

Living Stones

“You yourselves are being built like living stones into a spiritual temple.” (1 Peter 2.5)

Mason First Presbyterian Church

To be added to or removed from this list, please notify Bill.

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2020 + THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER



I encourage you to set aside some time today for personal worship using these or other resources.

Today's service includes the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Have some bread and grape juice ready!

An audio recording of this entire service is available at www.masonpresbyterian.org.

You are welcome to share this with your friends.

Prayer of the Day

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. *Amen.*

Call to Worship

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Jesus said: "I am the good shepherd."

Christ lays down his life for the sheep.

The Lamb of God will be our shepherd;

he will guide us to the water of life.

Let us worship God!

(Romans 1:7; John 10:11; Revelation 7:17)

Hymn: "The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

The King of love my shepherd is, whose goodness faileth never;

I nothing lack if I am his and he is mine forever.

Where streams of living water flow my ransomed soul he leadeth,
and where the verdant pastures grow, with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oft I strayed, but yet in love he sought me,
and on his shoulder gently laid, and home, rejoicing, brought me.

In death's dark vale I fear no ill with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still, thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight; thy unction grace bestoweth;
and O what transport of delight from thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days thy goodness faileth never;
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise within thy house forever.

(lyrics by Henry Williams Baker, 1868)

Call to Confession

Christ himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. Trusting in God's grace, let us confess our sin.

(1 Peter 2:24)

Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, in raising Jesus from the grave, you shattered the power of sin and death. We confess that we remain captive to doubt and fear, bound by the ways that lead to death. We overlook the poor and the hungry, and pass by those who mourn; we are deaf to the cries of the oppressed, and indifferent to calls for peace; we despise the weak, and abuse the earth you made.

Forgive us, God of mercy. Help us to trust in your power to change our lives and make us new, that we may know the joy of life abundant given in Jesus Christ, the risen Lord.

Assurance of Pardon

All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, but now we have returned to the shepherd and guardian of our souls. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God! Amen.

(1 Peter 2:25)

Hymn: "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"

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 righteousness, e'en for his own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale, yet will I fear none 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 life shall surely follow me,
and in God's house forevermore my dwelling place shall be.

(lyrics: Psalm 23; Scottish Psalter, 1650)

Prayers of Intercession

We offer our prayers through Christ,
who is risen from the dead,
who lives and reigns forever,
and prays for us in heaven.

Through Christ, we pray for the church . . .

(silence)

Let us be people of joy, living witnesses

to the power of the resurrection
and the good news of your grace and peace.
Living God, *hear our prayer.*

Through Christ we pray for the earth . . .
(*silence*)

From the dust of the damaged earth,
raise up your new creation,
full of beauty, wonder, and glory.
Living God, *hear our prayer.*

Through Christ, we pray for all nations . . .
(*silence*)

Let the message of your saving power
spread throughout the world:
that the dominion of death is no more.
Living God, *hear our prayer.*

Through Christ, we pray for this community . . .
(*silence*)

Let the doors of this church be open wide
as we go forth in love and service
and others come in to find a home.
Living God, *hear our prayer.*

Through Christ, we pray for loved ones . . .
(*silence*)

Give hope to those who wait for good news.
Turn their mourning into dancing,
and their sorrow into joy.
Living God, *hear our prayer.*

God of all power and glory, receive these prayers,
and continue your mighty work among us,
through Jesus Christ, our living Lord. *Amen.*

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.*

Hymn: "Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread"

Be known to us in breaking bread, but do not then depart;
Savior, abide with us, and spread your table in our heart.

Here share with us, in love divine, your body and your blood,
that living bread, that heavenly wine be our immortal food.

(lyrics by James Montgomery, 1825)

(An audio recording of the communion liturgy that follows – everything from the Invitation to the Lord's Table to the Prayer after Communion – is also available at www.masonpresbyterian.org.)

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
therefore let us keep the feast. *Alleluia!*

This is the joyful feast of the people of God!
People will come from north and south
and from east and west
to sit at table in the kingdom of God.

According to Luke,
when our risen Lord was at table with his disciples,
he took the bread,
blessed and broke it,
and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened,
and they recognized him.

This is the Lord's Table.
Our Savior invites those who trust him
to share the feast that he has prepared.

(We will eat the bread and drink from the cup during the anthem, after the Great Thanksgiving and the Breaking of the Bread.)

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!
We lift them to the Lord!

Let us give our thanks and praise.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

In every time and every age, O God,
it is good and faithful that we give you thanks,
for your mercy is sure
and your steadfast love endures forever.

In your compassion you gave us Christ Jesus,
who sets us free from death
and leads us to life eternal.

And so, with all creation,
with all the needy and hungry ones,

with all those who have enough and plenty,
with creatures large and small,
with sun and moon and stars,
and with the saints of every age,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*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!*

Blessed are you, O God, creator of all things.
By your power and love you continue
to deliver your people from bondage,
thwart the designs of evil,
show the way through the wilderness,
turn hardship into righteousness,
and reveal your hand upholding the just.

Blessed are you, O Christ, servant of the universe.
You came among us to feed and heal and teach,
to confound the haughty,
to confuse the deceivers,
to challenge the wrong-hearted,
and, in all these things,
to give hope to those who long for peace.

On the night before he met with death,
Jesus came to the table with those he loved.
He took bread
and praised you, God of all creation.
He broke the bread among his disciples
and said: "Take this, all of you, and eat it.
This is my body, given for you."

When the supper was ended,
he took a cup of wine
and gave thanks to you, God of all creation.
He passed the cup among his disciples
and said: "Take this, all of you, and drink from it.
This is the cup of the new covenant sealed in my blood
for the forgiveness of sin.
Do this in remembrance of me."

Remembering our Lord's self-giving love,
we proclaim the mystery of faith:

*Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.*

Blessed are you, O Spirit, giver of life.
You give us words when we have none;
you fill us with vision when we have the most need;
you give us voice to proclaim our faith in every hour.
Be our guide and teacher, today and always.

Come now, O Prince of Peace,
Spirit of Love,
Breath of Life.
Bring to all this hurting world the joy that Mary knew,
and teach us to proclaim with her,
“I have seen the Lord!”

In the unity of the Holy Trinity,
in gratitude for this great day of resurrection,
we praise you, God of all that is,
now and forever.
Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

Jesus said: “I am the bread of life.”
(Lift and break the bread.)

Jesus said: “I am the vine, you are the branches.”
(Lift and/or pour the cup.)

Jesus said:
“Come to me and never be hungry;
believe in me and never thirst.”

These are the gifts of God for the people of God!
Thanks be to God!

(During the anthem that follows, eat the bread during the first “Alleluia” chorus. Drink from the cup during the second “Alleluia” chorus.)

Communion Anthem: “Song Unending”

(You can listen to the anthem [here](#).)

When I think of how He loved me
when He took my guilt and shame
how He carried it to Calvary
how He left me free from pain

When I think of how He healed me
how He touched my heart and soul
how He took my broken spirit
how He made it strong and whole

When I think of how He loves me
all the hours of all my days
then I lift my voice to heaven

and I sing a song of praise:

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Allelu!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Allelu!

Jesus loves me, dearly loves me.
He is Savior, Lord and friend.
And my grateful heart rejoices
with a song that has no end:

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Amen!
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Amen!

Amen.

(by Joseph D. Rojahn and Lee Dengler)

Prayer after Communion

Gracious God, we give you thanks
that by the witness of your word
and the sharing of this meal
you have opened our hearts and eyes
to the presence of Christ among us.
Now send us forth from this place
by the power of your Spirit
to tell this good news to the world:
The Lord is risen indeed!
Amen.

Invitation to Offering

In the spirit of the first believers,
we are called to share our goods in common
and contribute to the needs of the poor
with glad and generous hearts.
Let us offer our lives to the Lord.
(Acts 2:44-46)

Offertory Response: "Good Christians All, Rejoice and Sing!" (verse 4)

Your name we bless, O risen Lord,
and sing today with one accord
the life laid down, the life restored:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

(lyrics by Cyril A. Alington, 1931, alt.)

Prayer for Illumination

Living God, with joy we celebrate the presence of your risen Word. Enliven our hearts by your Holy Spirit so that we may proclaim the good news of eternal and abundant life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Gospel Lesson: John 10:1-10

(Jesus is speaking.)

“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”

New Testament Lesson: 1 Peter 2:19-25

For it is a credit to you if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God’s approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Sermon: “The Shepherd and Guardian of Your Souls”

*The sermon is available in printed form at www.masonpresbyterian.org, or attached to this email.
An audio recording of the sermon is also available at www.masonpresbyterian.org.*

Hymn: “Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

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

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

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

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.

(lyrics from Thrupp’s Hymns for the Young, 1836, alt.)

Blessing

May the steadfast love of the Lord be yours,
this day and forever. *Alleluia!*
(*Psalm 118:1, 24*)

Postlude

If you have another 20 minutes, enjoy [this spectacular recording](#) of a live performance of J. S. Bach's cantata *Ich bin ein guter Hirt* ("I am a good shepherd"), performed by twelve members of the J. S. Bach Foundation at a church in Switzerland. The soprano in the third movement reads her music in Braille. The lyrics are in German; here is a translation:

1. Aria (Bass)

I am a Good Shepherd; a good shepherd gives up his life for his sheep. (*John 10:11*)

2. Aria (Alto)

Jesus is a good shepherd;
for He has already given His life
for His sheep,
so that no one will steal them from Him.
Jesus is a good shepherd.

3. Chorale (Soprano)

The Lord is my faithful shepherd,
to whom I entrust myself totally,
He leads me, His lamb, to pasture
in a lovely green meadow,
He leads me to fresh water,
to refresh my soul powerfully
through the blessed word of grace.

4. Recitative (Tenor)

When the hired servants sleep,
then this Shepherd watches over His sheep,
so that each in desired peace
can enjoy grazing and pasture,
through which flows the stream of life.
For the wolf of hell seeks forcibly
to devour the sheep,
yet this Shepherd keeps his fury at bay.

5. Aria (Tenor)

Behold what love does.
My Jesus keeps His own
tightly closed in good keeping
and has poured out on the trunk of the Cross
His precious blood for them.

6. Chorale

If God is my Protector and faithful Shepherd,
no misfortune will disturb me:
away, all my enemies,
you who cause fear and pain,
it will be to your own harm,

since I have God as my friend.



One of the earliest pieces of Christian art: a shepherd and sheep, symbolically representing Jesus the Good Shepherd;

from the Catacomb of Priscilla, a Christian woman in the 3rd century, in Rome

(source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Good_shepherd_oi_small.jpg)

Credits

Prayers courtesy of the PC(USA)'s 2018 Book of Common Worship

Scripture passages are from the New Revised Standard Version

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