



First Presbyterian Church of Newton

10:30 AM APRIL 21, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Easter

* indicates when to rise in body or in spirit

QUOTE FOR MEDITATION

"It is God's companionship that transforms every situation. It does not mean that there are no deathly valleys, no enemies, but they are not capable of hurt. Psalm 23 knows that evil is present in the world, but it is not feared.

Confidence in God is the source of a life of peace and joy."

Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

WORDS OF WELCOME

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (based on Psalm 100)

Leader: Shout with joy to the Lord! Worship the Lord with gladness.

People: Come before the Lord, singing with joy! Know that the Lord is God!

Leader: God made us, and we are God's own.

People: We are God's people, the sheep of his pasture.

Leader: Enter these gates with thanksgiving;
go into God's own courts with praise.
Give thanks to God and bless God's holy name.

People: For the Lord is good. God's unfailing love continues forever,
and God's faithfulness continues to each generation.

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Gentle Shepherd, You guide us in right paths, You lead us in the ways of righteousness, but we have allowed our anger, our rage, our greed, and at times even hate, to direct our paths. We have overreacted, we have taken more than our share, we have despised others that seem to have it all. Forgive us, God, for not following Your ways. Forgive us for not remembering that we are Your sheep, and You are our Shepherd. Forgive us when we have not listened for Your voice and instead have acted in the ways of the world. Guide us back to Your path, to loving You and loving our neighbors. Help us to unclench our fists and lend out our hands in hope and healing, forgiveness and love.

(A Time of Silent Prayer)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
 The Good Shepherd knows the sheep,
 and the Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep
 so that the sheep may live.

All: **We are part of the flock; we are part of Christ’s body.**
 In Christ we find wholeness and restoration.
 We are to go forth and share this Good News with everyone.

*** SUNG RESPONSE OF JOY “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” (verse 1) PH #464**

*Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flowers before Thee,
Opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
Drive the gloom of doubt away;
Giver of immortal gladness,
Fill us with the light of day.*

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

FAMILY CHOIR ANTHEM

“In His Steps”

by R. Kevin Boesiger

LISTENING FOR THE WORD BY THE SPIRIT

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (in unison)

Draw us close, Holy Spirit, as the Scriptures are read and the Word is proclaimed. Let the word of faith be on our lips and in our hearts, and let all other words slip away. May there be one voice we hear today – the voice of truth and grace.

SHARED READING (in unison) Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil,
for you are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

TIME WITH CHILDREN

SCRIPTURE READING John 10:11-18

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

MESSAGE

“The Good Shepherd”

RESPONDING TO THE WORD WITH OUR LIVES

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH “I Believe I Need a Shepherd”

This I Believe -- I believe I need a shepherd.

Because I am sometimes timid and other times overconfident,
because I often don't know the best path, yet pretend I do,
because I rush into dead ends or lead others into hazardous places,
because my brightest ideas are seamed with darkness,
because the things I crave may not be what is good for me,

I need a shepherd.

I believe in Jesus, the best possible shepherd;

his wisdom leads me to the best opportunities,
his word comforts me when I'm anxious or afraid,
his arm steadies me when I feel weary and heavy-laden,
his wounded body displays the cost of my rescue.

I believe in Jesus, the best possible shepherd.

I believe that I do not find Jesus but Jesus finds me,

that I am under his care by virtue of sheer grace,
that the love Jesus gives me is to be shared with others,
that Jesus treasures my name and prepares a place for me,
that Jesus' fold transfixes earth and heaven.

I trust Jesus, the good shepherd. Amen.

***HYMN**

“We Have a Common Calling”

See Insert

CALL TO OFFER OUR GIFTS TO GOD'S SERVICE

OFFERTORY

*** SONG OF GRATITUDE** *“Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” (verse 2)*

PH #464

*All Thy works with joy surround Thee, Earth and heaven reflect Thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around Thee, Center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, Flowery meadow, flashing sea,
Singing bird and flowing fountain, Call us to rejoice in Thee.*

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHARING OF PRAYER JOYS and CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ending with the LORD'S PRAYER (in unison)

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

GOING OUT TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST

*HYMN PH #171

“The King of Love My Shepherd Is”

See Insert

* BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE

We thank our Worship Leader Judy Prendergast
and the Ushers/Greeters this morning.

Liturgical Resources:

(PH denotes The Presbyterian Hymnal and STF denotes Sing the Faith Hymnal)

Artwork for meditation is “The Good Shepherd” by James Tissot (1836-1902) which is in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum of Art.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon, Rev. Mindi Welton-Mitchell Rev-o-lution.org
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**CONGREGATIONAL LIFE AT
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEWTON
Week of April 21, 2024**

- Sun. 4/21 9:00 am Adult Study & Prayer
 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes
 9:00 am Worship in the Chapel
 9:30 am Family Choir Practice
 9:45 am Chime Choir Practice
 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary
 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm Youth Group
- Mon. 4/22 10:00 am Wired Word
- Tues. 4/23 7:00 pm Jubilee Women at the home of Jane MacDonald
- Wed. 4/24 7:15 pm Session Meeting
 8:00 pm Midweek Vespers via Zoom
- Thur. 4/25 7:00 pm Bell Choir Practice
- Fri. 4/26 1:00 - 3:00 pm Hearts and Hands Craft Group
- Sun. 4/28 9:00 am Adult Study & Prayer
 9:00 am Faith Formation Classes
 9:00 am Worship in the Chapel
 9:45 am Family Choir Practice
 9:45 am Chime Choir Practice
 10:30 am Worship in Sanctuary
 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Girl Scouts
 No Youth Group

*Our service can also be found on our YouTube channel sometime after 3 pm.
Go to: www.YouTube.com and search for: fpcnewtonnj

Our Staff

Interim Pastor Heather Morrison-Yaden
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Treasurer Jane MacDonald
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Organist Ann Socha

Bell Choir Director Melinda Kline

Choir Director Cate Pasculli

Child Care Heather Woods

Church Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Friday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Church Email Address: admin@fpcnewtonnj.org

Church Telephone # 973-383-4420

54 High Street, Newton NJ

Church Web Site Address: www.fpcnewtonnj.org facebook.com/FPCNJ

www.youtube.com (Search for: "fpcnewtonnj")

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