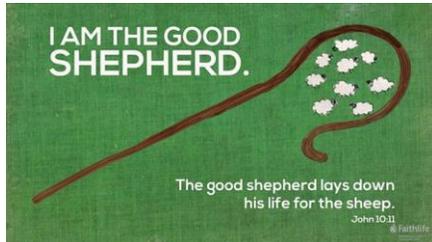




## The 4th Sunday of Easter

April 25, 2021

*"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me -- just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep." (John 10:14)*



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Most of us have grown up with the stained-glass image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, carrying the lost lamb on his shoulders. It is a comforting, reassuring image we reiterate every time we repeat the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm.

But how many of us have honestly ever identified ourselves with that lamb and the reasons why he got lost in the first place? We like to describe ourselves as strong as an ox, or as gentle as a dove, or as courageous as a lion ... but few of us would choose to compare ourselves with a sheep. And yet that is how the Bible describes us, all of us, and thus we need a shepherd, a Good Shepherd, who is willing to lay down his life, not for the Mother Theresa's of the world only, but for stupid, fall-over-the-cliff again and again, sheep. It was for sheep that he died. While we were yet helpless sheep, He gave his life for our life. This is the whole story of Good Shepherd.

Yours in Christ,          Pastor Doug

**Join us this Sunday, Worship Service . . . . . 9:30 A.M. Joe Rudy and Pastor Doug**

**Scripture Readings**          Acts 4:1-12  
I John 3:16-24  
John 10:11-18

- **Happening Around St. James**

**Children's Sunday School is happening at 10:30. Join us  
Adult Forum is happening at 10:30 as well. Join us.**

**Reminder.....coffee is available in the Narthex. We hope you stop and enjoy a cup with your St. James family.**

**COVID Precautions Forward:**

- **Resume** the following April 11<sup>th</sup>:
  - kneeling for communion,
  - coffee and food availability,
  - handing out bulletins (also have some available on the table for anyone who wishes to just pick it up),
  - use of the Common Cup during Communion.
- **Stop** the following practices as of April 11<sup>h</sup>:
  - ushers dismissing each pew at the end of the service.
- **Continue** the following:

- encouraging “good sense” practices such as:
  - using hand sanitizer,
  - washing of hands,
  - if anyone who feels ill they should not attend in-person worship services, meetings or gatherings,
  - wearing of face masks when not social distancing,
  - using “non-contact” greetings including when sharing the peace and greeting at the door.
- locating the offering plate in the Narthex (not passing the plate).
- live streaming worship services.
- sanitizing the common area surfaces of the church after the service.
- holding one service.
- **Start** using the right side of the sanctuary **only** for individuals wearing masks and seated using social distancing (with the pew signs) and the left side designated as no social distancing with masks optional.
- **Grief Share . . . Not too late.** You are invited to join our 13 week GriefShare, --April 7 through June 30<sup>th</sup>. This is a wonderful program of support for those who have lost a loved one and are struggling through the grief process. Time will be 6:30 PM every Wednesday. Questions? Contact Cindy Gregory.
- **Women’s Bible Study is Going.** Ladies join us for Bible Study here at St James, on Monday’s at 11 A.M. Great time of sharing and growing in Christian faith.
- **Men’s Bible Study is Gathering.** Another sign we are returning to normal. Men join your brothers in Christ in Bible Study here at St James, at 9 A.M. on Tuesdays. It will be time well spent.
- **Additional Bible Study Opportunity.** . . .Our Christian Education Committee is always looking for new ways for helping us grow in our discipleship. So, included with this weekly update is a bible study for you to use in the comfort of your home.
- **Daylighters started back up on April 21<sup>st</sup>** .....they are meeting the first and third Wednesday of the month at 1 P.M. Questions, please contact June Gries.
- **Blood Drive** put on your calendar May 2<sup>nd</sup>. From 9:30 AM to 2 PM, the Red Cross will be here to receive blood that will save lives. Sign up in the narthex.
- **Put Mother’s Day at St James** on your calendar. Our Sunday School youth will be leading the service that day. It will be a special blessing to moms and dads & us all.
- **Continue to Hold our Call Committee in Prayer** as they await someone who can be a potential pastoral candidate. May the Holy Spirit move strong in our midst and in the heart of the person who will take the reins of leadership as pastor of St James.

Every month we pray God will bless our **Heartland Mission District** In April:

- ✠ Pray for blessings for the Heartland Mission District (HMD) congregation of Reformation Lutheran Church in Middlebury Indiana and Pastor Daniel Repp.
- ✠ Pray for a joyful Easter season celebrating the Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost.
- ✠ Pray that the pandemic continues to subside and offer thanks for the vaccines.
- ✠ Continue to pray for guidance, support and strength from the Holy Spirit for HMD seminarian Ben Black.

Thank you all for your prayers.

I can be contacted at [pastorstjamesnalc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorstjamesnalc@gmail.com), or by phone 317 727-0612, or calling the St James office.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Doug