

Astoria First United Methodist Church
April 25, 2021

Fourth Sunday of Easter

ORDER OF WORSHIP

ANNOUNCEMENTS **Mary Frances Gunn**

CENTERING MUSIC *“Shepherd, like a Shepherd Lead Us”* **Mary Frances Gunn**

WORDS OF WELCOME **Pastor Michael**

CALL TO WORSHIP **Mary Frances Gunn**

Love one another, even when love involves risk. We love as God loves us. Love and care for others, even when caring is hard. We love and care as God loves and cares for us. Love in truth and action. By this we are known as children of God. We follow the Shepherd. We live in the Shepherd’s care.

OPENING PRAYER **Pastor Michael**

NT SCRIPTURE READING *“Acts 4:5-12”* **Mary Frances Gunn**

On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem, with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family. And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, “By what power or by what name did you do this?” Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, “Rulers of the people and elders, if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead—by him this man is standing before you well. This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which, has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

SPECIAL MUSIC *“The Lord’s My Shepherd, I’ll Not Want”* **Mary Frances Gunn**

EPISTLE READING *“1 John 3:16-24”* **Mary Frances Gunn**

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth. By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before

him; for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything. Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him. And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

PSALTER READING

"Psalm 23"

Mary Frances Gunn

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. AMEN

CALL TO RECONCILIATION

Pastor Michael

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

May Frances Gunn

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. In the name of Christ our Shepherd we offer our confession. **AMEN**

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE:

Mary Frances Gunn

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. We are part of the flock; we are part of Christ's body. In Christ we find wholeness and restoration. In Christ, we are reconciled to God. Let us go out sharing the Good News. Christ is Risen! Christ is Risen, Indeed! We are forgiven. **AMEN**

INVITATION TO OFFER OUR BEST GIFTS TO GOD

Pastor Michael

Jesus said, "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For the measure you give will be the measure you get back." Let us come and bring our first fruits to God, the best of ourselves and our labors, as a fragrant offering to heaven.

OFFERTORY PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Pastor Michael

HYMN OF PREPARATION

(verses 1,2,4,6)

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

**UMH#154
Congregation**

GOSPEL LESSON

"John 10:11-18"

Pastor Michael

SERMON

"A God Who Goes the Distance"

Pastor Michael

JOYS AND CONCERNS

Mary Frances Gunn

PASTORAL PRAYER

Pastor Michael

LORD'S PRAYER

Pastor Michael

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. AMEN

BENEDICTION:

Pastor Michael

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**We welcome to our friends from the Warrenton UMC
as they join us for worship.**

**We still need volunteers for liturgist each week.
Please call Sue Hicks or Mary Frances Gunn if you wish to help.
If you want to provide special music – let Mary Frances know.
We now have recordings of the worship services available as a link.**