

Christ Congregational Church

Upholding the evangelical and congregational tradition of the Reformed Faith since A.D. 2010



FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER | April 26, A.D. 2026

Call to Worship

The entrance tower bell and carillon bells are rung.

Organ Prelude

The King of Love My Shepherd Is — arr. Sir Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924)

Minister: Alleluia! Christ is risen.

Answer: **The Lord is risen, indeed. Alleluia!**

✝ All shall stand for the processional hymn.

Processional Hymn 521

Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know?

✝ The people shall sit at the conclusion of the hymn.

Opening Prayer

The Reverend Randall K. Green

✠ Then shall the Lector read the first lesson.

Hear the first lesson, written in John 10, vv. 1-10 (Pew Bible, p. 896).

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

7 So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Lector. The Gospel of the Lord.

Answer. **Praise be to Christ.**

✠ The congregation shall stand for the *Gloria Patri*, the hymn and the second lesson, following:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end, Amen. Amen.

Hymn 370

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Hear the second lesson, written in Acts 2, vv. 42-47 (Pew Bible, p. 911).

And [the fellowship of the believers at Jerusalem] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. 43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. 44 And all who believed were together and had all things in common. 45 And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

Lector. The Word of the Lord.

Answer. **Thanks be to God.**

✠ The congregation shall sit at the end of the reading.

Sermon

Principles of Church Growth

✠ The congregation shall stand at the conclusion of the sermon; then shall the Lector lead *The Nicene Creed*.

Let us confess the Holy Faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

I believe in one God the Father Almighty; Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who, for us men and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried; and the third day he rose again, in accordance with the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life; who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the prophets. And I believe one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

† All shall remain standing for the singing of the *Doxology*.

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow; praise Him all creatures here below; praise Him above, ye, heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Anthem

The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want— arr. by C. Armstrong Gibbs, 1952

The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want, he makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leadeth me the quiet waters by. My soul he doth restore again, and me to walk doth make within the paths of blessedness, e'en for his own name's sake. Though I pass through shadowed vale, I'll fear no ill; for Thou art with me, and Thy rod and staff me comfort still. My table Thou hast furnished, in presence of my foes; my head Thou dost with oil anoint, and my cup overflows. Goodness and mercy all my days will surely follow me; and in my Father's heart always my dwelling place shall be. And in my heart for evermore Thy dwelling place shall be. (based on Psalm 23)

† The congregation shall sit at the conclusion of the *Doxology*.; then shall the *Prayers of the People* be offered, each petition ending with:

Intercessor: Through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever,

Answer: **Amen.**

† The Minister shall conclude the prayers, ending with *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 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. Amen.

✠ Then shall the congregation stand for the recessional hymn and closing prayer.

Recessional Hymn 373

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

And now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all, now and forevermore.

Answer. **Amen.**

Organ Postlude

"God Is Here" (Abbot's Leigh) — Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

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WORSHIP LEADERS The Reverend Randall K. Green, *minister*; Mr. M. Todd Stracener, *lector*; *Christ Church Chorale*; Mr. David Lawson, *organist*; Mary Kathryn Stracener & Henry Springfield, *acolytes*.

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CHRIST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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