

**Welcome to Niskayuna Reformed Church
April 21, 2024
Fourth Sunday of Easter
Rev. Dr. Sherri & Rev. Michael Meyer-Veen**

The Approach to God

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Welcome and announcements

Prelude Grave from Sonata in E minor for flute and piano Handel

Introit

Votum Scott Haefner
Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Amen

Call to Worship (Responsive): Based on Psalm 23

The LORD is our shepherd who meets all our needs.

**We come to worship you,
seeking your nourishment, like green pastures,
and your peace, like still waters.**

You alone are the One who can restore our souls,
and lead us in the right paths for our good and your glory.

We have seen, journeyed through, and may yet be in
the valleys of shadow and death,
trying our best to be brave and keep the faith.

**You meet us with the power of your presence,
and comfort us with the wisdom and strength of your love.**

The table you prepare has room enough,
for loved ones, neighbors, strangers, and enemies.

**You anoint us with belovedness and belonging,
and the overflow of your grace extends to all.**

You accompany us with the chaperones of goodness and mercy,
and welcome us to make ourselves at home in you.

*Hymn of Worship "The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

Lift Up Your Hearts, 824

*The Salutation and People's Amen: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Call to Confession:

The prophet Isaiah reminds us,
"We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;
and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all."
In the honesty of our human condition,
and in the hope of grace
through Christ our good shepherd,
let us bring our sins, and our struggles to God.

Prayer of Confession (Unison):

**Righteous Father,
we who own more than we use,
proclaim more than we experience,
and request more than we need,
come asking your forgiveness.
We seek your salvation, then act like we save ourselves.
We beg your forgiveness, then repeat our errors.
We experience your grace, then act defeated.
We rely on your power, but only in hard times.
We have become confused and misguided.
Forgive our every defection.
Bring us to an unbroken commitment
and a steady trust,
through Jesus Christ, who is the way of hope,
the truth of God,
the life of love,
and our only Good Shepherd,
now and always. Amen.**

**Kyrie Eleison: Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us;
Lord, have mercy upon us.**

Words of Assurance: Ezekiel 34:11-12

“For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.”

*Gloria Patri: ***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.***

Anthem O God Beyond All Praising

Holst/Forrest

The Word of God

Junior Sermon

Prayer for Illumination

New Testament Reading:

1 John 3:16-24

This is the Word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

*Gospel Reading

John 10:11-18

This is the Gospel of the Lord. ***Praise to you, O Christ.***

Sermon “*Living As Easter People: Knowing the Good Shepherd*”

Pastor Mike

A Prayer for Blessing Upon the Word

*Hymn of Worship “Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

The Hymnbook, 380

The Response of God's People

The Offering

Offertory I Will Give You Rest

Shackley

*The Doxology 544 and Prayer of Consecration

The Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Prayers of the people and 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 of Worship "All the Way My Saviour Leads Me"

The Hymnbook, 365

*The Benediction

Benediction Response

*The Postlude Allegro from Sonata in E minor for flute and piano

Handel

(*)Please stand if you are able.

Prayer of Confession: The Worship Sourcebook. CRC Publications, 2004.

Cover Art: John Collier: Christ, the Good Shepherd Monument. - The Catholic Center, Diocese of Greensburg, Greensburg, Pennsylvania.



Announcements

Our guest musician today is Nathaniel Lossner. Nathaniel is a Junior at Niskayuna High School. He performs in both Symphonic band and Symphony at the high school. He additionally is a member of the Empire State Youth Orchestra's Wind Orchestra. He recently relocated to Upstate New York from Northern California.

You are invited to join us for a special 6-week spring Bible Study on the Epistle of 1 John. Bible study groups will meet on Monday Evenings on Zoom beginning Monday, April 29th through June 3rd, and in-person in the lounge on Wednesday mornings at 10:00am beginning May 1st through June 5th. All you need to bring is a favorite Bible if you have one and an open heart to share, listen, and learn from one another and the Holy Spirit! If we do not have your email address and you would like to join the Zoom small group, please be sure to give it to Pastor Mike or Pastor Sherri so we can send you the link.

Church members Penelope & Phoebe Stafford, led by scout leaders Erin Bagdriwicz and Mandie Stafford will be selling cooking **today** as part of girl scout troop 5062 from 9 am- 1pm. The girls have picked a local no kill animal rescue to support this year with the profits from their cookie sales.

NRC has begun our 2024 service at the Salvation Army of Schenectady. Lunch dates have been scheduled for **May 14 and June 11**. This is a commitment from about 9:30am until 1:30pm. We will serve monthly from April until November, so if you are unable to join us at the above dates, maybe we will catch you at another time! If you are able to help us prepare and serve meals to our neighbors, please call or text Sue Lichtig at (518)421-1734. Thank you!

Friday May 3rd is our next scheduled dinner service for the Schenectady City Mission. It runs from 4:30-6:30(often out by 6:15). The more, the merrier! Sign up using the following link.

<http://nrc.citymissionodschenectady.volunteerhub.com/>

Please text Michele Kopp at 518 424-3824 if you have any questions or concerns.Thank you!!

We are having our Spring Clean-Up Day **NEXT Saturday, April 27th** at 9 am. Every participant will receive donuts and water! Children and families are especially encouraged to attend. Please bring rakes and work gloves! If you have any questions, please contact Scott Haefner at 518-842-7167. We hope to see you there!

Scripture

1 John 3:16-24

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

¹⁹ This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence: ²⁰ If our hearts condemn us, we know that God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. ²¹ Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God ²² and receive from him anything we ask, because we keep his commands and do what pleases him. ²³ And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ The

one who keeps God's commands lives in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

John 10:11-18

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. ¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me— ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. ¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."