxw governance and jurisdiction.

Welcome & Announcements

Call to Worship¹

In a universe that seems so immense it is easy to feel insignificant as we stand here today.

Yet we know that we are His precious children, the sheep of His flock— unique individuals loved and blessed in so many ways.

As our Good shepherd, He helps us to love, not just in word or speech but in truth and action. Help us to love You and love one another.

Accept this offering of love we pray, our sacrifice of praise and worship. Amen

Gathering Hymn: #739 Touch the Earth Lightly

**Touch the earth lightly, use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder, ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.**

**We who endanger, who create hunger,
agents of death for all creatures that live,
we who would foster clouds of disaster—
God of our planet, forestall and forgive!**

**Let there be greening, birth from the burning,
water that blesses, and air that is sweet,
health in God's garden, hope in God's children,
regeneration that peace will complete.**

**God of all living, God of all loving,
God of the seedling, the snow, and the sun,
teach us, deflect us, Christ reconnect us,
using us gently, and making us one.**

Text: Shirley Erena Murray, b. 1931

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¹ Ashley Johnson, *Easter Liturgical Resources from Africana Writers*, edited by Safiya Fosua, 2020.

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The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit is with you all. **And also with you.**

Glory to God (*Hymnal, Setting 6, pages 167-68*)

Refrain:

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.

**Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory. *Refrain***

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer. *Refrain***

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.**

Glory to God in the highest, Amen, amen.

Prayer of the Day

O Lord Christ, good shepherd of the sheep, you seek the lost and guide us into your fold. Feed us, and we shall be satisfied; heal us, and we shall be made whole. Make us one with you, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Children's Corner

First Reading – Acts 4:5-12

The next day their rulers, elders, and scribes assembled in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. When they had made the prisoners stand in their midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, if we are questioned today because of a good deed done to someone who was sick and are asked how this man has been healed, let 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. This Jesus is ‘the stone that was rejected by you, the builders; it has become the cornerstone.’ There

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is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among mortals by which we must be saved.”

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Second Reading – 1 John 3:16-24

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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation (*Hymnal Setting Six, page 171*)

Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia

Gospel – John 10:11-18

The Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The 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. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I 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. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down,

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and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sermon

John 10:11-18

During my blacksmithing training, I took a rod and heated and pounded it, and dovetailed the ends, shaped the rod into an oval so that the ends were close together, heated it until it was bright yellow and then hit those ends together hard and fast so they fused. It's the ancient blacksmithing version of welding. And Bingo! After all that work I made a link. It tires me out to think about the energy needed to make a chain.

We have links everywhere. We use a link to connect on Zoom and it opens new possibilities. When we start making social links with others, friendships can develop. The Easter story is

about making links of hope that bind us together with God who loves us.



Links

Jesus always tried to link us to his message that we are not alone. This was especially important after Easter, after he died and rose again. He was then sort of there but not there ... like for us today. So he tried to show us our links with God: We are like sheep that aren't alone, because a good shepherd cares for them. Look at the birds. He said, "*not one of them falls without God knowing and you are more important than birds.*" "*See the flowers of the field, how beautifully they are clothed. Don't you think your heavenly father will care for you as much?*" Pointing at a grapevine, he added, "*I am the vine and you are the branches.*" He showed us links. Urging us not to be afraid in life, he whispered, "*I and the Father are one.*" We are not alone. "*See those sheep in the field and that shepherd watching over them the sheep? That's you and I,*" said Jesus.

How do we link a deep level with Christ whom we cannot see? I often struggle to speak in a meaningful way that Christ is alive and among us. The link is important for our life together.

I asked a church group one time how they would complete a sentence lifted from Psalm 23: *The Lord (God) is my...* They replied: *caregiver, family, brother, friend, daddy.* They chose strong linking words. How do you understand this connection with God that was so important for Jesus to speak about?

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Distance

When we moved here from Ottawa 14 years ago, I had an unexpectedly emotional time saying goodbye to my daughters. We stood together on a frozen, snowy driveway and I wept and held them close. Not only did I surprise them and make them cry, but I surprised myself. There was something about the vast distance that would separate us that broke my heart.

Love is not lost by distance. We talk almost daily. Strong links are forged by our hearts through visits, phone calls, and regular contact that have kept us strong as a family... but as I mentioned earlier, forging links takes work and determination.

Does God seem far away? Jesus announced that God's love is always near. It meets us at the table: *"This IS my body, this IS my blood. I am here. We are together."* God calls us family. When he mentions "other sheep," that can be anyone else we might think of. It was not just for a small group of disciples that Jesus came. But for you and for me and for those we don't expect. Christ made many... with those who need a family, strays who need a flock... Sometimes an invitation to come along was all it took. We can try that too.

I was told about one of the attendees at the recent memorial service. The person mentioned to one of our folks, *"I haven't been in a church for a long time, but I feel strangely comfortable here."* Those kinds of comments give me great joy, because in some way a link was being made.

Life-Giving

There are good shepherds and poor ones, but God's connection with us, Jesus says, is always life-giving. God's promise of care moves from birth and baptism to burial and a new beginning. Although we weep and hold each other tightly at times of grief and loss, the message of this Easter season is that the love of Christ is not hindered by death.

We've had a lot of memorial services and funerals in this parish recently. Death can be like a wolf stalking the flock. Researchers have found that when a wolf comes into an area where there are sheep, they become terrified. Other types of animals will flee, but sheep usually run in circles, stampede and damage themselves, or run into obstacles or ditches piling up in what is referred to as *"sheep wrecks."* It saves the predator a lot of work because in their hopeless panic they can destroy themselves. If you think of the old western movies, cattle are driven from behind, but sheep must be led. They will only follow someone they trust. A good shepherd is needed for safety, peace, and hope for a new day.

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So we are reminded us that our Good Shepherd is alive and present. Like the strong link I spoke of at the beginning, God's care and attention is pictured in the Bible in so many ways: like the commitment of a mother to her child; or the strong arms of a daddy with a toddler; or the good shepherd with the sheep. The love of God links us with a bond that cannot be broken.... Because Christ is risen! Christ is risen indeed.

Amen.

Hymn of the Day: #364 - Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia (*verses 1, 3, 4, 5*)

Christ has arisen, alleluia. Rejoice and praise him, alleluia.

For our redeemer burst from the tomb, even from death, dispelling its gloom.

Refrain

Let us sing praise to him with endless joy.

Death's fearful sting he has come to destroy.

Our sin forgiving, alleluia! Jesus is living, alleluia!

The angel said to them, "Do not fear. You look for Jesus who is not here.

See for yourselves the tomb is all bare. Only the graveclothes are lying there."

Refrain

"Go spread the news: he's not in the grave. He has arisen this world to save.

Jesus' redeeming labors are done. Even the battle with sin is won." *Refrain*

Christ has arisen to set us free. Alleluia, to him praises be.

Jesus is living! Let us all sing; he reigns triumphant, heavenly king. *Refrain*

Text: Bernard Kyamanywa, b. 1938; tr. Howard S. Olson, b. 1922

Swahili text © 1968 Lutheran Theological College, Makumira, Tanzania, admin. Augsburg Fortress. English text © 1977 Howard S. Olson, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Prayers of Intercession

Rejoicing that Jesus is risen and love has triumphed over fear, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need of good news.

(A brief silence)

Shepherding God, gather your church whenever we wander from you and one another. Empower our church in ministries around the world to worship and serve alongside global companions as equal partners and coworkers in the gospel. On this *Vocational Sunday*, we pray for all pastors and deacons called as servants in this church, and especially on

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this day, our **Bishop Kathy Martin**; *Oakridge Lutheran* in Vancouver; *Redeemer Lutheran* in Vancouver - **Pastor Katrina Vigen**. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Nurturing God as we enter *EarthWeek*, preserve the health of biomes and ecosystems. Inspire scientists, researchers, conservation organizations, and all people entrusted with the task of caring for creation, that we may be better stewards of the world around us. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, lead nations and communities to share resources, cooperate in solving conflicts, and listen to the wisdom of Indigenous peoples. Help all those with power to share it and to use such power for good. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Loving God, protect the very young and the very old, those living without housing, victims of domestic abuse, and all who live with chronic illness or compromised immune systems. Guide communities to actively care for people who are vulnerable, especially...
Carolyn B; Bill & Donna B; Mike B; Bonnie C; Bill L; Kaela D; Ken D; Gary G; Helena G; Ahmad H; Alyx M; Charlotte M; Marjorie M; Hans N; Janet O; Paula & Ana O; Irene P; James S; Birgit S; Evan S; Jack W; Zach & his children; Alana; Audrey; Bernie & Erna; Chittri; Colleen; Ezra; Graham; Helena; Julie's family; Kristi; Leah & the Nicholsons; Louise; Makai; Margaret; Penti; Quinn; Tanu; Zack. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious God, help this and all communities of faith to listen for your voice. Call us away from things that distract us from following you. Invite us to more deeply love and serve people who are lonely, isolated, and on the margins. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Living God, we give thanks for our ancestors in faith and all who labored to help generations understand the good news of the gospel. Strengthen us to share the good news in our own day. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, most merciful God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your abiding love; through Jesus Christ, our resurrected and living Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace [*unmute*]

The peace of Christ is with you always!

And also with you!

*(We greet each other gently with a wave, a smile,
or some other gesture of peace)*

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The Offering & Prayer

Offertory: "How Excellent is Thy Name" (written by Dick Tunney)

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of heaven and earth. Day by day you shower us with blessings. As you have raised us to new life in Christ, give us glad and generous hearts, ready to praise you and to respond to those in need, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord is with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give our thanks and praise. *(Pastor continues...)*

Holy, holy, holy *(Hymnal, Setting 6, page 173)*

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy God, you alone are holy, you alone are God. The universe declares your praise: beyond the stars; beneath the sea; within each cell; with every breath. We praise you, O God.

Generations bless your faithfulness: through the water; by night and day; across the wilderness; out of exile; into the future. We bless you, O God.

We give you thanks for your dear Son: at the heart of human life; near to those who suffer; beside the sinner; among the poor; with us now. We thank you, O God.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: *"Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."*

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: *"This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."*

Remembering his love for us on the way, at the table, and to the end, we proclaim the mystery of faith: **Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

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We pray for the gift of your Spirit: in our gathering; within this meal; among your people; throughout the world. Blessing, praise, and thanks to you, holy God, through Christ Jesus, by your Spirit, in your church, without end. **Amen.**

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Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come, your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread,

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

Communion *(those on Zoom will be communed first, and then those in the sanctuary)*

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Happy are those who trust in the Lord.

Bread: "Take and eat, this is the body of Christ, given for you."

Cup: "Take and drink, this is the blood of Christ, shed for you."

Lamb of God *(Hymnal, Setting 6, page 174)*

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Communion Hymns:

Hymn #789 Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us

1 Savior, like a shepherd lead us; much we need your tender care.

In your pleasant pastures feed us, for our use your fold prepare.

Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have bought us; we are yours.

Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have bought us; we are yours.

2 We are yours; in love befriend us, be the guardian of our way;
keep your flock, from sin defend us, seek us when we go astray.

Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear us children when we pray.

Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear us children when we pray.

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3 You have promised to receive us, poor and sinful though we be;
you have mercy to relieve us, grace to cleanse, and pow'r to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, early let us turn to you.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, early let us turn to you.

4 Early let us seek your favor, early let us do your will;
blessed Lord and only Savior, with your love our spirits fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have loved us, love us still.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, you have loved us, love us still.

Text: attr. Dorothy A. Thrupp, 1779-1847

Hymn #536 God Be with You Till We Meet Again

God be with you till we meet again; by good counsels guide, uphold you,
with a shepherd's care enfold you; God be with you till we meet again.

Refrain

Till we meet, (till we meet,) till we meet, (till we meet again,)
till we meet at Jesus' feet; (till we meet,)
till we meet, (till we meet,) till we meet, (till we meet again.)
God be with you till we meet again.

God be with you till we meet again; holy wings securely hide you,
daily manna still provide you; God be with you till we meet again. *Refrain*

God be with you till we meet again; when life's perils thick confound you,
put unfailing arms around you; God be with you till we meet again. *Refrain*

Text: Jeremiah E. Rankin, 1828-1904, alt.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace. **Amen.**

Sending Song: There is a Redeemer

**1. There is a Redeemer, Jesus, God's own Son,
Precious lamb of God, Messiah, Holy One.**

Refrain:

***Oh —Thank you O my Father, for giving us Your Son;
And leaving Your Spirit 'til the work on earth is done.***

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**2. Jesus, my Redeemer, Name above all names,
Precious Lamb of God, Messiah, Hope for sinners slain. (Refrain)**

**3. When I stand in glory I will see His face,
And there I'll serve my King forever, in that holy place. (Refrain)**

*Go in peace. Christ is risen!
Alleluia!*

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Worship Assistants Today

Hymnologist: *Cheryl Satre* (musician selecting hymns):

Reader: *Gerry Jacob*

Prayer: *Vibeke Sandberg*

Communion Assistants: *Flo Bender, Marilyn Gross, Carolyn Iles*

Zoom Hosts: *John Musgreave, Glenn Harvey*

Zoom Greeters: *Dorothy Pagan, Linda Harvey*

Usher: *Fred & Carol Wilke*

Musician: *Cheryl Satre*

Presiding: *Pastor Terry Richardson*

Readings for Sunday, April 28 — 4 Easter
Acts 8:26-40; 1 John 4:7-21; John 15:1-8

Announcements

Pastor Terry will be on holidays from April 23 - May 7. He will be back in the office on Wednesday, May 8.

The *Worship service* and *Invitation to Zoom* for worship will be sent out as usual by email each Saturday.