

THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF  
**EASTER**  
GOOD SHEPHERD



ANGELICAN CHURCH  
IN NORTH AMERICA

YEAR A

## SEASONAL GREETING

*Celebrant* Alleluia! Christ is risen!

*People* **The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

## COLLECT OF THE DAY

O God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the Good Shepherd of your people: Grant that, when we hear his voice, we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## FIRST READING

Acts 6:1-9, 7:2a,51-60

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. <sup>2</sup> And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. <sup>4</sup> But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." <sup>5</sup> And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. <sup>6</sup> These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

<sup>7</sup> And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

<sup>8</sup> And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. <sup>9</sup> Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen.

<sup>7</sup> <sup>2</sup> And Stephen said:

<sup>51</sup> "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. <sup>52</sup> Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, <sup>53</sup> you who

received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”

<sup>54</sup> Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. <sup>55</sup> But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” <sup>57</sup> But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. <sup>58</sup> Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. <sup>59</sup> And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” <sup>60</sup> And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

OR

Nehemiah 9:(1-3)6-15

( Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads. <sup>2</sup> And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. <sup>3</sup> And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God. )

<sup>6</sup> “You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you. <sup>7</sup> You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram and brought him out of Ur of the Chaldeans and gave him the name Abraham. <sup>8</sup> You found his heart faithful before you, and made with him the covenant to give to his offspring the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite. And you have kept your promise, for you are righteous.

<sup>9</sup> “And you saw the affliction of our fathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea, <sup>10</sup> and performed signs and wonders against Pharaoh and all his servants and all the people of his land, for you knew that they acted arrogantly against our fathers. And you made a name for yourself, as it is to this day. <sup>11</sup> And you divided the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land, and you cast their pursuers into the depths, as a stone into mighty waters. <sup>12</sup> By a pillar of cloud you led them in the day, and by a pillar of fire in the night to light for them the way in which they should go. <sup>13</sup> You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke with them from heaven and gave them right rules and true laws, good statutes and commandments, <sup>14</sup> and you made known to them your holy Sabbath and commanded them commandments and statutes and a law by Moses your servant. <sup>15</sup> You gave them bread from heaven for their hunger and brought water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and you told them to go in to possess the land that you had sworn to give them.

*Reader:* The word of the Lord.

***People:* Thanks be to God.**

## PSALTER VERSES

*(In said services, the psalm verses may be placed between the Epistle and the Gospel, with the congregation standing in preparation for the Gospel. At services where there is a hymn or canticle before the Gospel, the psalm might be said between the Old Testament and Epistle, the people seated.)*

### Psalm 23

- <sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd; \*  
therefore I can lack nothing.
- <sup>2</sup> He shall feed me in green pastures \*  
and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.
- <sup>3</sup> He shall refresh my soul \*  
and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake.
- <sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, \*  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me.
- <sup>5</sup> You shall prepare a table before me, in the presence of those who trouble me; \*  
you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.
- <sup>6</sup> Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, \*  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

## NEW TESTAMENT READING

### 1 Peter 2:13-25

Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, <sup>14</sup> or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. <sup>15</sup> For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. <sup>16</sup> Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.

<sup>17</sup> Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

<sup>18</sup> Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. <sup>19</sup> For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup> For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. <sup>21</sup> For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were straying like

sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

*Reader:* The word of the Lord.

*People:* **Thanks be to God.**

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

*Deacon:* The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ, according to St. John.

*People:* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

John 10:1-10

“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. <sup>2</sup> But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup> This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup> So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

<sup>8</sup> All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup> I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

*Deacon:* The Gospel of the Lord.

*People:* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## OFFERTORY AND POST-COMMUNION SENTENCES

*(Drawn from verses of Holy Scripture, these sentences are chosen by the celebrant or preacher to reinforce the lessons or teaching of the day.)*

## PROPER PREFACE

*Easter*

But chiefly are we bound to praise you for the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord; for he is the true Paschal Lamb, who was offered for us, and has taken away the sin of the world; who by his death has destroyed death, and by his rising to life again has won for us everlasting life.

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Sources: The Collect of the Day is taken from the Book of Common Prayer 2019. The Psalm verses are taken from the New Coverdale Psalter of the BCP 2019. Scripture quotations are taken from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.