

An opening note about preparing for worship: please be sure to have bread and wine/juice/water standing by, ready for Communion.



**New Utrecht Reformed Church at home
4th Sunday of Easter with Communion, May 3, 2020**

We pray:

Dear Lord, together in our separation we gather to worship you, to praise you, to thank you, and to petition you for the many who are in need of healing. We have no God but you, and we are grateful that we are a family of faith united by you.

We sing:

Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need Thy tender care;
In they pleasant pastures feed us, for our use Thy folds prepare:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are;
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

We pray:

GOD, my shepherd! I don't need a thing.
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
you find me quiet pools to drink from.
True to your word, you let me catch my breath
and send me in the right direction.
Even when the way goes through Death Valley,
I'm not afraid when you walk at my side.
Your trusty shepherd's crook makes me feel secure.
You serve me a six-course dinner right in front of my enemies.
You revive my drooping head; my cup brims with blessing.
Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life.
I'm back home in the house of GOD for the rest of my life.

(from Psalm 23 – The Message)

We sing:

He leadeth me! O blessed thought! O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!
He leadeth me, He leadeth me, by His own hand He leadeth me;
His faithful foll'wer I would be, for by His hand He leadeth me.

Our prayer of confession (from *Ministry Matters*):

Shepherding God, be with us in our need.

Like sheep who have gone astray—we have not always heeded your voice, calling us to follow the right paths, beckoning us to lie down and be restored; we have acted as if our salvation lies in busyness and control.

We don't want to be sheep—dependent on a shepherd for everything.

We want to do it alone—to maintain our independence.

Forgive us for rejecting your shepherding care and your love and guidance.

Forgive us for our need to do it by ourselves, to be separate from the flock.

Forgive us for doubting your presence in times of trouble.

Forgive us our despair in the face of seemingly unrelenting evil and death.

Lead us back to the path of life. Amen.

Words of Assurance:

Jesus told us he came that we may have life and have it abundantly.

In so confessing, we have returned to our shepherd,

the guardian of our souls, who welcomes us with open arms and a glad heart.

We remember that the shepherd of our lives never abandons us,

is always calling our name, and unfailingly loves and forgives us.

Our Scripture Readings (please consult your own Bible):

- Acts 2:42-47
- John 10:1-10

Our sermon: OUR SHEPHERD

*In thanks for God's Word and God's great work among us,
we will send our offering to Rita.*

We celebrate Communion:

Like Jesus, we take the bread, gave thanks to God, break it and share it if we are not alone. We say, "Jesus said, this is my body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Like Jesus, we raise the cup, saying, "Jesus said, this cup is God's new covenant sealed with my blood, which is poured out for you."

Thank you, Jesus, for inviting us to your table to be blessed by sharing in Communion.

We sing:

Day by day, day by day, O, dear Lord, three things I pray:

To see Thee more clearly, love Thee more dearly, follow Thee more nearly
Day by day.

We pray:

Dear Lord, hear our prayers for the people we name who are in need of your healing hand and the inspiration of your Spirit; hear our prayers for our city, our state, our country and the world as we all fight against a common enemy; hear

our prayers of gratitude for all who serve, putting themselves at risk. Thank you for being our Lord and Savior; bless us all this week, we pray, until we gather again in the Spirit of worship. In your holy name, Amen.

We pray this Benediction together:

May we be held in the hand of God the Father Almighty

May we be filled to overflowing with the Light of the world, His Son, our Savior Jesus

And may we always be safely protected at home, and if we need to go out,
by the shalom-making Holy Spirit.

Amen.