

# THE SEASON OF EASTER

CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY!

ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



## *The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter*

### **Prelude**

### *Blumen Andacht*

**Gathering**— Hear Jesus’s great truth: I am the gate for the sheep! We recognize this voice. We’ve heard these words before. Come in! You belong here! You are safe and cared for here! We recognize the voice of our shepherd. Follow and find green pastures and still waters! We hear his voice. I come to give life and give it abundantly. Come one, come all!~

**A Time of Prayer**—Risen Savior, Reliable Shepherd, we hear your voice calling us to follow. We remember our ancient brothers and sisters who gathered in prayer and praise. Today, we too gather in prayer and praise. Enliven us with your resurrection power— a power that frees us from despair. Enliven us with your abundant life.

May your living power flow through us in all we are and do!~

**The Lord's Prayer** (unison)—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.

### **Bell Choir**

### *Thine is the Glory*

### **We Hear God’s Word**

### *John 10:1-18 (NRSV)*

‘Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.’ <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup> So again Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen

to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go 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.

<sup>11</sup> 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup>The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. <sup>13</sup>The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. <sup>14</sup>I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, <sup>15</sup>just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup>I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. <sup>17</sup>For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. <sup>18</sup>No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.'

## **Meditation**

*Abundant Generosity*

## **Hymn**

*The Summons, 350*

## **We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving**

**Invitation**—Some of the earliest memories of the church record acts of generosity, of meeting the needs of any and all. The church earned the goodwill of everyone who witnessed and experienced this gladness. Let us give with open hearts, as our ancient brothers and sisters did.

**April Benevolence**—Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries (CUE)

## **Doxology**

**We Give Thanks**— God of Abundant Life, Host of our Table, we devote ourselves and these gifts to your vision of a community that meets the needs of any and all. We give our gifts of money and work, of prayer and praise, of presence and purpose to our friends and neighbors. Bless our offering, that it may meet the needs, both small and large, of your great and generous blessings. Amen.~

## **Hymn**

*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us, 440*

**Benediction**—As you walk the paths of life, know that Jesus is with you, blessing you with his presence.~ As you break bread and gather at the table, know that Jesus is beside you, pouring out the love you long for. Go in peace, knowing the Risen Christ is forever with you.

**Postlude**

*A Joyous Acclamation*